



The Wartburg Project

April/May 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™.

CHANGE OF FORMAT We are changing the name of our regular updates from *newsletters* to *reports* since they may include more substantial articles on topics pertaining to our work. Two such articles appear at the end of this report.

PROGRESS REPORT

NT The editing of the New Testament has been completed and the material is in the hands of NPH.

PSALMS The edition of Psalms for the 2017 publication is finished and is in the hands of NPH for layout.

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 the editorial process has been completed for about half of the Bible. See the chart at the end of this report.

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 Some pastors and congregations have tested a © 2016 version of the Passion History. We will be making the © 2017 Passion History available on our website and through NPH in plenty of time for next Lent. Congregations may continue to use the older editions since changes are minor.

PRODUCTS An updated edition of Matthew (*EHV* © 2016) is now 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 resources section of our web site. An Old Testament list will appear later this year.

NEW FAQ A new FAQ, FAQ 17, on the spelling of proper names has been posted in the FAQ section of our website.

WEBSITE See our website (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 "Resources" 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.

See the chart and articles below.

MAY 2016 PROGRESS CHART

OLD TESTAMENT

Key:

✓ = editing completed

× = Tech review complete

Bold = completed initial draft

Blue underlined = recently completed

*Asterisk = in progress

Red Italic strikethrough = not yet assigned

Pentateuch	Historical I	Historical II	Poetical	Major Prophets	Minor Prophets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Genesis ✓ Exodus ✓ Leviticus ✓ Numbers ✓ Deuteronomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joshua *Judges Ruth × 1 Samuel 2 Samuel *1 Kings *2 Kings 1 Chronicles <u>2 Chronicles</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ezra Nehemiah × Esther 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Job ✓ Psalms × Proverbs × Ecclesiastes ✓ Song of Songs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah 1-12 *Isaiah 13-39 Isaiah 40-66 Jeremiah *Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Hosea Joel <u>Amos</u> ×Obadiah *Jonah <u>Micah</u> ×Nahum ×Habakkuk ×Zephaniah ×Haggai *Zechariah ×Malachi

ARTICLES

A New Resource for Translation

One of the practical problems in translation is, on the one hand, avoiding constructions that will sound old-fashioned and stuffy to some readers, and, on the other hand, avoiding constructions that will sound like bad grammar to some readers. In a sea of grammatical change, how does one objectively determine what the current standards are for editing standard contemporary prose?

We are now making use of a valuable new resource to address this issue in the EHV. *Garner's Modern English Usage* has proved to be useful for understanding which constructions, phrases, and words (including spellings) are most common and acceptable today. Our interest started with an article about this new resource on modern English usage. Here's a link to the article for aficionados of good English usage: <http://www.businessinsider.com/bryan-garner-interview-english-usage-google-ngrams-big-data-2016-4>

Below are a few edited excerpts from that article about the author, Bryan A. Garner:\

The 57-year-old Texan has written 25 books, many of them award-winning, and he's the editor-in-chief of *Black's Law Dictionary*, said to be the most widely cited law book on the planet. In his new book, *Garner's Modern English Usage* (Oxford), Garner has made extensive use of so-called *big data* to write more precisely and more objectively about English usage than anyone ever has done before. Google gave him license to delve into its [Google Books Ngram](#)

[Viewer](#), which displays graphs showing how words have occurred in print over a number of centuries.

In many ways, books about word usage have always been based on a good deal of guesswork. That's why Garner calls the use of ngrams "absolutely revolutionary" in the field of usage lexicography.

Here's a little bit of what Garner had to say in the interview:

The biggest change is the level of empiricism (objectivity) underlying all the judgments. I made extensive use of corpus linguistics, and especially of [Google Books and the ngrams](#), to assess the judgments that I've made in previous editions, and it was a most enlightening process. I've added almost 2,500 usage ratios of the most current available information about how many times one form — the standard form, let's say — would appear in relation to a variant form. That's enormously useful information for the connoisseur. But even for a less serious aficionado, those ratios can be extremely interesting....

