

# Holman Christian Standard Bible

## Background

### Produced by Holman Bible Publishers

1999 – originally published

2009 – revised

### Websites:

[hcsb.org](http://hcsb.org) – background

[biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) – full text

[mystudybible.com](http://mystudybible.com) – full text plus study notes

### Is the HCSB a Baptist translation?

“The HCSB was translated fresh from the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts by scholars from 17 denominations. We feel that one of the strengths of the HCSB is that it is rooted, not in any one tradition or denomination, but in the original languages of the biblical authors.” ([hcsb.org](http://hcsb.org))

### Approach to translating: optimal equivalence

“Optimal equivalence as a translation philosophy recognizes that form cannot be neatly separated from meaning and should not be changed (for example, nouns to verbs or third person ‘they’ to second person ‘you’) unless comprehension demands it. The primary goal of translation is to convey the sense of the original with as much clarity as the original text and the translation language permit.” (HCSB Introduction)

### Positive reactions from WELS reviewers:

“The English feels very natural to a young American reader. ... Luther said that he tried to make the prophets speak German. The HCSB has accomplished that for 21st Century English.”  
(Romans reviewer #3)

“It may not be quite as smooth as the NIV2011, but it gives me much the feel I was used to with NIV1984.” (Peter, John and Jude reviewer #2)

## Features

### 1. *Yahweh*

- God’s personal name: YHWH *hw̄hiy*”
- *Jehovah* another translation in other versions and hymns
- still often translated as *LORD* (but not as *Lord*)
- *Yahweh* “where the personal name of God is discussed or in places of His self-identification”  
(HCSB Bullet Notes)

Numbers 6:24 – *May Yahweh bless you and protect you.*

Isaiah 42:8 – *I am Yahweh; that is My name.*

### 2. capitalization of pronouns for God

### 3. *slave* instead of *servant*

“...not out of insensitivity to the legitimate concerns of English speakers, but out of a commitment to accurately convey the brutal reality of the Roman Empire’s inhumane institution as well as the ownership called for by Christ” (HCSB Bullet Notes)

### 4. *Messiah* in NT instead of *Christ* in Jewish contexts

### 5. gender language

- similar to, but more inclusive than, NIV 1984
- “While the HCSB avoids using ‘man’ or ‘he’ unnecessarily, the translation does not restructure sentences to avoid them when they are in the text.” (HCSB Introduction)

### 6. theological terms retained

justification  
sanctification  
saints  
propitiation

### 7. footnotes

- extensive and usually helpful
- bullet points (•) – repeated notes in an appendix

### 8. *Plan of Salvation* page

objectionable elements: sinner’s prayer, decision, believer’s baptism

## Specific Passages

### Different

1. Job 19:25 – *I know my living Redeemer* (footnote: *is living*)
2. Psalm 23:4 – *darkest* valley (footnote: *shadow of death*)
3. Psalm 46:10 – *stop your fighting*
4. Song of Solomon 2:4 – *he looked on me with love* (footnote: *his banner over me is love*)
5. John 3:16 – *For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.* (lengthy footnote)

### Sacraments

6. Matthew 26:28 (and other Communion passages) – *this is My blood that establishes the covenant*
7. Mark 1:4 footnote (also Luke 3:3 footnote) – *a baptism based on repentance*

8. Acts 2:38 – “Repent,” Peter said to them, “and be baptized...”
9. Acts 22:16 – Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins by calling on His name.

### **Messianic Prophecies**

10. Genesis 12:3 footnote – will bless themselves by you
11. Psalm 45:6 footnote – Your divine throne is, or Your throne is God’s
12. Proverbs 8:22 – *made* (footnote: *possessed, or begot*)

### **Millennial Overtones**

13. Matthew 19:28 – *Messianic Age* (footnote: *regeneration*)
14. Revelation 20:4 – ... people (footnote: *souls*) who had been beheaded ... They came to life and reigned with Messiah for 1,000 years

### **Gender Roles**

15. 1 Corinthians 14:35 – it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church meeting
16. 1 Peter 3:7 – live with your wives with an understanding of their weaker nature (footnote: *understanding as the weaker vessel*)

### **Others**

17. Leviticus 16:8,10 – *azazel* [instead of *scapegoat*] (lengthy footnote)
18. Psalm 16:10 – You will not abandon me to Sheol
19. Matthew 11:23 – you will go down to Hades
20. Psalm 1:1 – How happy is the man
21. Isaiah 10:6 – people destined for my rage
22. Daniel 12:2 – many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth
23. Matthew 22:21 – give back to Caesar
24. Galatians 5:25 – we must also follow the Spirit (“a ‘must-y’ tone to a number of HCSB renderings of Pauline commands and exhortations” WELS reviewer #2)
25. Jude 7 – practiced perversions, just as angels did (really?)