

New Jerusalem Version (NJV)

The following is a written summary of our [full-length video review](#) featuring excerpts, discussions of key issues and texts, and lots of pictures, and is part of our [Bible Review series](#).

Do you recommend it? Why?

Two thumbs up! The New Jerusalem Version takes first place in our lists of recommended Messianic Jewish *and* Hebrew Roots Bibles. Read on to learn why.

Who's this Bible best for?

The New Jerusalem Version is your best choice if you're looking for a literal translation with some Hebrew names and keywords that's respectful towards Judaism and looks like a real Bible.



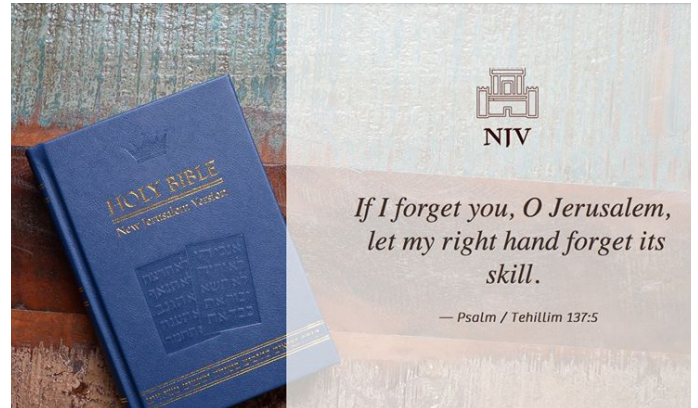
Would you suggest this as a primary or a secondary Bible? Why?

The NJV is ideal as a primary Bible to carry around and read from on a regular basis because it contains the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, is literal enough to be used as a study Bible, and is large enough to be easy on the eyes when reading but not so large as to be clunky.

How's this version's relationship with the Jews and Judaism?

In short, excellent. The New Jerusalem Version belies a deep familiarity with Jewish customs and sensibilities.

For instance, the books of the Hebrew Bible are in the Jewish order rather than how they were later rearranged by Christianity. Similarly, the books are called by both their Hebrew and English names and the chapters and verses follow the Jewish numbering with the alternative Christian numbering in brackets. Personal names and words close to the Jewish heart are also transliterated so as to retain their original resonance. Even the name "Jerusalem" is a reminder of the centrality of the holy city in the prayers and history of the people of Israel.

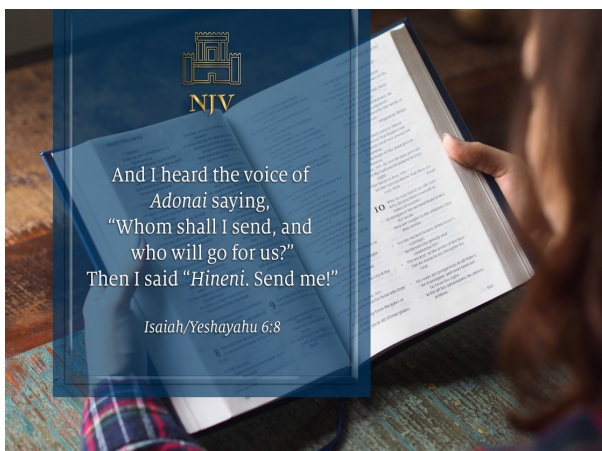


The NJV also introduces Christians to the Hebrew roots of their faith in a way that teaches a respectful attitude towards the Jewish people. For instance, when speaking of the holy name of God the tradition of saying "Adonai" or "Hashem" is encouraged. In the Shema prayer it's explained that the "baruch shem kavod" line is said quietly. The traditional blessing for lighting the Shabbat candles is given, along with an alternative. And the Torah portions are listed in the back for those who would like to experience the world's first Bible reading program, compliments of the synagogue.

Whilst the NJV does have some Jewish features, they're not so abundant as to make it foreign to Christians. When the Hebrew names of books of the Bible are used, the English is included also. Most personal names retain their English pronunciations, with only a small handful written the Hebrew way. The NJV's goal is "to help the reader to rediscover the Hebrew roots of the Bible" and it does that in a positive and non-threatening way.

Who's the publisher and when did it come out?

