The
New Testament

God's New Agreement With Mankind Through His Son Jesus the Messiah

A captivating, accurate new translation, with special, authoritative notes, for the last generation.

After 43 years of publishing the Great News about God’s magnificent salvation in booklet and tract form, Ray W. Johnson, founder and President of Life Messengers felt strongly led by God to produce the Last Days New Testament. The translation and notes follow many years of extensive study, research, and collaboration with eminent Bible scholars about the end times and many other subjects. Mr. Johnson is presently completing work on the prophets of the Old Testament, which will also, soon be available.
The New Testament
from
The Last Days Bible

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Life Messengers is a bona fide Christian non-profit organization, and all profits from sales, and all moneys received otherwise, are used in propagating the true, thrilling, and urgent message of God to mankind by various ways and means. God’s message to mankind (the Bible) is by far the greatest treasure on Earth. It is an inexhaustible mine of knowledge, to be explored for the purpose of making one rich in all that really matters. Life, or death, are just ahead. Choose life!

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These Are The Facts
(To be read—Very Important!)

Fact one: The end of this age is fast approaching! Jesus said in Mark 13:32 that no one will know the day or the hour when He will return with power and great glory. Both Jesus and the Apostle Paul said that Jesus' second coming will come as unexpectedly as a thief in the night. And truly, the world seems to be altogether in the dark about end-time events. But Paul informs us in the 5th chapter of 1 Thessalonians that true Christians will not be in the dark about such matters.

There are many prophecies throughout the Bible that tell us quite clearly what to expect as the end approaches. You will find informative notes of explanation of these prophecies as you read this remarkable Book. True, as the Lord said, no one will know the day or the hour when He will return, but He did not say we would not know the approximate times of these various end time events, especially as they begin to unfold.

That the end is upon us is also clear from the periods of time God gave Daniel. Daniel was informed that the understanding of those periods would not be given until the time of the end. Daniel 12:4,8-9. And only recently has God revealed to His servants the actual meanings of those periods of time given Daniel! See Appendix 244, page 498, and Appendix 245, page 505.

But Bible prophecy is not our main concern in bringing this translation and the notes to you. Our main concern is that you will read what God has to say to you here on many subjects. For your own education you need to know what the Bible says. Our main concern is that you are ready to meet God—that you and those you love will live forever with Him, for sure.

Fact two: If the end is so near we need to be studying God's message to man as never before. And the same goes for your whole family, friends, neighbors, and everyone. You hold in your hands a new translation of the New Testament. As fine as other translations are, we have felt the need for a new translation that flows freely, that grabs the attention and makes fascinating reading, that is absolutely correct in its translation, and that talks to us in today's way of speaking. God has a vital message for man, and it must be presented in the most correct, understandable, and interesting way possible. We believe God has given us just such a translation.

Fact three: Besides the notes you will find on prophecy, you will find many other notes. In fact, most of the notes are on subjects other than prophecy. But you will discover that most of these other notes pertain to Scriptures concerning our salvation. The reason for this is as follows:

About a year after beginning this translation, the editor of this project was awakened one morning about 3 o'clock—not sleepy awake, but wide awake. Then he heard a voice. He had never before heard God speak to him audibly, but this was definitely the voice of God. The message was, "Build an evangelistic center."

The man didn't want to wake his wife who was sleeping next to him, so he didn't reply to the Lord audibly, but in his thoughts he asked, "But Lord, are you really asking me, at 74 years of age, to build an evangelistic center?" There was no audible response this time, but in his thoughts came the message, "Build an evangelistic center into the translation you are working on."

So that's the reason you will find these footnotes and appendices dealing mainly with the salvation of our soul. We believe the Lord has been with us in these writings, and we trust you
will accept them as from the Lord. There are
warnings, words of encouragement, and words of
explanation. We trust that these notes will help
both you and yours to make sure of Heaven.

