

FAQ

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)

J.K. McKee

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

Frequently Asked Questions

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Cover Image: nullplus via Istockphoto

ISBN 979-8317009786 (paperback)

ASIN B09F1MWGB7 (eBook)

Published by Messianic Apologetics, a division of Outreach Israel Ministries

P.O. Box 516

McKinney, Texas 75070

(407) 933-2002

outreachisrael.net / outreachisrael.blog

messianicapologetics.net / messianicapologetics.blog

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: *English Standard Version* (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: *Greek New Testament*
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: *King James Version*
Lattimore: *The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore* (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: *Septuagint*
m. Mishnah
MT: *Masoretic Text*
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
NJSB: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)
NT: *New Testament*
OT: *Old Testament*
REB: *Revised English Bible* (1989)
RSV: *Revised Standard Version* (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: *Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version* (2014)
TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: *United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition*
v(s). *verse(s)*
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: *Latin Vulgate*
YLT: *Young's Literal Translation* (1862/1898)
WMB: *World Messianic Bible* (2020)

Bible Versions

Is there any specific Bible version you recommend that I use? I am new to the Messianic movement.

Two valuable resources which we recommend if you are brand new to the Messianic movement, which you will probably find extremely helpful, are the **Complete Jewish Bible** translated by David H. Stern (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1998) and the **Hebrew-Greek Key New American Standard** edited by Spiros Zodhiates (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1994). The CJB will familiarize you with many of the Hebrew words and Hebraic terms used throughout the broad Messianic community, and the *Hebrew-Greek Key NASB* has many words keyed to Strong's Concordance, with a Strong's dictionary in the Bible for easy reference.¹ There are also the two companion dictionaries, the *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, eds., Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003) and the *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Spiros Zodhiates, ed., Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), for Hebrew and Greek, respectively.

Most of the articles and publications produced by our ministry employ the **New American Standard, Updated Edition** (1995) as their default Bible version. This is because the NASU is widely considered to be the most literal evangelical Protestant version available on the market. (The New American Standard Bible or NASB is the 1977 edition, which still employs some Elizabethan period English via the King James and American Standard versions, which has been removed from the NASU.) The NASU represents a theologically conservative and evangelical translation ideology, and the NASB and NASU together have a longstanding usage in much of Messianic Judaism. An advantage of the NASU over various other Christian versions, is how *italics* are employed to denote most added words (usually "to be" verbs understood by Hebrew or Greek construction), pronouns and possessive pronouns for the Father and Son are capitalized, and SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS are used in the New Testament to indicate most Old Testament quotations or allusions.

Other major Bible versions which you will encounter our ministry use in a secondary capacity, include, but are not limited to, the Revised Standard Version (1952)/New Revised Standard Version (1989)/English Standard Version (2001) family, the New International Version (1984)/Today's New International Version (2005), and the Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004). The two major Jewish versions you will see us use are the Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999) by the Jewish Publication Society, and the ArtScroll Tanach (1996). Another Messianic version which has been released, is the Tree of Life Messianic Family Bible (2014), which we greatly appreciate given its overlapping qualities with the NASB/NASU and NIV. Our ministry does appreciate how some of the newer Christian versions do employ various degrees of inclusive language, such as using the clearer "humanity" or "humankind" instead of "man," "people" instead of "men," and "brothers and sisters" instead of just "brothers" when a mixed audience of males and females is definitely intended.

Ultimately, every English Bible translation has its limits. This is why we encourage everyone to have a wide array of useful tools to understand Scripture, including Hebrew and Greek lexicons, Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, and good commentaries. An English translation of the Bible cannot teach you how to read the Scriptures, nor can it investigate proper background and cultural issues germane to the ancient time period, the

¹ We do not recommend that you become too attached to either Strong's Concordance or the rather incomplete Strong's Concordance dictionary, though. For a further, useful discussion, consult the author's article "Getting Beyond Strong's Concordance" (appearing in *Confronting Critical Issues*).

potential issues surrounding an intended audience of a text, and especially give you hints as to the relevant ancient literature which serves in a secondary or tertiary role for a reader understanding a text.