If you want to know how often, for example, "between you and I" occurs in comparison with "between you and me" in print sources or current books, that information is now available to us, whereas previous lexicographers and usage writers simply had to guess. There's a lot of this kind of empirical evidence spread throughout the book, and in some cases my judgments about terms changed. I've added about a thousand new entries, a lot of them for connoisseurs — plural forms, some arcane plurals that weren't in the book before. I've tried to make the book the most comprehensive treatment of English usage ever published. That was the goal anyway....

Once the ngrams became available, it took me a little time to start playing with ngrams and realize this is absolutely revolutionary in the field of lexicography. The moment I played with a couple of ngrams, I realized this fundamentally changes the nature of usage lexicography. For a long time, some descriptive linguists have complained that usage books with a prescriptive bent are written by people who just sit back and say, "I like this better than I like that. "I don't think that's ever been so, because the best usage books, even prescriptive ones, have been based on lifetimes of study — when you consider people like [H.W. Fowler](#) and [Wilson Follet](#) and [Theodore Bernstein](#) and others.

But still, they had to guess. Even the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary* had to guess based on the few citation slips in front of them. But now we can apply *big data* to English usage and find out what usage was predominant until what year.

The editors of the Wartburg Project are finding Garner's book to be useful in our translation work. For example, the EHV will be spelling *worshipped* with the double "p." This is actually the standard American and British usage by a ratio of 3:1. Garner comments that some American dictionaries state a preference for *worshipped* with one "p," but this spelling has never attained a predominance in print. Double "pp" has steadily outranked single "p" in America, and in Britain there has been no competition at all. It's double "p" consistently.

There was a question about our translation of Esther 1:19. Should this be "she" or "her"?

*The king will give her status as queen to a different person, one better than **she/her**.*

Many think that one of these usages is a mistake, but actually it is not quite that simple. Garner's treatment of this question is fascinating. Here is just a taste:

Traditional grammarians have considered *than* to be a conjunction, not a preposition—hence *He is taller than I (am)*. On this theory, the pronoun after "than" gets its case from its function in the completed second clause of the sentence—though, typically, the completing words of the second clause are merely implied....

That view has had its detractors.... Even William Safire plumps for the objective case: “The hard-line Conjunctionites have been fighting this battle for a long time. Give them credit: They had to go up against the poet Milton’s treatment of *than* as a preposition (the use of *than whom* in ‘Paradise Lost’) and against Shakespeare’s ‘a man no mightier than thyself or me’ in ‘Julius Caesar.’” (Safire, “Than Me?” *N.Y Times*, 16 Apr. 1995)

For formal contexts, the traditional usage is generally best. Only if you are deliberately aiming for a relaxed, colloquial tone is the prepositional *than* acceptable....

What about “My mother likes the dog more than me?” vs. “My mother likes the dog more than I?” These sentences say different things, even though *than* acts like a conjunction, seemingly, in the first as well as the second. The first means *more than (she likes) me*, the second *more than I (like the dog)*. [Garner, p. 899]

The meaning can change with one word. We’ve learned that the meaning can even change with punctuation, such as the placement of a comma.

We try to avoid English constructions that sound old-fashioned and stuffy, and we also try to avoid constructions that sound like bad grammar to some people. What about the question in John 18:4? The EHV text reads: Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them,

- A. “For whom are you looking?”
- B. “Who are you looking for?”

Does A sound old-fashioned and stuffy? Does B sound like bad grammar?

On page 964, Garner writes:

It’s true that in certain contexts, *whom* is stilted. That has long been so: “Every sensible English speaker on both sides of the Atlantic says *Who were you talking to?* [—not *Whom*—] and the sooner we begin to write it the better.” J.Y.T. Greig, *Breaking Priscian’s Head* 23 ([n.d.—ca. 1930]).

According to the LANGUAGE-CHANGE INDEX on page 965, “*Who* as an object not following a preposition” is “Stage 4.” That means that it is “virtually universal but is opposed on cogent grounds by a few linguistic stalwarts (die-hard snoots).

So, “Who are you looking for?” is not “bad grammar.” It is viewed as acceptable, but not all “die-hard snoots”* will approve (yet).

***NOTE:** In Garner’s book, “snoot” is not a bad word, but to have a clear grasp of the meaning, be sure to read his description of the word on page 840. It’s both serious and worth a chuckle.

