

**How God Gave Us the Bible,  
W. C. Harold Reid, Welch, 1983; pb., 98 pp.**

Although this is only a slender book, it is packed with detailed information. It traces the story of how ancient manuscripts were preserved, and discusses the formation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament), the New Testament, the transmission of the Bible, the early translations, modern English translations, Roman Catholic editions, Jewish translations, paraphrases and other editions.

Dr. Reid gives consideration to more than 30 translations of the Bible and concludes that the New International Version is one of the best English modern versions today. Reid also points out the differences between a translation and a paraphrase. For example, he says about the Living Bible, "There are so many places where this Bible has departed from the original text so that instead of having a translation or even a paraphrase, you have the translator's interpretation. In John 1:1, 'Word' is put into the footnote and 'Christ' in the text, just the reverse of what it should be."

Since there are no perfect translations, there is always a need for a revision of current translations as newer information is obtained about the original languages and as our own language continues to change. To guide the reader the author provides a few basic governing principles for translations that must be kept in mind.

Which translation should be preferred? Dr. Reid suggests, "Next to the King James Version, I place at the top of the list -especially due to its general accuracy - the New American Standard Bible, along with the New International Version which in some respects is superior to the former especially in its greater clarity of expression."

This book contains the following appendices: List of 100 English Translations of the Scriptures, Reference Books for Further Study, Index of Biblical References, and a General Index.

How God Gave Us the Bible is an interesting and highly readable study; an excellent text for Sunday school, catechism and Christian school teachers.

Rev. Dr. Harold Reid, former lecturer in Biblical Hebrew at Presbyterian College, McGill University, is a retired minister who pastored in Ontario and Quebec prior to 1955 and currently resides in Stoney Creek, Ontario.

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