

The Composite Bible

Composite Bible Report (CBR)

By

Gary D. Rose

Introduction

What Bible should you read?

Answer, the most literal one that you can understand, that has personal meaning to you, and that you can apply in everyday life. The first Bible I read through was the Living Bible, followed by the New American Standard Bible (1977). Today, I use the The World English, Logos Bible and The Byzantine Greek N.T. (Readers edition) as my primary Bibles but refer to all the following and more: The Bible in Basic English, The Webster Bible, The American Standard (1901), The World English Bible, The King James Bible, Darby's Translation and Young's Literal Translation.

Why this answer? Because over the past few decades, there has been a tendency to translate the original text into a more "thought for thought" methodology, rather than a "word for word" one. This may make the text easier to read, but it also increases the possibility of translator bias. Making The Bible easier to read sounds wonderful, except that it is all too easy for The Holy Scriptures to become more a work of man than the communication God intended from the Koine Greek text. By starting with a English text that

is the most comfortable for you to read and progressing to the most literal one that you are capable of using, the reader receives both the benefit of an easy to understand Bible and the precision of a more exact translation of the original Greek. Who knows, perhaps one day, with enough study, one may even be able to read the Greek text with the ease of an English one?

The Composite Bible: What is it?

Several things; first, it is a reading plan that categorizes the Scriptures into Law, History, Literature and prophecy that are read on an equal basis during the course of the year. This has the benefit of reading all of the Scriptures on a yearly basis and giving equal emphasis to each Bible category for both testaments. Second, it is a categorization of Bibles into types (One Text only, Text Comparative [two or more translations] and Analyzed [Interlinear Greek text or English with Greek helps]) and third, it is a database that encourages the gradual use of more literal Bibles.

Note: This Report edition replaces the database usage by listing many of the reports from the database, eliminating the need for complicated database use and requiring only a computer with the ability to read PDF or text files.

The Composite Bible: Usage

Each of these three concepts can be used separately or in conjunction with one another. This allows great flexibility and aids in realizing that we should be progressively heading towards an understanding of the original languages. We naturally do this when there are disagreement over a meaning of a text, so why not do it as a part of our study design? This may

sound a little strange at first, but we normally go from the less to the more difficult; remember reading the Dick and Jane books as a child? What do we read today, my guess is something far more sophisticated than our early years.

The Composite Bible and Literalness

The categorization of Bibles in the database (and now in this work, which I refer to as **Composite Bible Report (CBR)**), is my opinion and if you disagree, that is OK; over time I may vary the categorization slightly. Note the use of color in the report files; it will aid in reading the vertical arrangement of the Bibles, either in a sequential (Composite) or a linear fashion (by one color). In our reading, we begin with the less literal (**black**) and then compare it to a more literal second version (**blue**) and finally consider the most literal with them (**red**). Taken together, we progress from just reading, to comparison, to an overall analysis as to what is being communicated. Personally, the color progression also has another symbolic meaning, for I often think of The Apostle Paul, when recounting his encounter with the risen Christ said:

Acts 16 (**World English Bible**)

15 "I said, 'Who are you, Lord?'

"He said, "'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. "

16 "But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you; "

17 "delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you, "

18 "to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

The Composite Bible: What does it mean?

We have the choice of three Bible study methods that are systematic, progressive, and flexible. Systematic in their approach as to what to study, progressive in progression toward literacy, and flexible in choice of Bible texts and reading plans. One could use just the reading plan (or any combination of categories within it) with their current Bible, use several Bibles of their own choosing sequentially, use one or more Bibles from each category of the Researcher plan or any of the combinations of the reports. This gives a lot of options! Whatever your choices are, realize that the Bible is a work of God and therefore meant to be understood spiritually and applied personally. So, when the text is read, ask yourself the following questions: What does the text say? What does it mean to me (a spiritual application)? How should I apply these things to my Life? We are not one-dimensional beings; we think, feel and act in a multi-faceted way, so why not apply this concept to our study of the word of God.

The Composite Bible: What does it mean to you?

I can't answer that question; only you can decide if this is a way you want to study. I love the idea of a study plan based on a progression from the less to the more literal and that addresses my overall nature as a human being. I enjoy reading and reflecting on my version of choice, then comparing it to a more literal version and finally, when I study three or more versions at once, the message becomes a composite in my mind and forces a comprehension of

the text into a condensation of thought that makes the text come alive. This is something like the question: “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Also, as you emotionally consider the text and make a life application of the meaning of the words and feelings it becomes a very real part of you, transforming you every time you consider what God has said for your life. I encourage you to know the word of God, have it mean something to you at the very essence of your being and apply it to your life.

May you enjoy your studies, your reflection and your Christian life!