



# The Wartburg Project

## June Report

### 2016

The Wartburg Project is a group of WELS and ELS pastors, professors, teachers, and laypeople who are working together to produce a new translation of the Bible called the *Evangelical Heritage Version™* or

EHV™.

## June 2016 PROGRESS CHART

### Key:

- ✓ = completed for publishing
- × = Tech review complete
- Bold** = completed initial draft
- Blue underlined** = recently completed
- \*Asterisk = assigned or in progress
- Red Italic strikethrough* = not yet assigned

### OLD TESTAMENT

Pentateuch	Historical I	Historical II	Poetical	Major Prophets	Minor Prophets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Genesis</li> <li>✓ Exodus</li> <li>✓ Leviticus</li> <li>✓ Numbers</li> <li>✓ Deuteronomy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Joshua</li> <li><u>Judges</u></li> <li>Ruth</li> <li>1 Samuel</li> <li>2 Samuel</li> <li><u>1 Kings</u></li> <li><u>2 Kings</u></li> <li>1 Chronicles</li> <li><u>2 Chronicles</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× Ezra</li> <li>Nehemiah</li> <li>× Esther</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Job</li> <li>✓ Psalms</li> <li>× Proverbs</li> <li>× Ecclesiastes</li> <li>✓ Song of Songs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Isaiah</u></li> <li>Jeremiah</li> <li>*Lamentations</li> <li>Ezekiel</li> <li>Daniel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Hosea</u></li> <li>Joel</li> <li><u>Amos</u></li> <li>× Obadiah</li> <li>* Jonah</li> <li><u>Micah</u></li> <li>× Nahum</li> <li>× Habakkuk</li> <li>× Zephaniah</li> <li>× Haggai</li> <li>* Zechariah</li> <li>× Malachi</li> </ul>

### NEW TESTAMENT

Basic editorial process complete. We are on track to publish a New Testament and Psalms special preview edition in 2017.

Completed OT Drafts are in various phases of review and editing. The Wartburg Project process is rigorous and will take time. Some books are being carefully checked by “technical reviewers.” Other books are being read by “popular reviewers.” After all of this input, we seek to produce the most accurate and clear translation we can.

**This report has two parts: OLD NEWS, which is review,  
and NEW NEWS, which is the latest developments.**

## **OLD NEWS**

### **SUMMARY REVIEW of PROGRESS REPORTS**

**OT** We hope to have complete draft translations of every book of the Old Testament by the end of 2016. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are now in the hands of Northwestern Publishing House, and the other historical books are expected to follow on a regular basis. This means that our editorial process has been completed for about half of the Bible.

**EHV** We are continuing efforts to make the name known and to establish the use of the name *Evangelical Heritage Version* in interstate commerce.

**PASSION HISTORY** The 2017 Passion History © will be available on our website and through NPH in plenty of time for next Lent. Congregations may continue to use the older editions if they wish, since changes are minor.

**PRODUCTS** An updated edition of Matthew (*EHV* © 2016) is available on Amazon. In the near future, a new study edition of Psalms with more extensive notes will appear on Amazon too. We hope to have a complete *EHV Harmony of the Gospels* available later this year. The Matthew and Psalms versions are similar to the free versions from last year, and we may offer further free opportunities in the future, but **we encourage supporters to take the plunge and invest 99 cents in purchasing these offerings** since one of the necessary steps in establishing our trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office is to provide evidence that we are using the trademarks in interstate commerce.

**LECTIONARIES FOR 2016-2017.** We plan to make EHV Scripture lessons available to pastors and congregations in time for Advent 2016. From that point on, we expect to provide Scripture lessons for worship on our website. Congregations may use these without charge. Scripture lessons will be provided for the lectionaries of *Christian Worship* (three-year and one-year), *Christian Worship Supplement*, and the *Lutheran Service Book* (three-year and one-year). We hope that this will provide pastors and congregations the opportunity to use and test what we've been working to produce. Pastors will be able to cut and paste EHV texts into bulletins for use in worship. Watch for updates on this system.

**NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES** See the list of recommended New Testament commentaries on the library section of our web site. An Old Testament list will appear later this year.

**WEBSITE** See our website ([wartburgproject.org](http://wartburgproject.org)) for more information relating to the EHV. See FAQ #15 on the Bible name. A paper explaining our name is posted in the "Library" section.

Sign up on the "Contact" page to receive free e-reports. Like us on Facebook to receive the latest updates posted there. (The purpose of our Facebook posting is not debate, but we've been able to share information with many people very quickly that way.) We continue to be a "purely positive" effort, avoiding debates and controversy. We are just quietly and humbly trying our best to translate the Bible "to spread its light from age to age." So far, so good! God has richly blessed us. To God be the glory and praise for all of his blessings!

