

We Must Translate the Scriptures

By Steve Combs

Lord willing, I will be leaving for Thailand very soon. While there, I will be checking the books of Hebrews, Colossians, and Philippians, which are newly translated into the Isan people's heart language, but need a final proofread to insure the highest possible accuracy and fluency. I plan to print these newly-completed books, as well as Galatians, Ephesians, and possibly 1&2 Peter, time, energy, and finances permitting. The printed booklets will then be distributed to key locations around the vast Isan region (*same land area as NY State*), and into the hands of Isan believers there. While there, I will be visiting and encouraging believers throughout the area, presenting a much-needed foundational seminar teaching series. With that, I will be visiting missionaries to promote the use of the Isan Scriptures ... While in Bangkok, I will be coordinating with *Far East Broadcasting* (FEBC) who will be using the Isan Scriptures in their programming, now being broadcast into Isan and neighboring Laos. I will also be making and distributing audio CDs of Genesis 1-12 in Lao-Isan. So, as you can see, I will be busy, and most importantly that God's hand of blessing is on our ministry!" (Ron Myers, missionary)

The Isan are twenty-two million people living in Northeast Thailand. They *live* in Thailand, but they are a distinct people with a distinct language.

The Isan illustrate a critical need in the world. While some have taken in hand to meet this need, others have been slow to become involved or are not even aware of the need. This book is written to make you aware and to help you look on the fields in such a way that you become concerned and, for some of you, become involved.

How many of you are glad that you have an English Bible to read in private and to hear read in church? How would you feel if all you had was a Bible in Hebrew or Greek or Latin that had to be read to you? Would you like it if the only way you could understand this Bible of a strange language would be to have a preacher interpret it for you? These questions should serve to highlight the need I am referring to. There are millions of people in this world that are in just this situation. You can have a part in

helping meet this need.

The need I am referring to is the work of "Bible translating."

Of course, I'm not referring to translating the Bible into yet another English version. I believe that we have no greater English Bible than the Authorized or King James Bible. I believe the KJB to be the preserved word of God for the English speaking world. Moreover, in my opinion, the expense that has gone into translating the plethora of modern English Bible versions has been a colossal waste of money and a massive misdirection of God provided resources. The money that has gone into English Bible translating and the money that individual Christians have forked over to the book stores and publishers to purchase the new versions would have been well used if it had gone toward the expense of translating and providing the Bible to the many Bible-less peoples and tribes across the globe.

Yes, there are millions who do not have even one word of the Bible in their own language. Such was the case of the Isan people until missionary Ron Myers began to translate the Bible for them into Isan - twenty centuries, twenty million people and not one word of the Bible. Thank God, it is now, finally, being done.

The story of the Isan could be repeated thousands of times about thousands of people groups and tribes. Think of the 402,600 Drukpa of Bhutan and the 16 million Zhuang of China and the 300,000 Bella of Burkina Faso and the....well, you begin to get the picture. These Bible-less people must be reached with the gospel and they must have the word of God in their own language. This is desperately needed and, I believe, demanded by the Scriptures.

It is true that many have taken up the challenge to translate the scriptures into foreign languages. The most well-known of these is Wycliffe Bible Translators, but there are others. There is Pioneer Bible Translators, a Church of Christ organization. Then there is the Lutheran Bible Translators. Others are Evangel Bible Translators, New Tribes, the United Bible Societies (UBS), the Roman Catholic Church, and the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Without exception these encourage the use of the UBS corrupted Greek text for New Testament translation. Wycliffe and UBS have a history of compromise with the Roman Catholic Church. Many of the translations produced are equivalent to "Good News for Modern Man" or the NIV.

Although this article will benefit believers in general, it is directed mainly toward

a particular group of churches and individuals. This article is specifically written to address Independent Bible-believing Baptist (and Baptist) churches which take a stand on the King James Bible similar to the one I mentioned above. I would to God that among these churches we could see a stirring and moving of the Spirit of God that would fill them with a holy fire to enter into Bible translation work, so that the Bibleless nations of earth may have as pure a copy of God's word in their own language as possible.

If we do not engage in this work as never before, then the Bibleless nations may still get translations. However, they are likely to get translations from those who water down the word of God and produce works comparable to the NIV or Good News from corrupt original language texts. Instead, they need faithful translations from the Textus Receptus Greek text and the Hebrew "Ben Chayim" Massoretic text.

The articles and information on this web site are given to help motivate you to get a burden and to move you to pray for the translating of the Bible into the languages of the remaining peoples who have no Bible and, perhaps, to even commit yourself to this task. They seek to do this by reasoning and argument, certainly, but primarily by statistics, the Scriptures, and history.

Statistics will show you that hundreds of millions of people still need the Bible in their language. They will give you an understanding that there are thousands of languages involved and will tell you where the major needs are.

The Scriptures will explain to you the mind of God on the matter. They declare His plan for this age and eternity.

History tells about what God has done in the past. *He* has made Bible translating a priority in His missions work through history. Ask God to direct your heart and to give you an understanding and an indication of what He wants you to do to help fulfill His plan. Here is a ministry of great importance and you can experience profound blessedness through an understanding of it.