

great part of the Old Testament (possibly all of it) was available in Greek. 'Things originally spoken in Hebrew', he says, 'have not the same force in them, when they are translated into another tongue: and not only these, but the law itself, and the prophecies, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their original language'.
(*To be continued*).

The Revision of the Chokwe New Testament

D. B. Long

Chokwe is one of the most virile of the Bantu languages in this belt of Africa, the people having been great warriors and traders with no fear whatever of travelling long distances. The home of the tribe is in the Cassai valley, but the Swedish Mission down on the borders of the Kalahari desert in South West Africa sells almost as much Chokwe literature as some of our purely Chokwe missions up here. The mines through Southern Congo, N. Rhodesia and S. Rhodesia as well as South Africa have large numbers of A-Chokwe. North into the Congo in the area of the Unevangelized Tribes Mission there are thousands of Chokwe people, as down in Bie in the Umbundu tribe and over among the Songo tribe as well. I mention this because they manifest the greatest freedom in adopting and adapting words from everywhere, moulding them to fit the genius of their own tongue and in a year or two will argue that such words are pure Chokwe from the times of their grandfathers. The fact that the Portuguese authorities do not recognize native languages and demand that all teaching and school work be done in Portuguese has also tended in this direction and they have blithely taken on hundreds of Portuguese words, developed nouns from verbs and vice-versa, made adjectives, adverbs on their own pattern from Portuguese roots and continue to do so, even in the most backward pagan villages. Where certain words have been lacking they have of their own will formed abstracts from concretes and such like, once they get the idea involved and this has been a tremendous help to us in theological terms. In general they formed abstracts by prefixing 'u' to the concrete or the verb form and putting it into the noun class of their own abstracts, e.g. *kuhuka*: to be bad or naughty, *chihuki*: a bad person, *uhuka*: badness or naughtiness. Thus, though they did not have such a word when they themselves needed 'deity', they took *Zambi*, put the abstract prefix 'u' on it and now *Uzambi* is part of the language. In the same way was made *Ukristu* for 'messiahship'. For 'the place of the unrepentant dead' they used the word *mbwemena* ('the burning') from *kuwema*, 'to burn' and it now has almost completely lost any other meaning.

Lord

With 'Lord' we have had no trouble at all since *Mwene* has almost the same area of meaning as our word. *Mwene wa zuwo* is 'the head of the house', its owner, its boss, he who commands. *Mwene wa ndungo* (shortened to *mwenya ndungo*) means 'the slave's master or owner'

(*ndungo* is 'slave'). *Mwenya chifuchi* is 'the owner, governor or ruler of the country'.

Forgiveness

Ukonekeno for 'forgiveness' is their ordinary word for the act of forgiving any crime or trespass, annulling any debt, or cancelling any obligation against the person involved. It does not have the idea of a person's being cleared from a charge because of satisfaction given, but then neither does our English 'forgiveness' and that will have to be dealt with by teaching.

Faith

'Faith' has given no difficulty since their word *kufuliela* and its noun *ufulielo* mean much as our word does, 'to believe a statement made', 'to depend on a person's word', 'to trust in a person to perform something on our behalf', etc. Thus it is easily applied and understood as our initial act of faith in accepting God's word regarding ourselves and regarding His Son, and also of that attitude of mind and heart whereby we look to God and depend on Him for everything.

Love

'Love' is a word which has deepened very much with its association with Christian things. The word means basically 'to want', 'to desire', though even in the native mind it also had some of the thought of 'loving' one's children, etc. But like all other such moral words it had little power or depth. Now it is different, and a new conception of its richness has come to them as they measure love by the love of God in Christ.

Bishop

'Bishop' (*episkopos*) we have rendered by *kalayi* from the verb 'to watch or guard'. A *kalayi* in everyday life means one who watches over a house or property for a master, or a watchman or sentinel set in time of war who is responsible for the safety of the village or camp in case of enemy action. In church affairs they have taken readily to the idea of an 'overseer' in spiritual things and the idea of doing it as responsible to our absent Lord has, of course, heightened the parallel.

Flesh

For 'flesh' (*sarx*) we have used the word *musunya* which is their word for the flesh of a person or animal as distinct from 'meat' which is *yifwo*. Here we had to teach them its meaning but have found it very rapidly accepted and even among unconverted people who had some contact with the Scriptures we find them using the word in its Scriptural sense.

Predestinate

For 'predestinate' we have used the word *kufunjika* which in its simplest meaning is just to draw a line or mark, but hence to mark something, and often to mark it out for some special purpose. This is one of the very few doctrinal words which have been changed in the revision, but the word there used was grammatically incorrect so that apart from

any question of its meaning it just never made sense. The above has been used as an explanation and has become current.