***

Some may feel we have emphasized the
necessity of obedience to God too much in these
notes. But it was because of our disobedience
that Christ needed to suffer and die to save us!
And to be saved we must repent (turn from all
our sin and disobedience, and obey God) as well
as trust in Jesus as our Savior. Otherwise we are
not converted, not born
again.

But it's the repentance message that's being
watered down, explained away, and omitted in
much of the preaching today. We are living in
the last days, when a soft, comforting message is
being demanded by an unregenerate audience.
See 2 Timothy 4:3–4, page 371, and the footnotes
there.

***

One person reviewing the manuscript con-
tended that we have pointed out and repeated the
commands and warnings too often. Well, that's
because there are so many serious commands and
warnings in the Scriptures—which have been
almost totally ignored, softened, or
explained away by the comforting preaching and
teaching demanded by most congregations today.
Again, see 2 Timothy 4:2–4, and the notes. But
Christ didn't merely state these matters as sug-
gestions. They all have very serious conse-
quences if unheeded! Very Serious! See Hebrews
5:7–9.

There's been a majoring on the promises,
while giving very little serious attention to
Christ's many unconditional commands and
warnings. We must be thoroughly awakened to
wholeheartedly heed the commands and warn-
ings, and take the necessary actions, before we
can be participators in the glorious promises God
has offered us!

**Fact four:** Some of the verses have
been slightly expanded to more clearly bring out
the meaning. We have not added to, or changed
the meaning, we have simply sought to bring out
the meaning more clearly. One of the Greek
scholars working on the translation wrote to
another, whose work he was checking, "At some
places you have a free-wheeling paraphrase. But
you accurately express the Greek text in those
places, so I didn't feel I should rein you in."
Here's an example, in Romans 12:2—

So don't blindly and obediently run with the
pack and allow the world crowd to force you to bow
to their low standards. Instead, you must allow God
to continually transform you by the renewing of your
mind, so you may be able to examine and choose
what is good, acceptable, and altogether pleasing to
Him.

Another example is Galatians 5:17–18—

Because all selfish desires, and all sensual
appetites and desires you are tempted to satisfy in a
wrongful way are in violent opposition to the desires
of the Holy Spirit for you. And the desires of the Holy
Spirit for you are contrary to the wrongful desires
that tempt you. There's a constant war going on
inside each of us. The Holy Spirit is waging war
against our selfishness and against our temptations
to satisfy our sensual appetites and desires in a
wrongful way, in order to keep us from the wrong we
are tempted to do.

So then, if you allow yourselves to be led and
controlled by the Holy Spirit, you are free from any
need to put yourselves under the restraints and con-
trol of the Law of Moses.

A third example is Revelation 20:6—

Those who will be raised back to life in the first
raising of the dead will be extravagantly blessed by
God and extremely happy, far beyond anything any-
one can presently imagine. But only those who have
sincerely dedicated themselves to live holy lives for
God will be included. The second death will have no
power over them. But even more than that, they will
be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with
Christ a thousand years.

However, most of the translation is as close
to a word for word translation as possible—as
close as we could get with a free-flowing transla-
tion in today's way of speaking.

**Fact five:** We have changed a few of
the words to more modern terms. For instance:
masters has been changed to employers; slaves,
to employees. We believe you can see the wisdom
in this. Also, we have changed brothers to brothers and sisters. There are other places where the masculine has been changed to a neuter form, but we have done this only when we felt it was the thing to do. Pronouns referring to God have always been kept in the masculine. As the Apostle Paul said, I conform myself to everyone in every possible way so that by every means possible I may save some of them.

1 Corinthians 9:22.

Fact six: The Greek grammar of the original text has been most carefully observed. For instance, in John 19:12 we translated the middle portion, But the Jews kept shouting: The reason: The word shouting is in the imperfect tense, which indicates repeated shouting. Such fine distinctions have been made throughout the text.

Fact seven: The Greek text from which we have made this translation is the Textus Receptus, commonly called the Received Text. It is called the Received Text because this was the Greek text accepted by scholars hundreds of years ago as the correct Greek text. This was the Greek text from which the King James translation was made.

