

NET Bible: New English Translation. Second Beta Edition. Biblical Studies Press, 2003.

“Of making many English Bible translations there is no end.” In the past few years Bible readers have been subjected to a veritable deluge of new versions, including *The Message*, the NLT, ISV, ESV, TNIV, and HCSB. Why would any reader of this journal, or anyone serious student of Scripture, be interested in the *NET Bible*? Those responsible for the development of this new version contend that this is not just another English translation of Scripture.

Significantly, the *NET Bible* is the first English Bible translation aimed primarily at distribution over the internet (hence the double meaning “*NET*” *Bible*). While a print version is available, the translation can also be accessed at www.netbible.org. The *NET Bible* is a new translation from the original languages, which in the edition here under review is accompanied by 60,237 notes by the translators and editors.

For this reason the *NET Bible* is essentially a work in progress. Reader input and new information are regularly incorporated. This renders the *NET Bible* more flexible than conventional versions which in the past have been updated typically only once every generation. Also, anyone with internet access anywhere in the world can avail himself of this version of Scripture even where printed Bible study resources are not easily available.

The translators of the *NET Bible* are evangelicals who essentially concur in their interpretive approach and philosophy of translation. The process employed was the following. Initially, each book of the Bible was assigned to an individual scholar for translation. Then, the entire committee went through the draft for editing and revision. An expert in English style was consulted as well. Finally, the translation was posted on the internet to solicit reader input.

The print version reviewed here has a table of contents, a lengthy preface, the actual translation, a list of the *NET Bible* principles of translation, lists of abbreviations and cited works, an introduction to principal manuscript evidence for the Greek New Testament, Hebrew and Greek transliteration tables, a detailed table of contents, an index to *NET Bible* maps, and maps of Paul’s three missionary journeys.

In addition, there are several amazing maps of the Holy Land courtesy of ROHR Productions and a companion CD. This CD, in turn, features not only the *NET Bible* itself, but also materials on the history of the English Bible and on the making of the *NET Bible*; on studying and teaching the Bible; tools on the Gospel of John (including an audio version of the Gospel of John); and various reference tools.

It is not the purpose of the present review to provide a full critique of this new version. The intention is rather to alert the reader of this journal to the existence of this Bible translation and to highlight the considerable promise and potential of this new approach to the translation of Scripture. The extensive footnotes alone make this an indispensable tool for any serious Bible student and are neglected by Bible teachers, students, and pastors at their own peril.

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