The New Jerusalem Bible came out in 2019. It was produced by Hineni Publishers which was established in 2017 and is based in the Netherlands. The stated goal of Hineni Publishers is "To make the personal name of God and the Messiah known to English-speaking people from all around the world and to help the reader to rediscover the Hebrew roots of the Bible." The company's name is explained thusly: "Hineni (הנני) is Hebrew for "Here I am!" When God called out to Moses from the Burning Bush, Moses said "Hineni!"



When God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham responded "Hineni!" When God called out three times to Samuel, the young boy responded, "Hineni!" With "Hineni!" we call out to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "Here we are! (to serve you)".

Who translated it and what's their story?

One of the FAQs on the NJV website asks, "Who were the translators and scholars for the NJV?" They answer, "The NJV is primarily an update of the 1901 American Standard Version (ASV); therefore most choices made by the original scholars that made this translation hold. Some verses have been re-translated to do justice to the Masoretic text. For example in Exodus 3:14, when Moses asks God what His name is, God answers "I AM WHO I AM". To provide this translation would be inaccurate; therefore the verse has been transliterated as "EHYEH ASHER EHYEH" with a footnote referring to different English translations."

Is it more word for word or thought for thought?

The main reason we recommend this Bible so highly is that it's the most literal Messianic translation available to date, thus giving a clearer sense not only of the meaning of the verses but also of the individual words and their order as used in the original text. Contrasted with other Messianic Bibles which were more intended for easy reading, this makes the NJV the best choice for deeper study and for readers who prefer a Bible with a higher literary style and broader vocabulary.

The NJV website explains, "The New Jerusalem Version is primarily an update of the 1901 ASV, WEB and "The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text," published in 1917 by the Jewish Publication Society. Both translations are considered to be highly reliable "word-for-word" translations based on the Masoretic Text, and comparable to the KJV."

It goes on to explain which manuscripts the translation is based on: "The Brit Chadashah (New Covenant) is mainly based on the Byzantine Majority Text (M-text). Footnotes in the New Jerusalem Version list additions, changes, and omissions relative to the authoritative Majority Text (M-Text). "NU" refers to the Nestle-Aland and "TR" refers to the "Textus Receptus" or "Received Text."

If you're new to the Bible or unfamiliar with the history of how it came to us you may find it disturbing that different translations are based on different manuscripts. You may wonder how accurate or trustworthy the

I Blessed is the man
who does not walk in the counsel of
the wicked,
nor stand on the path of sinners,
nor sit in the seat of scoffers.
² But his delight is in the *Torah* of יהוה,
on his *Torah* he studies day and
night.
³ He will be like a tree planted by the
streams of water,
that produces its fruit in its season,
whose leaf also does not wither—
whatever he does shall prosper.

⁴ The wicked are not so,
but are like the chaff which the
wind drives away.
⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand
in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of
the righteous.
⁶ For יהוה knows the way of the
righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall
perish.

2 Why do the nations rage,
and the peoples plot a vain thing?
² The kings of the earth take a stand,
and the rulers take counsel
together,
against יהוה and against his
Mashiach, saying,
³ "Let us break their bonds apart,
and cast their cords from us."
⁴ The one enthroned in heaven laughs,
Adonai mocks at them.
⁵ Then he will speak to them in his

Bible could be, or if it's truly the Word of God. We explore those questions in our in-depth review of the [Delitzsch Hebrew Gospels](#) and show that despite small textual differences, the Bible doesn't contradict itself, is internally consistent to a remarkable degree, and can indeed be trusted as the inspired Word of God.

Does it have the Tanach, the New Testament, or both?

