

Title: Questions about Bible Translations

Earlier this week I was asked a question about Bible translations. This week and next, we will consider some questions about Bible translations.

Question #1: Why do we need to know about translations?

Answer: We need to know about translations because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. Part of the Old Testament (like in Daniel) was written in Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek. Yet, we speak English. Therefore, we need to know that we can trust the translations we have. We need translations because the majority doesn't speak Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.

Question #2: What is a translation?

Answer: It is a rendition of the original text into a modern language. When it comes to translations, there is always a source language. Then there is a target language. So for example, the New Testament, which was written in Greek is the source language. The target language is English. It is important to note that it's better to use the terminology (Translations) instead of (Versions of the Bible). Using the term "Version" can at times be confusing and misleading with how we think of a translation. For example, sometimes kids may give their "version" of what happened at school. Those versions could be totally different or have major inconsistencies.

Question #3: Are people who make translations inspired?

Answer: No! They are not inspired. The apostles and prophets who wrote the original documents (autographs) were inspired, [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#); [Ephesians 3:3-5](#). Those original words have been translated. Translators have to do careful study and comparison as they do their work, but they are not inspired.

Question #4: Should we even use translations?

Answer: Yes! Unless you are fluent in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek! We should use translations. The Bible sometimes translates words for us, [Mark 15:34](#). The text says, ***"At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTANI?' which is translated 'My GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?'"*** This was a translation from the Aramaic into the Greek by Mark. It is often the case when you see the Old Testament being quoted in the New Testament, that it came from the Septuagint Translation. This was a translation of the Hebrew into Greek. So, when you see passages like [Luke 4:16-19](#), where Jesus was reading from Isaiah in the synagogue, it was likely from a translation.

- Benjamin Lee