Garner is careful to note that *whom* is not dead in American English. And, *who*= is not always acceptable. For example, “*Who* as an object following a preposition” is only “Stage 2” on the LANGUAGE-CHANGE INDEX. That means that it is “unacceptable in standard usage” even if “a significant fraction of the language community” might use it. In other words, it is not acceptable to say:

“That sits well with the local leaders, *one of who* [read *one of whom*] drew upon his own analogy to describe the party.” [Garner, p. 965].

One of the real benefits of using big data and ngrams is that it is now much more possible to base grammatical judgments on very comprehensive objective data rather than on feelings and biases.

Translation and Geography

Of all the world religions Christianity is the one that is most closely tied to specific historical events that are grounded in real time and that occurred at real places.

That is one reason archaeology is so important as an aid to Bible translation. An understanding of the objects and the events that fill the biblical accounts provides the translator and the reader with a clearer understanding of the recorded events. The many ways in which archaeology has contributed to more accurate translations in the Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV) were discussed in a previous article (See FAQ 16). Here we will mention just one example in passing. The EHV provides more consistent, more objective translations of the musical instruments in the Bible, because our translations are based on the best archaeological information about those instruments. The EHV, for example, distinguishes metal trumpets from ram's horns more clearly and more consistently than most recent translations. On the basis of archaeological evidence the EHV believes that the "tambourines" which appear in many recent translations were more likely "hand drums."

Biblical geography has the same importance in clarifying translations of biblical events and helping readers understand those events.

One reason that we have a combined April/May newsletter is that during the month of April both the general editor and the pastor who maintains our website were in Israel getting another close look at the geography of Israel. One of the things that became very apparent on this trip is that the golden era for studying the geography of biblical Israel, which was opened up in 1967 by Israel's occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank, has come to an end. Contributing factors to this development are the return of Sinai to Egypt, the less stable security situation in Sinai, and the less friendly situation for travelers in the West Bank. But the biggest factor in this change is the increasing urban sprawl in all areas of the country and the great increase in modern four-lane (or more) highways in all parts of the country.

This summer the general editor of the EHV will be teaching a twenty-hour course on biblical geography. He will have to rely very heavily on landscape pictures from thirty to fifty years ago. The geographical experiences available to travelers in those decades can no longer be duplicated.

The old roads are gone (or at least replaced). Travelers entering Jerusalem from the east no longer approach Jerusalem by the old two-lane road over the Mount of Olives, a road on which the view of the Temple Mount dramatically appears as travelers comes over the crest of the Mount of Olives. Today travelers from the east enter Jerusalem through a tunnel under the Mount of Olives.

The Jerusalem/Jericho road until relatively recently was a narrow, up-and-down road with little development along it. It is now a modern, cut-down-the hills, raise-up-the valleys highway that serves extensive high-rise settlements. A traditional site of the shepherds' field east of Bethlehem is surrounded by high-rise apartments. The mound of Old Testament Jericho is hemmed in by urban development. A McDonalds sits on part of ruins of New Testament Beth Shan (Scythopolis).

The study of the geography of biblical Israel will never quite be the same. Fortunately, the golden age for biblical geography produced a lot of research and large collections of color pictures of the landscape of Israel before the current development. The results of this research are an important resource for the production of the EHV.

The full utilization of a lot of this information will have to wait for the Study Bible phase of our work (for example, footnotes that tell how far Paul walked or sailed on the various stages of his journeys). But there are many passages in which knowledge of the geography helps a translator provide clearer renderings of specific passages. This is especially true of passages concerning military campaigns. We will provide a few examples from 1 Samuel.

The retreat of the Philistines after the death of Goliath is described in 1 Samuel 17:52: “Fallen Philistines lined the road of Shaaraim and to Gath and to Ekron.” But does “road of Shaaraim” mean “the road to Shaaraim” or “the road from Shaaraim”? The recent identification of the ruins at Khirbet Qeiyafa, which are located above the west end of the David and Goliath battlefield, as Shaaraim suggests the translation “along the road from Shaaraim, all the way to Gath and Ekron.” Shaaraim was located at the east end of the pursuit and slaughter, and Ekron and Gath, near the mouth of the Elah Valley, were at the west end.