In recent years claims have been made that older texts have been discovered which are more reliable. We do not agree with the reliability of these supposedly older texts. For a full and complete explanation regarding the reliability of the Received Text, we encourage you to read the book entitled The Identity of The New Testament Text, by Wilbur N. Pickering, published by Thomas Nelson Publishers. Another very informative book on the subject is Unholy Hands On The Bible, by John W. Burgon.

These supposedly older texts (from Egypt) omit whole verses, parts of verses and even entire sections that are found in the Received Text. There are hundreds upon hundreds of differences in those texts when compared with the Received Text. There are hundreds of deletions, some additions, and many, many changes in the grammar of many words. To check this out yourself we suggest that you go to your Christian bookstore and purchase or inspect a copy of THE INTERLINEAR NEW TESTAMENT, by George Berry, published by Zondervan Publishing House. In this book you have the Greek, and then the English below each Greek word. But the main thing we encourage you to observe there is the listings at the bottom of each page in that New Testament of the differences there are in the other Greek texts when compared with the Received Text. The INTERLINEAR NEW TESTAMENT by George Berry is the Received Text as to the Greek that's published there.

Many of these differences in the Greek versions are not all that important. On the other hand, there are many that are very important. For instance, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, the word all is omitted. This would indicate that we do not become altogether new in Christ. Some take this to mean that we do not need to make a full surrender of our lives to the Lord. But Paul's teachings in Ephesians 2:10, and 4:21-24 certainly indicate that 2 Corinthians 5:17 in the Received Text is correct. Christ also taught many times that it was all, or nothing. See the note on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

In 1 Timothy 6:5, the last part of the verse, Withdraw yourself from such people, has been omitted. In Luke 4:18 the words, to heal the broken-hearted, have been omitted. In the Lord's prayer recorded in Luke 11, in v 2 the words our and who is in heaven and May your will be done on Earth, just as it is in heaven are all omitted. In v 4, the words but rescue us from the evil one have been omitted. These are just a very few of the many, many omissions. And most of the recent translations of the New Testament have been made from these so-called older texts.

Notice also how they have changed Revelation 13:10 and 22:14.

The overwhelming majority of the approximately 5,000 complete and partial ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament agree with the Received Text.

Fact eight: We wouldn't call this fact spiritual, but we feel it should be included. Most of you have read, or tried to read, paragraphs from English printings of several hundred
years ago. It makes us moderns laugh at the way they spelled some of our words in those days. Well, we still have some very strange spellings for a good number of our words. There is no reason why they should not be upgraded. To mention just a few, the word thorough should be changed to thorough, although to altho, bough to but, would to wud, thought to thought, etc. These are just a very few of the many words that could be improved, shortened and made easier to read by beginners, as well as by the rest of us.

In other words, we need to eliminate the absolutely unnecessary "ough's" in the written English language. We have decided that in this translation of God's Word we would upgrade just two of these words throughout. Those are the words through to through and throughout to throughout.

At first you may cringe at such changes. But why? In all the newer translations of the Bible, the word Saviour has been changed to Savior. At first, some objected, but no longer. Now the new spelling seems very sensible to all. The same should be true in regard to other improvements of our written words.

On the economic side, someone has said, "Just think how much paper, ink, and labor in writing, printing, and reading could be saved by shortening and simplifying the spelling of many of our English words."

Fact nine: Twelve Greek scholars have given critical guidance in the forming of this translation, as well as several theologians; and several English purists gave counsel in regard to style and grammar. Most of the Greek scholars, representing various denominations, teach, or did teach, Greek, in a Christian university, seminary, or Bible school.

We are indeed grateful for all the work that all these fine people of God have put into this endeavor.

Fact ten: No effort whatever has been made to please any person or persons, any denomination or denominations. Our only concern has been to please the Lord by presenting a most accurate and invigorating translation, and to present notes that will be both helpful, challenging, and true. May God be honored in all the results from the publication and dissemination of this translation of His Word.

