

The Way of Wisdom:

Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon

(A New Translation of the Latin Old Testament)

English Version:

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Searchlight Press, 2008, 264 pages.
\$15.99

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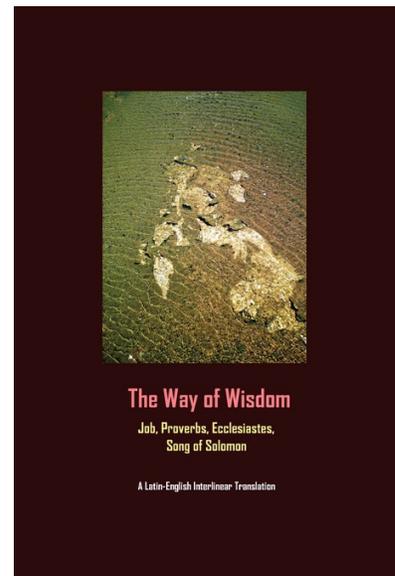
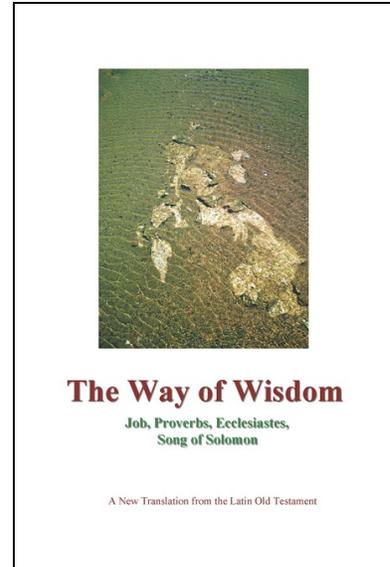
Book Description

Tired of *Christianity Lite*?

In a hard world, we need real answers. **The Way of Wisdom: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon** is a fresh translation of the Bible's Wisdom books, the deepest truth there is. Long before TV, psychologists or the internet, God's Word spoke to the deepest longings of our heart. God showed us how to succeed in life.

The Way of Wisdom has nothing to do with fads or theories. There is nothing "pop" about it. Instead, God shows us through it who we are, what life is about, and how we can live it well.

These four works from **The Bible – Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon** – offer us better advice than any other source could ever hope to. **Job** shows us what a human being is and where our comfort comes from. **Proverbs** teaches us how to succeed, whatever our path may be. **Ecclesiastes** teaches us what lasts and what doesn't. **The Song of Solomon** shows us what true love is all about.



Copies of the Book:

For Review Copies, contact the author at: wisdomlit@johncunyus.com

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FAQs

Who: John Cunyus, an ordained Disciples of Christ minister, is translating the Old Testament from *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, The Vulgate, the Latin-language Bible, into contemporary English. John, a graduate of Rice, Texas Christian, and Pacific Western Universities, is the author of several books. He publishes the website, www.JohnCunyus.com, and a blog, “Rolling the Wheel.”

What: The Way of Wisdom: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon is a translation of the wisdom literature from the Bible, shared in common by Jews, Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox.

When: Saint Jerome translated the Bible into Latin from the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, between 382 and 405 of the Common Era.

Where: Jerome’s translation, done in Jerusalem, became The Bible of the Roman Catholic Church for over 1,000 years.

Why: *ad maiorem dei gloriam.*
“To the greater glory of God.”

How to Use The Material

Groups/Classes: One approach for groups using the material is to read the books aloud, several chapters at a time, over a period of several sessions. This allows those present to hear them the way Jesus and his contemporaries would have, orally and in their entirety. Classes would include informal sharing, an opening prayer, twenty to thirty minutes of reading, then discussion. The class could then close with a prayer.

Comments So Far

“What really pleases me as I read your translation is the way you have set it up and the beautiful way in which you have caught the essence of each verse with elegant English (simple and understandable).”