BOOKS OF THE TANAKH

TORAH			
Genesis / Bereshit	1	Numbers / Bamidbar	135
Exodus / Shemot	56	Deuteronomy / Devarim	182
Leviticus / Vayikra	101		
PROPHETS / NEVIIM			
Joshua / Yehoshua	225	Amos / 'Amos	642
Judges / Shoftim	252	Obadiah / Ovadiah	652
I Samuel / Shemuel I	280	Jonah / Yonah	654
II Samuel / Shemuel II	315	Micah / Michah	657
I Kings / Melakhim I	345	Nahum / Nachum	664
II Kings / Melakhim II	379	Habakkuk / Chavakuk	668
Isaiah / Yeshayahu	412	Zephaniah / Tzefaniah	672
Jeremiah / Yirmeyahu	490	Haggai / Chaggai	676
Ezekiel / Yechezkel	566	Zechariah / Zekharya	678
Hosea / Hoshea	625	Malachi / Mal'akhi	688
Joel / Yoel	637		
WRITINGS / KETUVIM			
Psalms / Tehillim	693	Esther / Ester	902
Proverbs / Mishlei	796	Daniel / Dani'el	911
Job / Iyov	831	Ezra / 'Ezra	929
Song of Songs / Shir Hashirim	871	Nehemiah / Nechemiah	941
Ruth / Rut	878	I Chronicles / Divrei Hayamim I	957
Lamentations / Eicha	882	II Chronicles / Divrei Hayamim II	988
Ecclesiastes / Kohelet	892		

The NJV includes both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

In the Table of Contents "Tanach" is written as "TANAKH" which is also a valid transliteration and is divided into the three categories of "TORAH" or Teaching/Instruction/Law, "NEVIIM" or Prophets, and "KETUVIM" or Writings. This tripartite structure is how the Jewish Canon is organized and is reflected in the New Testament at the end of Luke's Gospel where the Scriptures are referred to as the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (the first and longest book in the Writings/Ketuvim.)

The New Testament is written as "BRIT CHADASHAH" or "New Covenant" which is further divided into "BESORAH" or Good News from Matthew to John and then "MESSIANIC WRITINGS" for Acts to Revelation.

How are Hebrew book names written?

On both the Old and New Testaments the names of the books of the Bible are written in both the traditional English and original Hebrew pronunciations. For instance: Genesis/Bereshit, 1 Kings/Melachim I, Habakkuk/Chavakuk, Ruth/Rut, Ecclesiastes/Kohelet, James/Jacob, I Peter/Kepha I

If you're unsure how to pronounce these terms watch our [in-depth video review of the NJV](#). You may also be interested in [Lesson 16 of Hebrew Quest](#).

BOOKS OF THE BRIT CHADASHAH

THE GOOD NEWS			
Matthew / Mattityahu	1029	Luke	1091
Mark	1067	John / Yochanan	1131
MESSIANIC WRITINGS			
Acts	1163	Titus	1276
Romans	1202	Philemon	1278
I Corinthians	1219	Hebrews	1279
II Corinthians	1234	James / Jacob	1292
Galatians	1244	I Peter / Kepha I	1296
Ephesians	1250	II Peter / Kepha II	1301
Philippians	1256	I John / Yochanan I	1304
Colossians	1260	II John / Yochanan II	1308
I Thessalonians	1264	III John / Yochanan III	1309
II Thessalonians	1267	Jude / Judah	1310
I Timothy	1269	Revelation	1312
II Timothy	1273		

How are Hebrew personal names written?

In the Tanach personal names are written in their traditional English form. For instance, Abraham, Rebekah, Moses, Abigail, Solomon, Hazlelponi, and Dodo.

In the New Testament most personal names are written in their traditional English forms, with a small number retaining their original Jewish pronunciation. Specifically, Barabbas is Bar-Abba (which notably means "Son of the Father"), Mary is Miryam, John is Yochanan, Matthew is Mattityahu, Judas and Jude are both Judah, Cephas is Kefa, Joanna is Yochanah, and Susanna is Shoshanah. James is also corrected to Jacob.

How are Hebrew place names written?