Fact eleven: It had been our intention to give no credits in the notes. That policy was later changed, but it has been next to impossible to now give proper credit to all. The Lord knows the part each has played, and may He reward each accordingly with eternal rewards, as most from whom we quote are now with Him.

Fact twelve: The producer and publisher of this version of the Bible is Life Messengers, the organization founded in 1944, that produced and published in great quantities such outstanding witnessing booklets as Here's How — Destined for Greatness — Have You Been Brainwashed? — and many others. Over 66 million copies of Here's How alone were printed and distributed in over 50 languages in scores of nations.

22 years in the making, including eight years of prophecy study, with the Old Testament to follow, Life Messengers is still committed to the admonition at the end of the booklet Here's How: "There is so much that God wants every person to know, both concerning this life and that which is beyond. Most of this important knowledge is obtained thru reading the Bible and thru fellowship with God in prayer."

Fact thirteen: How can you get to Heaven—for sure? You will find the answer as you read thru this translation of the New Testament. But we have presented a summary of the answer for you in Appendix 247, page 520, entitled The Amazing Story of God. As you find the very help you need as you read this story, we trust you will share The Amazing Story with many!

God's main reasons for inspiring His servants to write The New Testament were to bring honor to His name and to bring us to be with Himself forever. So be it!
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A Beginning Word

Jesus of Nazareth is by far the greatest Man the world has ever known. And it's no wonder He stood out so brilliantly, because He proved so conclusively, in many ways, that He was indeed Earth's rightful King, the majestic Creator God! Although His public ministry lasted only three and one-half years in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire 2,000 years ago, His profound influence world-wide is still without comparison. No life ever lived was more significant, no death and its results more meaningful.

Many hundreds of years after the creation of the world, God inspired dedicated men to write what we now call the Holy Bible. It was written by many authors over a period of some 1,500 years. The Bible is divided into two sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament consists of the God-inspired writings of Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and many other prophets. After the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension back to Heaven of Jesus Christ—the promised Messiah of the Old Testament—Jesus' close followers were inspired to write the section we call the New Testament.

The New Testament tells the story of Jesus the Messiah, His instructions, promises, and warnings to His followers, the early days of His Church, and what we can expect to see happen on Earth in the last days of this age just prior to His triumphant return.

You hold in your hands a very special new translation of The New Testament for these end time days, with special notes to clearly point out what God has actually done for you, and what He now expects of you if you are to escape His judgment and live forever in total fulfillment with Him.
Very Special

NOTICE

If this is your first reading of the Bible, you are doing well by reading the New Testament section first. As you no doubt know, the New Testament is the last one-quarter of the Bible, and it begins with the birth of Jesus Christ.

Also, there's a best way to read the New Testament when reading it for the first time. The first four books were written by four men who were on the scene and were well acquainted with what Jesus claimed, said, and did. It's great that we have these four different accounts of His life, but from experience we've discovered that it gets rather heavy, reading all four of these accounts one after the other, as there's a good deal of repetition. We suggest that for your first reading you skip the first two books, and begin with Luke, the third one. The fourth book, John, brings in different material, so you won't have the repetition.

You will indeed want to read Matthew and Mark, the first two books, but do that later. In fact, you should read the New Testament thru at least twice before reading the Old Testament. So you could read Matthew's account when you read the New Testament a second time.

Another reason for reading Luke first, is that Luke gives a fuller account of the birth and early childhood of Jesus than the other writers. But even before you read Luke you may wish to turn to page 520 and read *The Amazing Story of God* as your introduction to your totally fulfilling everlasting life with Him.

You are about to read the most awesome story ever told, concerning the greatest love and wisdom, the most astounding promises, the most dire warnings, and the most profound prophetic utterances, all brought to us by the greatest Man who ever lived, together with pronouncements inspired by Him and brought to us by His followers after He had left Earth.

You have in your hands a copy of the world's all-time best seller and most loved book. May the truths presented here result in great inspiration and salvation for you and yours, and in your attaining the highest plane of happiness and fulfillment possible, both in this life and for all eternity. God Bless!