God's Word is our great heritage  
And shall be ours forever.  
To spread its light from age to age

Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way.  
In death it is our stay.  
Lord, grant while worlds endure  
We keep its teaching pure  
Throughout all generations.

## NEW NEWS

**Trademarks** Our trademarks *Evangelical Heritage Version, EHV, and Wartburg Bible* have cleared the first stage of review by the USPTO, in which they analyzed our trademarks and required us to make disclaimers, for example, that we do not claim that we have exclusive rights to the words *evangelical, heritage, Bible, or Wartburg*, but only the combinations of those words as names for a Bible and related products. In other words we won't challenge the trademark of a Chinese cheesemaker who manufactures *Wartburg Cheese*. After the necessary disclaimers our trademarks are now "published." One of the future steps is that we will have to provide specimens of materials that we have published under these trademarks.

**RE-ENLIST** We are now entering on one of the more challenging phases of the project, completing the Old Testament historical books, and especially the synoptic books of the Old Testament, Samuel through Chronicles (see the final article). Throughout the summer and into fall we will be facing a heavy schedule of popular reviews and proof-reading. Since our list of volunteers has accumulated over a period of time and since people's availability may have changed, let us know that you are still available and would like to participate. It is probably best to use the editorial office's email address: [wpbrugj@gmail.com](mailto:wpbrugj@gmail.com).

**Special Projects** The Old Testament Synoptics offer **some opportunities for special more intensive projects:**

- 1) A careful analysis of the translation of the four chapters that describe the Temple (1 Kings 6–7, 2 Chronicles 3–4). This involves some fairly heavy duty Hebrew work.
- 2) Checking and improving the cross reference headings between 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles and between 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. The basic work here can be done in English.
- 3) Checking the synchronization of synoptic passages in Samuel and Chronicles or Kings and Chronicles. If the passages are almost verbatim replicas in the two Hebrew versions, we would like the English to reflect that similarity. This is quite a difficult process and the degree to which it should be done is debatable. There will be a more extensive discussion of this in our next report.
- 4) Any other project you might envision, such as converting EHV to a metric version. This would require checking the Hebrew expressions.
- 5) ????? If you can dream it, we will listen.

Volunteer at [wpbrugj@gmail.com](mailto:wpbrugj@gmail.com)

**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** Pastor Brian Keller, our project's New Testament editor and member of the editorial board, this month is celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary in the Holy Ministry of the Word. We want to join his congregation, friends, and family in thanking the Lord for Pastor Keller's years of service and praying that the Lord will bless him with many more years in which he may be a blessing to the church at large and to his congregation.

While his primary calling has been and still is service with the Word and sacraments to the congregations he has been privileged to serve, we also are also thankful to Pastor Keller and to the Lord that Pastor Keller has had opportunities to use his gifts to serve the church beyond the boundaries of the congregation. We are thinking in particular of his very dedicated valuable service to the Wartburg Project

in the production of our translation of the Bible as New Testament editor and a member of the editorial committee for the whole Bible.

Our thanks extend not only to him and to his family but to the members of St. Stephen congregation in Adrian, MI for allowing him and encouraging him to serve the church at large in this way.

**Thanks To All** We also take this occasion to thank all those who have given their time and gifts to help in the completion of the project and especially to their calling bodies. We are thankful for the vision of the kingdom of calling bodies that look beyond their own boundaries for ways in which their pastors and congregation may be a blessing also to their brothers and sisters in Christ in the district and synod, and even beyond.

## **Article “Outside Help”**

The participants in our translation society, the Wartburg Project, are all members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, but we are very conscious of and very thankful for all the help we have received from outside our immediate circles. First of all, there is the great heritage of translation knowledge which the church has accumulated and preserved through the centuries, work which is still going on today. Much of this comes to us indirectly through the availability of information published in books and online.

Some of it, however, comes to us directly from the source. An interesting example is provided in the Old Testament textual studies of Wayne Mitchell, a Bible translator whose projects have been in English, Hebrew, and Arabic, and include the New Heart English Bible, a public domain translation.

A part of his research which is of interest and value to our project is his list of passages of the Old Testament for which there is textual evidence that some words may have been lost from Hebrew manuscripts when the scribe’s eye jumped from one occurrence of a certain word to the next occurrence, leading to a loss of the words in between. This is one of the common sources of scribal errors in transmitting handwritten texts.

In previous FAQs and presentations (see FAQ 10 for example) we have discussed the fact that the New Testament text of the EHV is slightly longer than the English text of such recent translations as the NIV. Such translations omit or relegate to the footnotes phrases and even whole verses that were familiar from the King James Version. They do this because they favor a few ancient Greek manuscripts which have a shorter text than that followed by the King James. The EHV, on the other hand, weighs all the textual evidence and adopts the reading that has manuscript support which is both early and widespread. This produces the result that the EHV text includes some passages that were in the King James but were omitted by more recent translations.

