

BROADCAST #5

Tools and Pipelines

SAUL:

Greetings, this is Saul and Mary, again. We want to continue our story about how God gave His word to our language.

MARY:

We shared earlier that even though we can read and speak in both our own mother tongue and our national language, most of our family and language community cannot. Our mother and many of our friends and family only understand our mother-tongue language.

SAUL:

We do not have God's Word in our own language; it is only in the national language which sounds strange to our people. We wondered if our mother would ever hear God's Word in a language that she would truly understand. We wondered if God spoke her language.

MARY:

The day came when our cousin Samuel shared with us a new translation method called MAST or Mobilized Assistance Supporting Translation. It is an Eight Step process developed by Wycliffe Associates that we learned and started with a small team of people that had a desire to see God's Word in our mother tongue.

SAUL:

In our past conversations, we talked about the history of translation and then shared MAST and the **Eight Step** translation process. We also discussed that we all want to make sure that our translation is quality. With much praise, singing and dancing, we saw the book of Mark translated and printed.

MARY:

Before we start talking about today's topic, let's talk about the **Eight Steps**. We are not going to review the steps again but encourage you and your team to discuss the steps, practice the steps together, and create a plan on how to start and finish the translation project. It is easy to stray from how the steps work and try to make them easier but that will lower the quality of the translation. Over 1500 translations have been started using this method and over 300 have been completed, so we know it works! We desire greatly to create a translation that will honor our Lord.

SAUL:

Today we would like to talk about what we call tools and pipelines. You know that with farming, there are special tools that we use to do the work. We have shovels, hoes and cutting tools to plant and harvest. Tools make the work possible.

MARY:

Talking about tools makes me think back to the scripture in Isaiah 40 that we shared during our first conversation. Isaiah says, that a voice calls out for mountains and valleys to be leveled and roads should be made straight and smooth. After that, we are told that the reason is so all may see the glory of God. We talked about language being a barrier to seeing and knowing God and His glory and that we are at work filling the valleys, lowering the mountains and making the path smoother for our people to see and know God through His Word in a language that is understood.

SAUL:

The passage in Isaiah then asks, what should we cry out? The answer talks about several things, but the first statement compares our temporary life with the flowers and grasses which are here today and gone tomorrow. The contrast is then made with the Word of the Lord that endures forever! Just like we use tools like shovels and hoes to level the ground, we are using tools to remove the barrier of language. The result is not temporary but eternal. The Word of the Lord will endure forever!

MARY:

Wow, that is a good reason to work hard and do our very best! So, we have used our tools and translated God's Word, now what?

SAUL:

Pipes are what we use to move things like water from one place to another. We might pump water from a well up to a holding tank and then use more pipes to carry the water down to where it is collected and used. With translation, there are tools that can make the work easier. We also want to move the material from our drafting, through checking, approvals and on to printing and the people. There are pipelines or pathways for moving our translated material to where the church and people can use it.

MARY:

You know that tools can take many forms. Some of us use very simple shovels and hoes, all hand tools for farming. Others may have tools that oxen or other animals pull, and some may even have tractors. We all use what is available. One tool may make the work quicker or easier but all of them help produce good food that sustains and nourishes. We will start with the simplest tools.

SAUL:

Our first tool is our source text. We mentioned that MAST includes a quality translation called the Unlocked Literal Bible or ULB. If you have a sponsoring organization, you can get it from them, or you can go the website bibleineverylanguage.org and look at the "Translations" page. It's available in English and in your national language. Everyone on the team should use the same version to help with consistency and using the ULB avoids some of the copyright issues we talked about earlier. If you cannot obtain a copy of the

ULB, then choose a version that you all have access to. One that is clear in your national language.

MARY:

During our conversations, we talked about doing the work on paper. We read the source text and wrote out the drafts and corrections on lined paper.

SAUL:

Let's remind everyone that if they are using paper, it is a good idea to skip one or two lines on the paper. The blank lines may seem to waste paper, but it is a great help when we make edits. One thing we did not mention is that it is helpful to note at the top of each page the name of the book, the beginning chapter and verse and the name of the translator. This will help keep the material in order. You should also write the number of the step the page has gone through and who did that checking step. So, once that page has been thru **Step Five**, the self-edit, just put a 5 at the top. Then when **Step Six** is complete, the **Peer Edit**, add a 6 with the name of the person that did that step.