A source of many problems is that biblical geographical terms do not always allow a one-for-one matchup with English terms.

The default translation for the Hebrew word *har* is *mountain*. The default translation for the Hebrew words *geba* and *gibeah* is *hill*. The problem is that many of the elevations which the Bible labels as *har* look more like hills than mountains to us. What makes one elevation a hill and another a mountain? Dictionaries say a hill is a promontory smaller than a mountain, and, you guessed it, a mountain is a promontory larger than a hill. But where is the dividing line? One rule of thumb is anything less than 1000 feet high is a hill, but there is no official dividing line, even for the U.S. Geological Survey. The difference is in the eye of the beholder. That being the case, we believe that in most cases the person who should make the decision about which locations in Israel are *hills* and which are *mountain* should generally be the biblical author. He had the option to call something a *mountain* (*har*) or a *hill* (*geba*) and presumably had good reasons to choose one or the other. So in most cases we will preserve the distinctions made by the biblical authors, with occasional footnotes to clarify the issue and with occasional exceptions based on tradition.

In 1 Samuel 17 the “mountains” on which the Philistines and Israelites take their stand are not very big hills, but the inspired author called them *mountains*. We accept his judgment and call them *mountains*. The site of the Sermon on the Mount is not much more than a good-sized hill, but we are not going to refer to the Sermon on a Hill. The Sea of Galilee is really a lake, not a sea, but we accept the tradition of calling it a *sea*, except for cases in which the New Testament text uses a Greek word that means *lake*. The Old Testament calls the highland regions of Holy Land *the Mountain* (*ha-har*). We follow the long-established tradition of calling it *the Hill Country*.

A *nahal* is a *seasonal stream*, that is, a stream bed that has water in it only part of the year. Depending on the context, a *nahal* may be a *stream*, a *stream bed*, a *gully*, a *ravine*, a *valley*, a *canyon*, or a *torrent*. An awareness of the geography helps the translator make the appropriate choice in each case.

The Hebrew word *midbar*, which we usually translate *wilderness*, refers to arid and semi-arid regions where agriculture is not possible, but grazing is. The word *midbar* is wider than the English word *desert* and narrower than the English word *wilderness*, which includes forested areas. In some contexts *midbar* can be *grazing land* or *open range*. In other contexts *desert* may be appropriate. *Arabah* may also be *desert*, but in some contexts it refers to a *valley* or *plain*. *Jeshimon* may be *Jeshimon*, *wasteland*, or *badlands*. *Emeq* is a *deep valley*, but sometimes it is a *plain* or *lowland*, since certain *emeqs* have a mountain on only one side.

Sadeh is usually translated *field*, but it does not always refer to planted fields. It is often *open countryside* or *the territory around a city*. *Animals of the field* may be *wild animals* but may sometimes include range cattle and sheep. *Trees of the field* sometimes are *cultivated trees*. Sometimes *sadeh* is *farmland*. Sometimes it is a *region* or *territory*.

In all of these and in many other cases, knowledge of the geography is necessary to make appropriate choices.

Another problem is the relationship between ancient and modern place names. In general we use the modern name for familiar places like the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea, but provide footnotes referring to the ancient names. An exception occurs when the text explains one ancient name in terms of another. Then the ancient names must be in the text, and the modern name must be in the note (example: *the Sea of the Arabah is the Salt Sea.* ^{Footnote} *That is, the Dead Sea*). The EHV also acquaints readers with common proper names for geographic areas in Israel such as *Shepelah* and *Arabah*, usually with the aid of footnotes.

Sometimes a problem is complicated enough to require consulting technical studies. An example is the frequent textual confusion of the place names *Gibeon*, *Geba*, and *Gibeah*, which look very similar in Hebrew, and all mean *Hill City*. For a technical study of the issue see *Excavating a Battle: The Intersection of Textual Criticism, Archaeology, and Geography* in the resources section of our web site.

In producing the EHV we utilize not only linguistic resources but also the best available archaeological, historical, and geographic resources.