Words which have given us a little more trouble are the following:

Conscience

'Conscience', which is a thing not even understood by villagers, has been difficult to get around, but we have used *shimbi ya mbunge*, lit. 'the law of the heart'. In some places because of construction we have shortened it to 'heart', and have sought by teaching to show them that there is a law within which accuses when we do wrong. They say they feel this voice (sometimes we wonder!!) but that they have never heard a name for it. Thus the 'law of the heart' has become fixed but is something which requires teaching.

Repentance

'Repentance' we have rendered by *kulikonyeka* which is from the root *kukoneka* 'to fold back over', and lit. means 'to go back on oneself'. It has been objected to by one brother because it is used in the bad sense too, of a person going back on their word or purpose, but has been retained since in its good sense it is used by them constantly of a person pursuing a certain course, but who has a change of mind or heart, and turns right round to go the other way. The word has now become so deeply fixed in the sense of 'repentance' that Christians use it in a way never thought of by others, and when they come to us about something wrong they have done say they have come to 'repent' before us.

Holy

'Holy' has been rendered by *sandu* from the Portuguese *santo*. I personally am quite convinced that in the beginning we ought to have taken the word *taboo* as they have in Lunda and Luvale (v. Horton, *The Bible Translator*, July 1951). But this was not then realized or agreed to and now the word *sandu* has become so deeply rooted in the thinking of the Christians that it would make for untold confusion to try to uproot it. It has definitely taken on its proper meaning to Christians, though, of course, non-Christians have to be taught. Some have suggested *kunanga* and *unango*, but since this means 'keeping of oneself from filth' and hence 'purity' we have retained it in that sense.

Grace

'Grace' we have rendered by *vumbi* which has troubled us somewhat by its very elasticity. Whether the noun comes from the verb *kuvumbika* or vice-versa we cannot be sure. *Kuvumbika* means 'to serve', but not for money; rather out of a sense of regard or respect. Hence *kavumbi* is 'a disciple', one who acts much as John Mark acted toward the apostles. (This word we have used with great success for 'deacons'). Therefore in this sense the word *vumbi* means 'to show respect or liberal good-will irrespective of the person's right to such treatment or otherwise'. Along this line of reasoning it means 'to be gracious towards', 'to be merciful to', 'to be kindly disposed to', and in this sense we have had little difficulty. The idea of Grace as a sphere and a condition is, of course, far removed from any purely native thought and we have to

depend on constant teaching. We have, however, even in this succeeded, and the term *vumbi lia Zamb*i is now something recognized as characteristic of Himself and the basis and ground of all His dealings with humanity.

Sin

For 'sin' as a root principle in us, the word used from the beginning of the work has been *shili*. This word in the minds of the people seems to be the basic motive power for all evil that a man may commit. It has a very slight tinge of the meaning of 'malice' but this quite obviously as a secondary or perhaps explanatory meaning. Then mission natives started using it (maybe led by missionaries) as a euphemism for 'adultery', and this led one or two to doubt its propriety for 'sin', even though we have precisely the same usage in English. Our main trouble lies in the fact that there is no word for a concrete act from this same root, and therefore we have to use a different word for the act, *mulonga*. There is an abstract word for the act of committing a *mulonga* (*kuvulumuna mulonga*) which is *uvulumunyi*, but this refers rather to the state or condition of one because he has been guilty of such an act and not to any principle within which led him to do it. Much as we would have liked to have, as in most other languages they have, the same word for 'sin' as a principle and 'sin' as an act, the native seems to assume that *mulonga* springs from and is the fruit of *shili* in the heart and therefore we have used that with the backing of almost fifty years of usage.

A Study of the Word "Sin"

With its correlatives *Sinner, Err, Fault, Guilt, Iniquity, Offence, Malefactor, Mischief, Perverse, Transgress, Trespass, Wicked, Wrong.*

Kenneth Grayston

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Part 1 - Old Testament

Despite the variety of these words which denote something central in the religious consciousness, they are inadequate to express the corresponding Hebrew terms. Nor has the English Bible any consistent way of translating one Hebrew word or group of words by one English word. The Hebrew usages may roughly be classed according to derivation thus: (1) Deviation from the right way: *h t'*, to miss a goal or way; e.g. among the Benjamite warriors there were men 'who could sling stones at an hair-breadth, and not *miss*' (Judges 20 : 16). Hence sin is failing to do something in relation to man or God. The same idea underlies *'awon* (iniquity), *shagah* (err), and *'wl* (wicked). A group of seven words is represented by 'perverse', meaning any deviation,