MARY:

Now, we have been talking about working on paper. Paper is the simplest "tool" to use. If you have a tablet or laptop or smart phone and want to type the work into the device, then make use of that tool and do it. You still may find it easier to use paper for the **Eight Steps**, then use another tool to preserve and distribute a copy of the work.

SAUL:

If you have a device, you can use whatever application or program you have access to. That could be a word processor or whatever program allows you to enter and edit text. You may want to start each page with the same information we just shared concerning working on paper. Put the book name, beginning chapter and verse and name of the translator at the top of each page.

MARY:

If you can connect to the internet or have a flash drive, then maybe you can obtain one of the different programs or apps that are available. BTT Writer can be put on an Android device or laptop. Another tool, called V-MAST (virtual MAST), can be used online. Each of these tools are easily learned and the sponsor can give training as well. Use whatever tool is available to you.

SAUL:

What if a language does not have a written form or most of the language community cannot read in their mother tongue?

MARY:

It takes a very long time to develop a written system for a language. The church and language community should decide if they want to do this work. There is another choice, you can do an oral translation. So, what is that?

SAUL:

An oral translation may not have written form, it simply exists as audio files on recorders, phones or radio that are used to share the translation. The translation process is a similar **Eight Step** process but using recording tools instead of paper and pencil. It helps if the translators can read the national language – and therefore the source text. If you have an android tablet or laptop, there is a program called BTT Recorder that you can download that can record your new translation. Contact the sponsor, Wycliffe Associates or go to the website bibleineverylanguage.org to the “tools” to get a free download of these tools and for more information doing a translation.

MARY:

We find that some languages with a written form will choose to do an audio recording in addition to the written one. This helps the many people that cannot read the written form. Although they did not have technology for playing audio recording in Bible times, most people did not read or did not have access to the few written scrolls but relied on listening to the Word of God being read to them. We can do the same.

SAUL:

Pipes or pipelines are used to move things like water from its source to where it can be accessed and used. We also want to see your work accessible and used by your church and people. So how do we get your translation of the book of Mark from whatever tool you used to the church and people? There are many options. You may even discover some new ways.

MARY:

The simplest is to have paper copies of the finished translation. If you drafted and checked a book or passage on paper, you could copy the edited material, your translation onto clean, fresh paper, being extra careful to write as neatly as possible.

SAUL:

These handwritten manuscripts can be hand copied or taken to a local printer to copy and staple. Start by sharing copies with church and community leaders. We know of one case where the pastor changed his sermon one Sunday after hearing one chapter of a newly translated book read earlier in the service. God’s Word, in any understandable form, will transform lives.

MARY:

If you can work on a laptop or other device, print out finished passages or books either on your own or at a local printer.

SAUL:

If you can work on a tablet or laptop with BTT Writer or V-MAST, the translations can easily be stored online and the material can be put in a format that can be printed.

MARY:

Another pipeline is creating an audio recording. You have the written translation. Have someone that has a clear voice read the translation into a phone, tablet or other recording device. There are many ways to share your recordings. You can create SD cards, use Bluetooth or whatever works for you. The point is to find ways to share God's Word.

SAUL:

Now think about the many ways that you and your team can get this newly translated scripture to the people. That reminds me of the story we have been sharing about our friend Sani who was able to share translated scripture to a very unlikely audience.

MARY:

We left Sani on the phone with a group of Militants. They called him twice begging him to come and tell them about Jesus. So far, Sani has refused their request. They have shared a second vision, this time with Jesus, Himself.

SAUL:

Sani has a hard decision to make. He did not accept their invitation but went home to discuss the phone calls with his wife. After sharing the calls with his wife and taking time to pray, Sani's wife reminded him that they had been in dangerous situations before and God had always protected them. She encouraged him to trust God and go meet the caller.

MARY:

Sani accepted the invitation and agreed to meet the caller in a nearby town. Sani drove to the town where he met the caller on a motor bike. They rode on the motor bike, far into the bush and into region controlled by Extremists. They arrived late at night. Sani was given a room and bed to sleep and was left alone until the morning.

SAUL:

At sunrise, Sani awoke and went outside. Before him was an open area filled with 2500 soldiers seated quietly on the ground. Why were they there? Was this what he feared might happen, a public execution? What happens next?

MARY:

Now we have discussed the reason we are translating God's Word into our language. We have shared the **Eight Step** process. We then talked about one way to improve the quality of the work and then some of the tools and pipelines that make the work possible. We encourage you to keep up the work. **If you have questions or are hearing this for the first time and want to get involved send an email to reachingalldialects@gmail.com or call....**