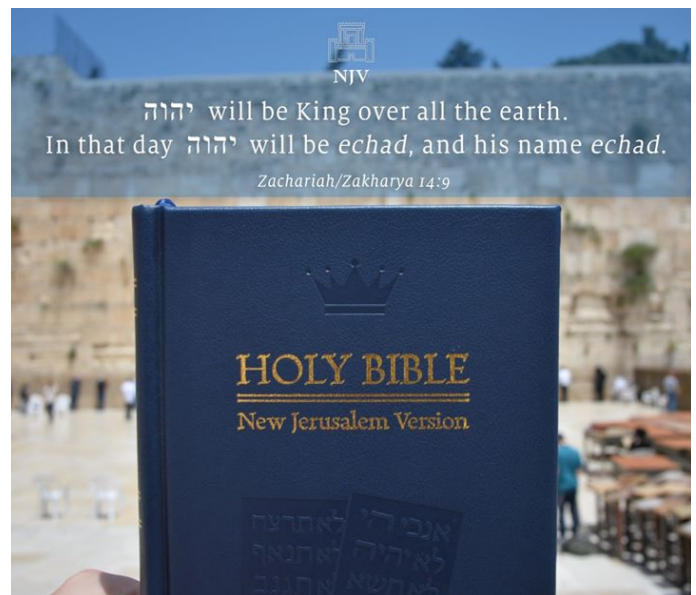
In the Tanach, geographical names are written in their traditional English forms. For instance, Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Babylon, and Abel Beth Maacah. Likewise in the New Testament, Hebrew and Aramaic place names are written in their popular English forms. For instance, Galilee, Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethany, Siloam, and Arimathea.

The one slight exception is the land of Israel, which is referred to as Eretz-Yisrael. If you regard Hell, this World, and the coming World as places then Sheol, Olam hazeh, and Olam haba could also be respectively included in this exception.

How are the names and titles of God written?

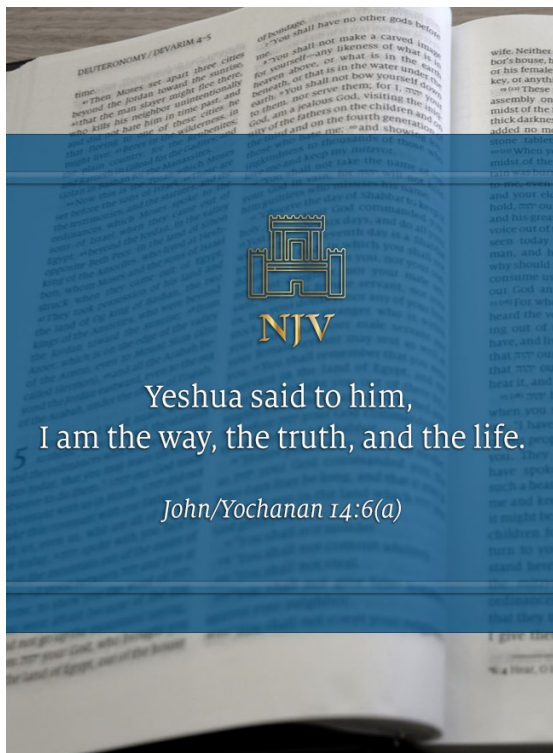
Throughout the New Jerusalem Bible the name of God is written in Hebrew exactly as it's written in a Torah scroll. This definitely gives the NJV an authentic and holy feel and hopefully inspires a greater degree of both intimacy and awe within the reader. At the same time it also requires that one handle this book as a real Jewish *sefer*, a holy book. For this reason be very careful to not put your NJV on the floor or ground, place anything on top of it, or bring it into a bathroom. While these reverent safeguards may be new if you're coming from a Christian background and you may not understand

the rationale behind them, please remember the words of the Apostle to the non-Jews to "respect what is right in the sight of all men" and "give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God."



The Publishers explain: "The Name of God is most significant in the Scriptures, where He manifests Himself in various ways. A common name used for the Supreme Deity is God, a translation of the Hebrew "Elohim." Another title for the Supreme Deity is Lord, a translation of the Hebrew "Adonai." However, these do not represent the personal name of God. God's personal, most holy and unutterable name is written and read in Hebrew from right to left: יהוה. The name is composed of the Hebrew letters Yod (י), Hey (ה), Vav (ו), Hey (ה), it is also referred to as the "Tetragrammaton," which means "the four letters;" YHVH in Latin script. In the Jewish tradition, the Divine Name is too sacred to be uttered, it was therefore already in ancient times replaced vocally by the Hebrew "Adonai" (LORD), which was translated as "Kyrios" (LORD) in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Septuagint or LXX). Most English Bibles owing to the Jewish tradition, therefore, write the name as 'LORD.' Out of respect for the name, the New Jerusalem Version has preserved the original Hebrew: יהוה. It is up to the reader how to pronounce the holiest name, though not to be used in vain. In Jewish tradition, it is not without reason that when the name is spoken aloud it is uttered as "Adonai" or "Hashem" (The Name). This goes back to the third commandment: "You shall not take the name of יהוה your God in vain; for יהוה will not hold him guiltless who misuses His name." (Deut. 5:11)"

