



PUT GOD'S WORD IN THEIR HANDS

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Built on “the foundation”

At the end of Ephesians 2, Paul uses the metaphor of a building to show that people of all nations and backgrounds are united together by faith in Christ. This building is pictured as standing on a stone foundation, and believers are joined together as parts of that building. Christ himself is the cornerstone on which everything is based.

However, the Tsamakko people of southwest Ethiopia do not build on stone foundations, and their buildings are traditionally round. This makes the idea of a “cornerstone” difficult for several obvious reasons.

In the Tsamakko translation of Ephesians 2:20, Christ is the *mososso* — the big center pole of a house that holds up the roof and the entire structure of the building. The apostles and prophets are the other poles that support frame of the house. And believers are the house itself — all the pieces that make up the walls and the roof. We are all joined together as one, and Christ is the thing that keeps us together!



“As a house is built on a strong *mososso* (center pole), you are built on the poles of the ones-who-work-for-Christ and the prophets, and Christ is the *mososso*. The whole house is connected with Christ, and is built to be the holy house of the Lord” (Ephesians 2:20-21, Tsamakko back-translation).

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The Plugers in Ethiopia

August 2022

PRAY

- For peace and stability in Ethiopia and the world
- For our continued language and culture learning
- For 14 newly-graduated Bible translation students and their future ministry
- For wisdom and peace for Sean

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*Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to **proclaim** to those who live on the earth—to **every nation, tribe, language and people.***
—Revelation 14:6

Travel “down country”

In June, Chris got to make a trip to the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region of Ethiopia to visit two translation projects. Both the Hamar and Tsamakko teams are hard at work on the first translation of the New Testament into their language. At the same time, they are helping to build a community of readers by alphabet design and literacy training.

The visit was a quick one. Chris’ main goal was to accompany two LBT photographers as part of an effort to raise awareness of Bible Translation among North American churches.

It was also great for Chris to see the teams in their own areas. This will be a huge help for him in the future as he consults with the teams to make sure their translations are accurate, beautiful, and clear in a way that is meaningful in their individual contexts. (See the example on the back!)

Traditional Religious Beliefs

Both the Hamar and Tsamakko translation teams are in the first generation of Christians in their language group. Over 98% of Hamar people follow traditional religious practices. In one village, several women wanted to become Christian, but the elders would not allow it. They were afraid that the spirits would punish everyone if these women turned their backs on the old traditions. Although these women were severely beaten, they would not renounce their faith in Jesus. They stood firm. Now their entire village is Christian and the women are evangelists to other Hamar areas.

Only about 5% of the Tsamakko people are Christian. One of the Tsamakko translators said his father tried to kill him when he decided to become Christian. Even today, when priests are conducting a séance to contact the ancestors, if a Christian is present the spirit won’t come. Why? As the priest says, “Your God and the spirit are enemies.”



A Hamar translator (l), with four evangelists



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LUTHER'S NEW TESTAMENT
1522 - 2022

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