



Kenyan Sign Language IG*

“I Always Got Confused”

After Justus, a Kenyan Deaf man, watched the biblical story of David and Bathsheba in his own Kenyan Sign Language at a Deaf church during a trip to test the translation, he said to Bernard, the consultant-in-training, “I never before understood the story of David and Bathsheba as I did today.” Bernard’s immediate reaction was, “Why not, since it’s such a common Bible story?”

Justus looked at Bernard and said, “I always knew that David had taken Bathsheba to be one of the women in his royal court. But I never understood the exact connection between Bathsheba, her former husband Uriah and the Prophet Nathan’s rebuke to David. In fact, I always got confused when I tried to read the story in the written Bible.

“But as the pastor was signing the story chronologically to us today, it was so clear.” Justus paused for a second and said, “Now I understand one of the reasons why the story is in the Bible. God wants us to see the dangers of being involved sexually with someone else’s wife.”

- **Praise God that His Word in Kenyan Sign Language is helping clear up confusion for the Deaf.**

Intriguing Responses

On the fourth day of community testing, translator Kennedy showed the Kenyan Sign Language recording of the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 4:32-5:11 to the Deaf. Afterwards, he asked the participants if they knew the identity of Joseph in Acts 4:36.

The response was intriguing as well as surprising. All the participants, including the pastor of the Deaf church, answered, “It was Joseph the carpenter, the earthly father of Jesus.” Kennedy showed them the entire clip again and explained carefully that the Joseph mentioned in this passage is different from the one in the Gospels.

During the tea break, Juma, one of the Deaf participants, told a member of the Deaf Opportunity OutReach (DOOR) team: “It’s typically very difficult for the Deaf, including myself, to understand the Bible from our background in the written version, since our own sign language is so different. That’s why I didn’t understand that Joseph in Acts was different from the father of Jesus.” Now with God’s Word in Kenyan Sign Language, Juma knows the difference. The two “Josephs” have different sign names!



- **Location: Kenya, Africa**
- **Number of Speakers: 200,000**
- **Year Project Began: 2009**
- **Expected Completion Date: 2012**

“I never before understood the story of David and Bathsheba as I did today.”

- **Pray that more and more Bible stories will become accessible to the Deaf in their own Kenyan Sign Language.**



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Meat from God's Word

Now that the Kenyan Sign Language translators have given the Deaf the elementary truths of God's Word contained in the 77 stories of the Evangelism Series and the Discipleship Series ("How to Know God" and "How to Follow God"), they've begun drafting the 34 stories in the Believer's Fellowship Series, "How To Serve God".

This latest Bible story set is aimed at giving God's followers the meat of His Word and helping them grow in maturity as it deals with weighty topics such as marriage, sexual sins, spiritual gifts and ministry. These teachings will benefit Deaf pastors and church leaders and other Deaf people involved in ministry.

So far, the translators have drafted 12 stories in the "How To Serve God" series and received helpful feedback from comprehension testing in the Deaf community. The participants were excited to watch a sign-language Bible, most of them for the first time. The teaching points included in each story were also new and relevant, which the Deaf found applicable to their lives.

The team is currently working on the next 12 stories in the Believer's Fellowship Series. Testing of all completed stories is ongoing.

Church Leaders Receive Training

Kennedy, who works at DOOR in Nairobi, is very passionate about training church leaders to use the chronological Bible stories in Kenyan Sign Language. He leaves the DOOR center on Saturdays twice a month, or sends someone else, and travels eight hours by road to his own town of Kisumu. He stays overnight and the next day he trains the Deaf church leaders, attends their worship and travels back to Nairobi, where he resumes his facilitator role on the Kenyan Sign Language team on Monday.

- **Pray that church leaders and translators will apply what they're learning in these training sessions.**
- **Thank the Lord for a consultant development workshop that recently took place at the DOOR center. Pray that the seven Deaf translators who attended will have abundant opportunities to use their training to serve the Lord.**

- **Pray for the team as they make revisions to the translated Scriptures based on input they receive during community testing.**
- **Praise God for an in-house DVD duplicator, which is an easier and more economical way of reproducing copies of His Word in Kenyan Sign Language.**



Kennedy with Deaf believers in Kisumu

Six Steps of Translation

1. **First Draft:** translators analyze what a passage says and produce a first draft.
2. **Team Check:** translators check each verse for accuracy and clarity.
3. **Community Testing:** translators share drafted Scripture with community members to test how well it communicates.
4. **Back Translation:** translators translate the draft "back" into a major language for a non-native consultant.
5. **Consultant Check:** a consultant checks the translation with the team to make sure expected standards are met.
6. **Proofread:** translators rigorously proofread the final draft for errors before publication.

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