Our textual principles are the same for the Old Testament: We examine the textual evidence to see which reading has the best support. Our problem in the Old Testament is that we very often have a one-to-one tie in manuscript evidence: the reading preserved in the Hebrew text of Old Testament transmitted by the Jews, commonly known as the Masoretic text versus the Greek text of the Old Testament, commonly known as the Septuagint. Although the Septuagint originated as a Jewish project, all of our major relatively complete manuscripts of the Greek version of the Old Testament are the very same manuscripts that provide us with our earliest complete copies of the text of the New Testament, namely, Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus.

EHV uses the Masoretic text as our base text, since it uses the original language of the Old Testament. There are a very limited number of passages (involving about 900 words out of over 600,000 words in the Old Testament) where the Greek version of the Old Testament text as transmitted by the Christian church seems to preserve a better, longer reading, which more clearly preserves the full meaning of the text. So 99.9% of the text is not affected by such variants, and no doctrines are affected.

Evaluating these variants is where Wayne Mitchell’s textual studies come in. He is engaging in the ongoing work of compiling a list of the Old Testament passage in which the Greek version of the Old

Testament seems to have a better, fuller reading than the Hebrew version. These readings share three traits:

- 1) the words missing from the Hebrew text fall between two occurrences of the same Hebrew word or phrase, suggesting the possibility that the Hebrew copyist's eye skipped from one occurrence of the word to another;
- 2) the restoration of the missing words clarifies the intended meaning of the text;
- 3) the shorter reading is still readable, so the proofreader did not notice the omission.

The list of passages is compiled from examples gathered from commentaries and translations but also from original research. There is, of course, one additional problem. One text is Hebrew and the other is Greek. Though it is possible to compare the passages on the basis of the Hebrew and Greek texts since the issue is missing words, Mitchell thought a passage list with the Greek text translated back into Hebrew (a process called retroversion) would be helpful for his own translation work as well as for other translators. A friend in South Africa, Dr. Godwin Mhuriyahe, PhD in Semitic Languages, has been assisting him with retroversions to Hebrew so a direct comparison can be made.

When he became aware of our project Mitchell offered his research to us and provides us with regular updates.

Here are a few examples in which the Greek text seems to provide evidence for a longer reading which clarifies the account.

In 1 Samuel 13 the Hebrew text tells us:



<sup>7</sup>*Saul remained at Gilgal....* <sup>10</sup>*Samuel met him there....*  
<sup>15</sup>*Then Samuel went up from Gilgal <> and went up to Gibeah in Benjamin, and Saul counted the men who were with him. They numbered about six hundred.* <sup>16</sup>*Saul and his son Jonathan and the men with them were staying in Gibeah<sup>e</sup> in Benjamin, while the Philistines camped at Mikmash.*

<sup>e</sup> Two Hebrew manuscripts read *Gibeah*;  
 most Hebrew manuscripts read *Geba*.

The Greek Old Testament reads: *Samuel went up from Gilgal. <The rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the army. They went up from Gilgal> to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul counted the people who were present with him, about six hundred men.* <sup>16</sup>*Saul and his son Jonathan and the men with them were staying in Geba in Benjamin, while the Philistines camped at Mikmash.*

It appears that the eye of the scribe of the Hebrew text may have skipped from one occurrence of *from Gilgal* to the next. It is Saul and the people who go to Gibeah in Benjamin in verse 15. This explains the strategic movements that set up the battle.

Two more examples:

From 1 Samuel 1: Hanna and Elkanah bring Samuel to the house of the LORD in Shiloh.

<sup>24</sup>*The boy <was with them. And they brought him before the LORD, and his father killed the sacrifice as he regularly did before the LORD, <sup>25</sup>and they brought> the boy. He killed the bull and presented the child to Eli.*

The words in the arrow brackets are not in the Hebrew text, but the Greek Old Testament has these words. The Hebrew text produces the puzzling reading *the boy [was] a boy*, which is usually translated, *the boy was still young*. The longer reading seems to preserve evidence of an accidental omission from the Hebrew text between the two occurrences of the word *boy*. The sequence of events is clear in the longer reading.

From 1 Samuel 14: Saul is trying to find the guilty party who violated his oath.

<sup>41</sup>So Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel, <“Why have you not answered your servant today? If the fault is in me or my son Jonathan, respond with Urim, but if the fault is with the men of Israel> respond with Thummim.” Jonathan and Saul were chosen, and the people were not chosen.

The words in the arrow brackets are not in the Hebrew text but are in the Greek Old Testament. They give a clearer statement of Saul’s request, which requires the use of Urim and Thummim. The accidental omission from the Hebrew manuscript seems to have been triggered by the repetition of *Israel*.

**NEXT REPORT** Our next report will contain an article on the synoptic passages of the Old Testament and the problems and advisability of synchronizing them, and a report on our developing library section.