

Question: Is there any relation between the King James Bible and New International version/paraphrase?

While both the King James Version (KJV) and the New International Version (NIV) are popular English translations of the Bible, there is no direct translational relationship between them. The NIV is an entirely new and independent translation and is not a revision, update, or paraphrase of the King James Bible.

Their relationship is one of historical succession and differing translation philosophies, representing distinct moments in the ongoing work of biblical scholarship and translation.

Here's a breakdown of their key differences:

1. Translation Philosophy

- **King James Version (KJV):** The KJV follows a formal equivalence (or word-for-word) translation philosophy. Its translators in the early 17th century sought to render the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts into English as literally as possible, preserving the sentence structure and word order of the source languages. This approach contributes to the KJV's majestic and sometimes archaic-sounding prose.
- **New International Version (NIV):** The NIV employs a dynamic equivalence (or thought-for-thought) translation philosophy. The international team of scholars who worked on the NIV aimed to convey the original meaning and intent of the biblical authors in clear and natural-sounding modern English. They focused on translating the message or thought of a phrase rather than being bound to a strict word-for-word rendering.

2. Textual Basis (Source Manuscripts)

This is one of the most significant distinctions between the two versions.

- **King James Version (KJV):** For the New Testament, the KJV translators primarily used a Greek text known as the Textus Receptus ("Received Text"). This was a compilation of Greek manuscripts available in the 16th century, which were relatively late in the manuscript tradition. For the Old Testament, they used the Masoretic Text.
- **New International Version (NIV):** The translators of the NIV benefited from centuries of archaeological and scholarly discoveries. They worked from a much broader and more critically established set of ancient manuscripts. For the New Testament, they used critically edited Greek texts, like the Nestle-Aland and United Bible Societies' editions, which are based on earlier and more numerous manuscripts discovered since the time of the KJV. For the Old Testament, they also used the Masoretic Text but consulted the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient versions for clarity.

3. Language and Audience

- **King James Version (KJV):** Published in 1611, the KJV uses Jacobean English, which includes archaic words (e.g., "thee," "thou," "ye"), obsolete phrases, and sentence structures that can be challenging for modern readers.
- **New International Version (NIV):** First published in 1978 (with subsequent updates), the NIV was created to be easily understood by a broad, contemporary English-speaking audience. Its language is modern, accessible, and intended for public reading and private study.

Is the NIV a Paraphrase?

The NIV is not a paraphrase. A paraphrase, such as The Living Bible or The Message, takes a translated text and rewords it in the paraphraser's own style to make it more readable, often with a greater degree of interpretive liberty.

The NIV, by contrast, is a translation. It was produced by a committee of over one hundred scholars working directly from the best available original language texts. While its "thought-for-thought" approach gives it more flexibility in wording than a formal equivalent translation like the KJV, it remains a faithful and scholarly rendering of the original biblical manuscripts.

In summary: The New International Version is not related to the King James Version in a translational sense. It is a completely new translation that stands on its own, with a different textual basis, a different translation philosophy, and a different goal for its language and audience. It represents a modern scholarly effort to render the biblical text accurately and readably for a contemporary audience, just as the KJV did for the English-speaking world of the 17th century.

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