It is clear from the above that, although the NJV uses the Sacred Name, it's not a Sacred Name Bible in that it doesn't teach people to try to pronounce the divine Name. Rather it underscores the very valid reasons behind the Jewish tradition of saying "Adonai" or "Hashem" and repeatedly refers to the Sacred Name as "unutterable". For more on this topic, including the abundantly clear evidence that Yeshua and his apostles did not use the Sacred Name and answers to questions such as whether you must actually pronounce the Name to call upon or proclaim it, please see our series of short talks on [Problems with Sacred Name teachings](#).



Not surprisingly, the name of Jesus is written as Yeshua in this version. The Publishers explain: "The name Jesus (Greek Ἰησοῦς) is derived from the Hebrew name Yeshua (יְשׁוּעַ), which is based on the Semitic root y-š-ṣ (Hebrew: ישע), meaning "to deliver; to rescue." In the Greek manuscripts of the Bible the name Iēsous occurs in both the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament the Greek Iēsous is found in several passages (1 Chr. 24:11, 2 Chr. 31:15 and Ezra 2:2,6,36). In the Masoretic text, the Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament, the name is יְשׁוּעַ, Yeshua. In Matthew 1.21 the Angel spoke to Joseph "She shall give birth to a son; and you shall call his name Yeshua, for it is he who shall save his people from their sins." The angel most certainly did not speak Greek, as Joseph was a Jew from the tribe of Judah (Matthew 1.1-6). Just like Joseph Paul also had a divine encounter with an angel; on his way to Damascus Paul heard a voice speaking to him in the Hebrew language (Acts 26:14). All divine encounters in the Bible are spoken in Hebrew, we therefore know the angel called the name of King Messiah יְשׁוּעַ, Yeshua."

In addition to the above, some of the other titles you'll see written with their original Hebrew pronunciations are *El Elyon* for Most High God, *Adonai* for Lord or Master, *El Shaddai* for Almighty or Superabundant God, *ADONAI-Tzva'ot* for LORD of Hosts, *Ruach Adonai* for the Spirit of the LORD, and *Ruach HaKodesh* for the Holy Spirit.

How are key terms in Old and New Testaments rendered?

One of the goals of the NJV is "to help the reader to rediscover the Hebrew roots of the Bible." The Publishers comment, "The Hebrew language is a rich language and differs in many ways from the English language. Hebrew letters can be seen as gems, each letter having its own unique meaning, and a numeric value. Even a lifelong study of the Hebrew language will not make a person able to fathom its depths. The goal of this revised version was to merge Hebrew into the English text in an easy and accessible way, without losing readability. Various Hebrew words have been transliterated to add depth of meaning to the text. All Hebrew words have been italicized and can be found in the glossary" It's the opinion of this review that the producers of the NJV did an excellent work in this regard. A small number of Hebrew keywords are tastefully mixed in, but not so many as to be distracting or overwhelming.



Some of the terms you'll become comfortable with as you read your New Jerusalem Version are *echad*, *Hallel*, *hametz*, *Hanukkah*, *hineni*, *hoshiana*, *kadosh*, *kohen*, *lashon hara*, *matzah*, *menorah*, *mikveh*, *mitzvah*, *niddah*, *Pesach*, *Rosh Chodesh*, *Shabbat*, *shalom*, *shammash*, *Shavuot*, *shema*, *Shemitah*, *shofar*, *Sukkot*, *tefillin*, *Torah*, *tzaddik*, *tzara'at*, *tzedakah*, *tzitzit*, *Yom Kippur*, and *Yovel*. For a complete listing of the Hebrew words used in the New Jerusalem Version with an explanation of what they mean and how to correctly pronounce them, watch the [in-depth video review](#).

In addition to the aforementioned Hebrew keywords, key concepts in the New Testament are phrased in religiously neutral ways that will feel refreshing for Christian readers and sensitive to Jewish readers. John the Baptist, for instance, is referred to as Yochanan the Immerser, and to go down into the water is referred to as immersion. The apostles are emissaries. Scribes are Torah teachers.

