



Samoaan Contemporary Old Testament

Overview

This project seeks to complete the translation of the Samoan Old Testament in contemporary language, to join with the contemporary New Testament which was completed in 2009. With the completion of the Old Testament translation, it will be possible to publish the whole Bible in the contemporary language.



The Need

The Samoan communities have requested the translation of the Old Testament into the contemporary language after the completion of the New Testament in 2009. Samoa is politically stable, and the culture is very supportive of the Christian message. This religious freedom helps in gaining support and acceptance for Bible translation work.

The estimated population of Samoa is 205,557 (Census 2021), and 27% of Samoans are under 15 years old. Whilst the Bible Society has maintained the old versions to meet the older generation, it is also working at meeting the growing needs of younger and future generations. Nearly all Samoans are literate. Education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 14; however, only a small fraction of the population has completed secondary school. Moreover, there is still a great demand for printed Scriptures to benefit those living in rural areas.

100k

people may be impacted by this Bible translation project.

27%

of Samoans are under 15 years old

9

Old Testament books have been completed already and awaiting review.

9/12

books of the Minor Prophets have had a complete review.

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

John 10:10b, ESV

Goals

The goal of this project is to publish in print and electronic formats a complete Contemporary Samoan Bible, thereby ensuring that younger generations of Samoan speakers will better understand the Scriptures.

In 2024, the project will continue drafting Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, 1 King, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah. Drafts of Daniel, Ezekiel, Lamentation, Jeremiah, Song of Songs, Psalms, Esther, Ezra and Ruth are completed and awaiting review. The original drafters of the books are to make the necessary editorial work and improve their translation drafts. Next, they can print the books and give it out for community checking or community review. Further editorial work based on feedback received are to be done as translation drafts are improved further.

A written back-translation of the books must be produced by an uninitiated native speaker (UNS) or a selected translator who has no connection with that book. This is produced for the translation officer to do their consultant checking. Any comments on the book from the Consultant (after working on the back translation) are to be reviewed again by the original translator before it is ready for draft typesetting. A final proofreading is to be done before printing the book.

Impact

The total number of people who may be impacted by this Bible translation project is 100,000.

It is hoped that this meaning-based translation will bring transformation in the lives of all Samoans (believers and non-believers). The completed Bible will also assist in equipping the Church for a new Samoan generation.

Testimonies

"They'll end up with something far more like the Good News Version than the King James Version. Their hope is that it will become widely accepted in Samoa, not only amongst the younger and next generations (for whom it is aimed) but also amongst older people who may use it alongside their beloved older Samoan version as an aid for understanding and reading God's word" — Sam Freney, Translation Consultant, Bible Society Australia

Prayer Needs

- Pray for the Samoa translation team, pray for committed individuals to join the team.
- Pray for Church leaders in Samoa, the Samoan church community, and for more to support this Bible mission work.
- Pray for the completion of the 12 Minor prophets' books in 2024.