

This thinksheet reproduces pp.9f of the Dec/76 American Bible Society mailer, giving background you'll not find in the GOOD NEWS BIBLE. I've been enthusiastic about "Good News for Modern Man" from the start, Bob Bratcher [ed. for both Testaments] having been a seminary classmate of mine and a solid scholar. OBSERVATIONS: The seven on OT were all male, all white, all Calvinist except one, more members of Jimmy Carter's denomination than of any other, all of missionary service except one (Bob being of a long line of distinguished missionaries in Brazil).

The GOOD NEWS BIBLE Translators



The translators of the Old Testament into Today's English Version were seven men of wide experience and deep commitment. All but one had served abroad as missionaries and had therefore gained practical experience in translating into other languages. This background prepared these men in a unique manner to appreciate the problems of communication and especially the need for making sense of difficult Biblical expressions. They had already wrestled precisely with such problems in communicating the Good News in other languages.

Dr. Robert G. Bratcher (Southern Baptist)

was chairman of the committee and provided exceptional leadership. His rare combination of wit, scholarship and personal devotion to the cause of Christ was the directive catalyst in the committee's work. Dr. Roger A. Bullard (Southern Baptist), a professor of New Testament Greek at Atlantic Christian University and a specialist in early Coptic Christian documents, possessed particular skill in translating the Wisdom Literature. Dr. Keith R. Crim (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.), a former missionary in Korea with wide experience in editing, translating and teaching, demonstrated particular enthusiasm and concern for Hebrew poetic structures. Dr. Hebert G. Grether (United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) formerly a missionary in Thailand with many years of experience in preparing a new translation of the Bible into the Thai language, was deliberate, thoughtful and kindly in his approach to every discussion. Dr. Barclay M. Newman (Southern Baptist) was known as the "commuting member" of the committee. He attended its major meetings while still carrying on his important work as a Translations Consultant of the United Bible Societies in Southeast Asia, where he has special responsibilities for the Malay and Indonesian languages and

for a number of "tribal tongues" of eastern Malaysia. Dr. Heber F. Peacock (Episcopalian) likewise carried on his work with the Old Testament committee while also serving as Translations Coordinator for Africa. He had gained real empathy for the reader through his experience in Africa as both consultant and coordinator of translation work and was always open for suggestions as to how to make the text completely meaningful as well as faithful to the original. Dr. John A. Thompson (United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) had served for some 20 years as a third generation missionary in Egypt (both his grandfather and father had been missionaries there) and had a working knowledge of some dozen ancient languages of the Near East. He acted as the committee's walking encyclopedia on the history and culture of Biblical times.

To help prepare a text of the GOOD NEWS BIBLE for publication in Great Britain, the Rev. Brynmor F. Price of the British and Foreign Bible Society joined the work. He had had many years experience as a missionary in China and after that, some years of work in India as a consultant on translation matters. His responsibility with the Old Testament committee was to check on matters of British usage, including grammar, vocabulary and spelling, and to arrange for certain editorial details in the British edition of the GOOD NEWS BIBLE.

In the committee sessions each translation was reviewed line by line verse by verse, and even punctuation mark by punctuation mark. When the committee had completed its review of this first draft, the results were then incorporated into a revised draft copy and sent out to more than 200 scholars and translators working in over 60 countries. From these persons a number of important suggestions were incorporated.

In line with its regular procedure for the handling of major texts of the Scriptures, the Bible Society sent the final text to a special panel of Biblical scholars, linguists, and churchmen drawn from different denominations.

It was the unusual gifts of this team of dedicated men, who began each working day with the reading of Scripture and prayer and who knew that it was only through the help of the Holy Spirit that they could hope to accomplish any lasting spiritual results, that made this vivid new translation possible!

No one knows better than these translators how difficult has been their task. But they have performed it gladly, conscious always of the presence of the Holy Spirit and of the tremendous debt which they owe to the dedication and scholarship of those who have preceded them. The Bible is not simply great literature to be admired and revered; it is Good News for all people everywhere—a message both to be understood and to be applied in daily life. #

The Rev. Dr. Robert G. Bratcher