The church is the assembly. Acts 11:26 says that "the disciples were first called Messianic in Antioch" with the footnote *Greek, Christianos. Hebrew, M'shichim*. Saint is holy one. Antichrist is anti-messiah. And Alpha and Omega are Aleph and Tav.

Does it also have the Hebrew text?

This is a translation only and doesn't include the original Hebrew or Greek texts, although as noted it does feature some names written with their original Hebrew pronunciations, and the name of God itself is written in Hebrew.

Does it open from right to left, or from left to right?

The book opens and reads from left to right like a regular English book.

Are the books in the Jewish or Christian order?

The Preface answers, "This Bible distinguishes itself from most English Bibles by restoring the order of books, following the Jewish tradition of the TANAKH (Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim)."

Are the chapters and verses in the Jewish or Christian order?

Again the Preface answers, "In some chapters there is also a small difference in verse numbering. The verse numbering of the Jewish tradition is followed, which deviates in some chapters from the traditional Christian order. When this occurs, the number that represents the Christian order has been placed between brackets, for example 1 (2), 2 (3), 3 (4), etc." For a more detailed explanation of the differences between Jewish and Christian Bibles, watch our video review of the [Complete Jewish Bible](#).



THE PROPHETS

יהושע	☞	Joshua / Yehoshua
שופטים	☞	Judges / Shoftim
שמואל	☞	Samuel / Shemuel
מלכים	☞	Kings / Melakhim
ישעיה	☞	Isaiah / Yeshayahu
ירמיה	☞	Jeremiah / Yirmeyahu
יהזקאל	☞	Ezekiel / Yechezkel

THE TWELVE PROPHETS

הושע	☞	Hosea / Hoshea
יואל	☞	Joel / Yoel
עמוס	☞	Amos / 'Amos
עובדיה	☞	Obadiah / Ovadiah
יונה	☞	Jonah / Yonah
מיכה	☞	Micah / Michah
נחום	☞	Nahum / Nachum
חבקוק	☞	Habakkuk / Chavakuk
צפניה	☞	Zephaniah / Tzefaniah
חגי	☞	Haggai / Chaggai
זכריה	☞	Zechariah / Zekharya
מלאכי	☞	Malachi / Mal'akhi

How's the general layout and navigability?

When you pick up the New Jerusalem Bible you feel like you're holding a real Bible. Everything about this book inspires reverence, from the "HOLY BIBLE" written on the front in golden letters to the Crown, Menorah, Tablets of the Covenant, and Temple embossed on its cover and spine.

The layout of the NJV is both simple and elegant. Aside from title and chapter on the top outside corners of the page and page numbers at the bottom, all you'll see on most pages is the text itself. It's typeset with a clean

and readable font. The pages are thin and can be smoothly thumbed through. Before each section of Scripture (Torah, Good News, etc.) there's a page listing the books in that section with little menorahs separating between their Hebrew and English names and corner scroll designs in the corners.

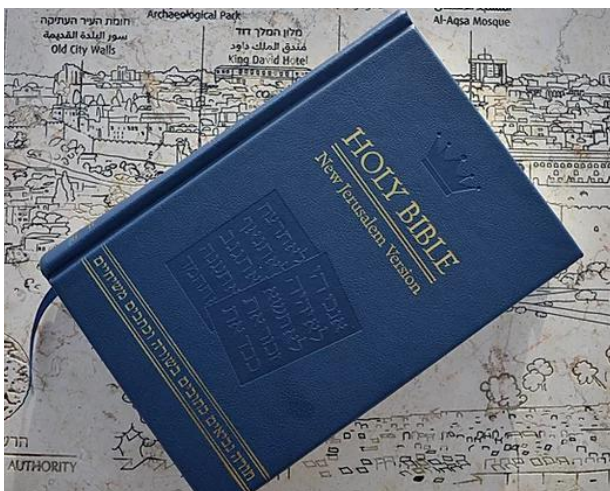
What does it have for notes, appendices, and extras?

The Table of Contents shows the books of the Bible in their traditional order after which another list is given in alphabetical order with accompanying page numbers. After that is the Preface discussing Translation, the Name, Hebrew roots, and closing with a Dedication, much of which has been quoted in the course of this review.