– **Rev. Dr. Robert Gartman, Retired Minister, Dallas, Texas.**

“I welcome the translation of the Vulgate and the emphasis on Wisdom Literature. The Latin language and particularly the Vulgate have had an enormous impact on the Christian Church and our liturgical and theological formation. Be assured that I will forward the second copy to the Holy Father.”

– **Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston**

As I've said before, you've always been the consummate scholar and an incredibly rich thinker. The books that you're authoring are welcomed additions to the ongoing world of biblical studies – thanks for using your considerable gifts and talents to continue pointing people toward a fuller understanding of God's Eternal Word!

– **Major Stephen George, Chaplain, US Army, Afghanistan**

John Cunyus Teaching Ministry

John has done programs for hundreds of groups around the country since 1988.

For more information, see
www.JohnCunyus.com

How Did This Translation Come About?

I spent twenty years as a Protestant minister, serving congregations in Texas. When that ended in July, 2005, I was so hurt and so angry I almost lost my faith entirely. I felt cut off, abandoned, cast out by the church. During that period, I passed “*through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none,*” as Jesus said in Luke 11:24.

Looking back, I suppose there were only two reasons I didn’t give up on faith and church entirely. My Sunday School class, the Sojourners at Central Christian Church in Dallas, was so relentlessly accepting and loving toward me that I couldn’t let them go. My dear friend since college, Myles Hall, wouldn’t let me let go of the Christian commitments I’d had since childhood. I can’t say I appreciated either of them for it at the time.

In late 2007, still struggling to hold on, I began writing a book on Buddhism. Buddha’s words kept reminding me of Ecclesiastes, a difficult little book from what Christians call “The Old Testament.” As I worked, I thought to myself (often sarcastically), What would Christian faith look like if it started with Ecclesiastes, instead of Genesis?

When I finished [A Path Beyond Suffering: Working the Buddhist Method](#), I felt compelled to find out. I began working my way laboriously through the Latin version of Ecclesiastes. I chose the Latin, in part, because I hadn’t studied Hebrew since seminary in the mid 1980s. I considered working through it in Greek, as I often had done with New Testament texts. But I wanted the fresh perspective of a language that was new, to me at least.

As I translated, I felt an increasingly heavy burden on my heart. I would have said, during my former life as a minister, that God was calling me back to Himself. But I didn’t want to go back. I was still angry. I had come to see so much of Protestant church life as self-centered, a cult of personality around pastors and buildings, bearing little resemblance to the biblical faith.

Yet a contrarian little voice in my head was insisting ever more loudly that, yes, one’s faith could begin with Ecclesiastes.

A turning point in my journey came when my interest in Latin led me to a Latin-language Tridentine Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, the parish in my neighborhood. I’d known about the service for years and told myself for years that one day I would attend. I hadn’t, because they insisted on holding it at 6:30 in the mornings!

One night, in the midst of translating Ecclesiastes, with family out of the country visiting other family, I told myself I would go the following morning, if I woke up in time. I woke up early, tried to roll back over and go back to sleep, and found I couldn’t. Lying there, I said to myself, ‘Well, I can stay in bed, or I can take a shower and go to church.’

I grumbled, got out of bed and went to church. I understood perhaps four words of the entire liturgy. The priest, as is customary in the Latin rite, said the service facing away from the congregation, toward the altar and crucifix. Yet one thought hit me like Job’s tornado: this service wasn’t about the worshipers! The service wasn’t

about the priest, the congregation, the preaching, or anything else. It was about God. That realization rushed over me like a flood. I found myself praying, pouring out my heart to God, as I hadn't been able to in years. I experienced peace, a rootedness in God, that I had sorely missed during my time in the *waterless places, seeking rest and finding none*.

I have been working on translations of the Latin Old Testament since. Whether they ever touch anyone else, they have already touched my heart beyond description.

John Cunyus
August 10, 2008

**For Review Copies, contact the author at
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