



# The Wartburg Project

## May News 2014

Here is the monthly progress report on what's happening.

### Progress of Books

Here is the update on books in progress. [Blue](#) is update.

**Books with completed initial drafts:** [Exodus II](#), Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ezekiel, Daniel, [Obadiah](#), Zephaniah, [Haggai](#)|| Matthew, Mark, Luke, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 1, 2 and 3 John. 27 1/2

**Books in progress:** (Test translations already submitted): Judges, John, Acts, Hebrews, 4

**Books that are assigned and for which initial drafts are expected to be in progress or completed in 2014:** [Numbers](#), Ruth, Ezra, Ecclesiastes, Amos, Jonah, [Nahum](#), [Zephaniah](#), Micah, || [Romans](#), 1 Corinthians, Colossians, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, Revelation, and others. 17

**Books ready for or in Technical Review:** [Leviticus](#), Joshua, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zephaniah, [Obadiah](#), [Haggai](#)|| Matthew, Mark, Luke, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Philemon, 1, 2 and 3 John (24)

Unassigned: 18 1/2 all OT

We have about a dozen translators working in each testament and about double that number of tech reviewers (with some overlap between these categories). Our number of “participants” which includes those who have volunteered to help in any category including popular review and with technology is 80-90.

### Rubrics

Rubrics typically will be updated about once a month. There were relatively few changes this month since there are a number of major issues which we are testing and polling as you seen below.

### Topic for the Month Language of Law and Sexual Language

Attached is a sample translation of Leviticus 18-20 to elicit thought about the language of law and the sexual language in the Bible. The necessary background is in the attachment. Some OT reviewers have already seen this, but it is revised.

### Contest of the Month

**Follow Up on Last Month:** last month's topic was *gilul*, one of Ezekiel's favorite terms for idols. Dictionaries and commentaries leave little doubt that this is a pejorative, insulting term. (Ezekiel uses sexual language even cruder than this, but that is another story.) But how strong or weak, how crude or euphemizing should the translation be? Suggestions from mildest to crudest included: idols, "filthy idols" with an explanatory note, fecal deities, dungball deities, horsh\*\* idols. One suggestion from you was that we could follow Tyndale's practice and coin new words (like his at-one-ment and scapegoat). In this case, the neologisms would be dungods and shidols (it even has a Yiddish sound to it). Another suggestion which a Bible class found acceptable was crap idols or crappy idols, cruddy idols. What term best preserves the harsh tone without over-sensationalizing? This issue is even more difficult in the sexual language of Leviticus and Ezekiel, so it deserves further consideration.

### **This month's term: *Kapporet***

What shall we call the lid of the ark of the covenant? For the ark it was a cover, but it served a footstool to the LORD. Blood of atonement was presented there on the Day of Atonement. The traditional "mercy seat" was based on Luther's *Gnadenstuhl*—"throne of grace." This translation recognizes that this object was more than a lid or a cover—God was enthroned above it, and atonement was presented there. But "mercy" is not a very precise rendering of *kopher*, which refers to payment of a ransom. *Kapporet* means an object associated with ransom or atonement. "Atonement cover" seems too prosaic. "Throne of grace" or "place of grace" seems a bit free. Place of atonement? Some paraphrase? Suggestions?

### **Translation and Archaeology: Copper and Bronze**

Sometimes archaeology can supplement written sources as an aid to translation. A question that was asked about the Matthew translation was why some coins in Matthew are called bronze rather than copper, which is the term many translations have. The answer is that archaeological and numismatic resources indicate very clearly the metal in use was normally some type of bronze. In Greek, the same word, *chalkos*, refers to copper and all its alloys. BAG defines *chalkos* as copper, brass, or bronze. Liddell and Scott does say "copper" at the beginning of the article, but the article goes on to say that the term includes bronze but not brass. Then, strangely, many of the Greek derivatives of *chalkos* are defined as brass. (Lesson: don't believe everything you read in a lexicon.) Because church artifacts are often made of brass (an alloy of copper and zinc) older translations consistently used "brass" for the tabernacle furnishing, until research showed no evidence for brass before 500 BC. Bronze is any alloy of copper except for brass. Pure copper is very soft, so copper is good for bendable pipes and electrical wire, but not very good for things that take wear and tear. Bronze on the other hand is very durable. Good tin bronze is better for swords than iron. For this reason the archaeological periods are called the Bronze Ages, not the Copper Ages. Coins would not have to be weapons-grade bronze, but the coin manuals that actually analyze the coins call them bronze, and the coins have the look of bronze.

A good survey of the issue of copper, brass, and bronze can be found by Googling the composition of U.S. pennies. At first pennies were pure copper—no good, too soft. So for most of their history our "copper pennies" were bronze. Even a penny with 95% copper is technically bronze unless it is copper and zinc. American pennies have also been poor quality brass. Today's fake pennies are zinc, coated with copper. Our current fake pennies are an example of what copper looks like. Indian head pennies are an example of what bronze looks like. Biblical coins have that darker brown look.

It is possible some of the smallest coins mentioned in the Bible were made on the cheap of copper, but this practice, as the U.S. mint discovered, was, to coin a phrase, "penny wise and pound foolish" because such coins wore out quickly. The numismatic resources call all the biblical coins bronze, so it seems best to call all the copper-based objects in the Bible bronze, unless there is evidence to the contrary. The ore and raw material are copper; objects are bronze. Calling bronze "copper" is similar to calling steel "iron."

[http://www.usmint.gov/about\\_the\\_mint/fun\\_facts/?action=fun\\_facts2](http://www.usmint.gov/about_the_mint/fun_facts/?action=fun_facts2)

## **How translators work**

An anecdote from Dave Kuske on how the term “super-fine apostles” got into J. P. Meyer’s translation of 2 Corinthians:

I got a chuckle in regard to your note about "super-fine apostles." I had not remembered that Meyer had used that expression in his commentary, but it brought back a couple memories about him. When we were Juniors, he was in his 80's and would ask for a student volunteer to drive him up to Manitowoc (?) where he did some supply preaching once a month. I volunteered a couple times and remember how on the way he would sometimes ask about exactly what some current popular expression meant. Then we would find that, if it fit, he would use it in class. At the time when he was presenting his study of 2 Corinthians (which eventually became the commentary) to a Milwaukee pastors conference, there was sugar company that advertised that their sugar was the finest on the market. Subsequently another sugar company began to advertise that their sugar was "super-fine" - apparently a grade above "finest". Meyer apparently liked that term for someone who was boasting above and beyond others. I checked, and sure enough he used that term in class too, and I have it in my Isagogics notes from his class. And now you know "the rest of the story" as Paul Harvey used to say.

## **Meet the Brothers**

Attached is the sixth edition of Meet the Brothers, which provides profiles of participants in the project. New profiles that came in this month are below the blue line.

This is only a partial list of participants. Submission of a profile is optional. You can still submit a profile is you wish to.

## **Psalms Offer**

The first draft of Psalms was offered free on Amazon. We gave away 1460 units and sold 42. A fair number were from several of Amazon’s foreign marketplaces.

## **Web Site Update**

Work is progressing on our web site. We may go partly operational next month.

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[Attachments; Rubrics, Brothers 6, This letter](#), Leviticus 18-20