The focus of the NJV is definitely the holy text itself and for that reason not many extras are included. There is, as was already mentioned, a Glossary with the Hebrew words used. This is followed by a handy list of the *Parashas* or weekly Torah portions giving their chapter and verse references, page numbers, Hebrew and English names, and which week to read them on. Included is a table of the Hebrew alphabet with pictographs, names, numerical values, and final forms. Also included is a table of weights, measures, and monetary units. And finally, the Shema prayer and the Welcoming the Shabbat blessings for candles, wine, and bread are laid out in Hebrew, transliteration, and translation.

How would you summarize the positives and negatives of this Bible?

As summarized at the beginning of this review, the New Jerusalem Bible's distinctives are that it's a literal translation, it uses a tasteful but not overwhelming amount of Hebrew words and names, and it looks and feels like a real Holy Bible. It also comes across as sensitive and respectful to both Judaism and Christianity, and as such should find wide usage amongst Messianic Jews, Messianic Gentiles, and Christians who desire a Bible with a Hebraic flavour.



We don't have any substantial negatives but a couple things may be worth mentioning:

Because at this time the NJV ships from Europe it may take a little longer and cost a little more than you'd normally expect.

On both of the two first edition Bibles that were sent to us the back cover began tearing away from the spine. If this happens for you our suggestion is to use a hot glue gun or plain white glue to thoroughly bond the spine cover to the actual spine of the book and then reinforce that with a

strip of clear packing tape. (UPDATE: this isn't a problem with the second, current edition.)

The Greek title Kurios when used in reference to Yeshua is translated "Lord". If this old English term doesn't resonate or even carries baggage for you you may wish to gloss over it with "Master" as you read.

We appreciate that Jewish traditions safeguarding its sanctity of the written name of God are highly spoken of in the NJV. At the same time, we would like to see some basic instructions somewhere in a future edition or on the NJV's website explaining to non-Jewish readers how to handle a Jewish holy book so as to preclude the possibility of causing severe discomfort or even horror to their Jewish friends. (UPDATE: this was included as a 'Handling Your Bible: Practical Guide' page at the back of the second edition.)



HOLY BIBLE

New Jerusalem Version



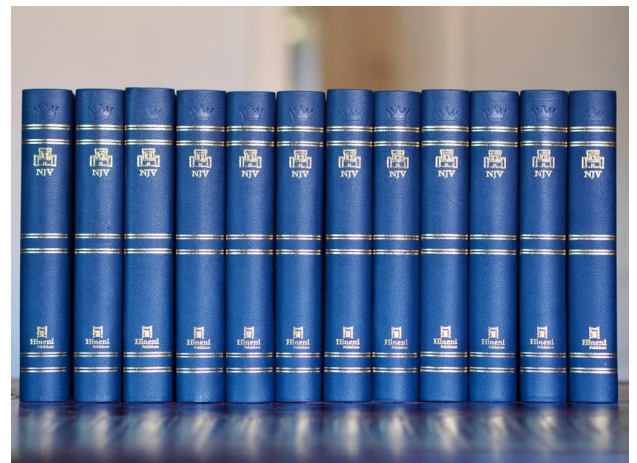
תורה נביאים כתובים בשורה וכתבים משיחיים

Which formats can I get it in, and where?

The New Jerusalem Version is available in genuine and imitation leather and in black, blue, and brown.

Order your New Jerusalem Version of the Bible on [the website here](#).

Be sure to also [watch the video review](#), check out our [Bible Review series](#), and if you appreciated this review ask yourself "what if everybody did this?" and then proceed accordingly and say thank you by making a [one-time donation](#) or [becoming a member](#).



And now as you come to the end of this review, please read and receive by faith this blessing from the Preface to the NJV: *May this Bible enlighten the eyes of your heart, and may your heart be a spring of living water, overflowing abundantly. Draw close to Hashem, for His faithfulness endures forever. Walk in His truth, for His lovingkindness is better than life. Love Hashem your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. Worship and bow down to your Maker, let your lips praise Him day and night. Blessed be Hashem, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Baruch Hashem!—Blessed be the Name!*

Amen!



NJV

*“May יהוה bless you out of Zion,
and may you see the good of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.”*

Psalms / Tehillim 128:5