

# Which Bible Translation(s) Should I Use?

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The Revised Standard Version was published in 1946 (New Testament) and 1952 (whole Bible). It was a revision of the American Standard Version using more modern English.

Here are some verses where the RSV is more readable than the ASV:

- “And thou, even of thyself, shalt discontinue from thy heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger which shall burn for ever” (Jeremiah 17:4 ASV).
- “You shall loosen your hand from your heritage which I gave to you, and I will make you serve your enemies in a land which you do not know, for in my anger a fire is kindled which shall burn for ever” (Jeremiah 17:4 RSV).

Here are some verses where the RSV is more readable than the ASV:

- “But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake” (Philippians 1:23–24 ASV).
- “I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account” (Philippians 1:23–24 RSV).

But the RSV has archaic pronouns whenever God is being addressed. Here are some examples:

- “O Lord GOD, thou hast only begun to show thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as thine?” (Deuteronomy 3:24).
- “But thou, terrible art thou! Who can stand before thee when once thy anger is roused?” (Psalm 76:7).
- “I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, and they have kept thy word” (John 17:6).

Here are some verses where the RSV has theological problems:

- “And Noah began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard” (Genesis 9:20 ASV).
- “Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard” (Genesis 9:20 RSV).
- “Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken” (Genesis 3:23 RSV).
- “And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground” (Genesis 4:2 RSV).

Here are some verses where the RSV has theological problems:

- “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14 ASV).
- “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Imman’u-el” (Isaiah 7:14 RSV).
- “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emman’u-el’ (which means, God with us)” (Matthew 1:23 RSV).

Here are some verses where the RSV has theological problems:

- “Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 9:5 ASV).
- “The ancestors are theirs, and from them, by physical descent, came the Christ, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen” (Romans 9:5 CSB).
- “To them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 9:5 RSV).

Here are some verses where the RSV has theological problems:

- “And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2 ASV).
- “And he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2 RSV).

So conservative Bible-believing Christians rejected the RSV and criticized it strongly. And as a result the New American Standard Bible was published in 1963 (New Testament) and 1971 (whole Bible). Then a minor revision was done in 1977.

The NASB is very sound theologically. Here is how the 1977 edition compares to the RSV:

- “Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard” (Genesis 9:20 NASB).
- “Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard” (Genesis 9:20 RSV).

The NASB is very sound theologically. Here is how the 1977 edition compares to the RSV:

- “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14 NASB).
- “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Imman’u-el” (Isaiah 7:14 RSV).
- “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from You’” (Matthew 12:38 NASB).

The NASB is very sound theologically. Here is how the 1977 edition compares to the RSV:

- “Whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 9:5 NASB).
- “To them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 9:5 RSV).

The NASB is very sound theologically. Here is how the 1977 edition compares to the RSV:

- “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world” (1 John 2:2 NASB).
- “And he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2 RSV).
- “And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2 ASV).

But the 1977 NASB has archaic pronouns whenever God is being addressed. Here are some examples:

- “O Lord GOD, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as Thine?” (Deuteronomy 3:24).
- “Thou, even Thou, art to be feared; And who may stand in Thy presence when once Thou art angry?” (Psalm 76:7).
- “I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word” (John 17:6).