

# Which Bible Translation(s) Should I Use?

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The New Living Translation (NLT) was published in 1996. It was a revision of an older translation called the Living Bible (TLB). It was a very popular paraphrase written by Kenneth Taylor and published in 1971. Over the next 25 years there were over 40 million copies sold.

Here are a few verses that give a sense of what the Living Bible is like:

- “Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105 NASB).
- “Your words are a flashlight to light the path ahead of me and keep me from stumbling” (Psalm 119:105 TLB).

Here are a few verses that give a sense of what the Living Bible is like:

- ““But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities, And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me,’ declares the LORD” (Amos 4:6 NASB).
- ““I sent you hunger,’ says the Lord, ‘but it did no good; you still would not return to me”” (Amos 4:6 TLB).

Here are a few verses that give a sense of what the Living Bible is like:

- “Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God” (Romans 13:1 NASB).
- “Obey the government, for God is the one who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power” (Romans 13:1 TLB).

Here are a few verses that give a sense of what the Living Bible is like:

- “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13 NASB).
- “For I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power” (Philippians 4:13 TLB).

Here are a few verses that give a sense of what the Living Bible is like:

- “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world” (1 John 2:2 NASB).
- “He is the one who took God’s wrath against our sins upon himself and brought us into fellowship with God; and he is the forgiveness for our sins, and not only ours but all the world’s” (1 John 2:2 TLB).

So the Living Bible leans strongly toward dynamic equivalence, and it does a good job in many verses. But in other verses it’s not so good. Here are some examples:

- “Do not get upset because of evildoers, Do not be envious of wrongdoers” (Psalm 37:1 NASB).
- “Never envy the wicked!” (Psalm 37:1 TLB).

So the Living Bible leans strongly toward dynamic equivalence, and it does a good job in many verses. But in other verses it's not so good. Here are some examples:

- "How you have fallen from heaven, You star of the morning, son of the dawn!" (Isaiah 14:12a NASB).
- "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" (Isaiah 14:12a TLB).

So the Living Bible leans strongly toward dynamic equivalence, and it does a good job in many verses. But in other verses it's not so good. Here are some examples:

- "For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst" (Luke 17:21b NASB).
- "For the Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21b TLB).

So the Living Bible leans strongly toward dynamic equivalence, and it does a good job in many verses. But in other verses it's not so good. Here are some examples:

- "When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48 NASB).
- "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and rejoiced in Paul's message; and as many as wanted eternal life, believed" (Acts 13:48 TLB).

So the Living Bible leans strongly toward dynamic equivalence, and it does a good job in many verses. But in other verses it's not so good. Here are some examples:

- "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose" (Romans 8:28 NASB).
- "And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into his plans" (Romans 8:28 TLB).

So the Living Bible had many problems. And as a result it was not accepted by most Bible scholars. So Taylor decided to enlist the help of about 100 conservative Bible scholars to revise the Living Bible, and the work began in 1989. They didn't just correct many problems in the Living Bible, but they also made the revision more literal. And so it was given a new name when it was published in 1996: the New Living Translation. It was then revised in 2004 and again in 2015.

Here are some verses where the NLT improves on the Living Bible:

- "Never envy the wicked!" (Psalm 37:1 TLB).
- "Don't worry about the wicked or envy those who do wrong" (Psalm 37:1 NLT).

Here are some verses where the NLT improves on the Living Bible:

- “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” (Isaiah 14:12a TLB).
- “How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning!” (Isaiah 14:12a NLT).

Here are some verses where the NLT improves on the Living Bible:

- “For the Kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21b TLB).
- “For the Kingdom of God is already among you” (Luke 17:21b NLT).



Here are some verses where the NLT improves on the Living Bible:

- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and rejoiced in Paul’s message; and as many as wanted eternal life, believed” (Acts 13:48 TLB).
- “When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for his message; and all who were chosen for eternal life became believers” (Acts 13:48 NLT).

Here are some verses where the NLT improves on the Living Bible:

- “And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into his plans” (Romans 8:28 TLB).
- “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them” (Romans 8:28 NLT).