



Safwa

Scriptures Displayed Prominently

The Safwa translators are pleased to announce that they've distributed calendars for 2009 to mother-tongue speakers with Scripture verses on each page in the people's heart language. These calendars are another tool to expose the Safwa to God's Word as they're displayed in a prominent place for all to see throughout the day.

- **Pray that the Lord will use these Scripture calendars to draw many Safwa people to the truths of His Word and to make a significant difference in their hearts and lives.**

Creating Awareness of God's Word

The one-day Scripture-use seminar was held, as planned. Now the team and other Safwa participants are better equipped to create awareness among their fellow mother-tongue speakers of the translation task and to stir their interest in using the Bible portions as they become available.

- **Thank the Lord that the Safwa team is learning how to convey their vision for the translation work more strategically among their own people.**

Many Hands Make Light Work

A new technical advisor is scheduled to begin working with the Safwa team later this year. The Safwa language committee met together last month to discuss goals for the translation project in the current year.

A linguist is on hand to assist the literacy effort by proofreading the stories the Safwa team produced at the story workshop last year. This specialist will also help the team with the challenging phonological and orthographical issues of the Safwa language so that the translation work can go ahead.

- **Thank the Lord for the arrival of this linguist. Pray that she'll settle in well.**



- **Location: Tanzania, Africa**
- **Number of Speakers: 158,000**
- **Year Project Began: 2006**
- **Expected Completion Date: 2015**

- **Pray that the translation task will resonate with more and more Safwa speakers.**

- **Pray that God will give direction to the Safwa language committee in their decisions. Praise Him for providing a technical advisor to guide the team.**

- **Pray that God will send another fulltime translator to the Safwa team.**



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Can God Cast Lots?

Before the book of Jonah was published in the Mbeya Cluster languages, a consultant had been teaching at a Bible translation workshop in the area, and the participants were working on the book. As they discussed chapter 1, they got to verse 7 where the sailors divined who was responsible for the calamity they were in. Every Mbeya Cluster language has a word for *divination*, since it's a normal part of their traditional non-Christian culture. Then the consultant asked the men, "*Did it work? Did they correctly divine who was to blame?*" They struggled with the issue, because it had in fact produced the correct answer.

"*But how can pagan divination be used by God?*" they asked. "*And does this mean that pagan diviners in our areas are doing God's will?*" Then they looked at another verse of Scripture that says God has authority even over the casting of lots (Exodus 28:30). And looking at the Jonah passage, they noticed that God was given credit for exposing Jonah as the guilty party, and in the end those pagan sailors offered sacrifices to the Lord! They saw that in the book of Jonah this was a special thing God had done. But in their local context, the translators saw that diviners seek their own glory and use a power not of God. They'd been afraid that if people in the community read Jonah, they might conclude that divination was acceptable. Now they had an answer from Scripture as to why Christians should have nothing to do with divination.

Like Playing a Guitar to Goats

On a recent visit to the Mbeya Cluster language area, the project leaders heard some interesting similes. They asked several people who'd gathered to meet them what would be the use of preaching in English to people in that area. The point of the question was to help people realize the need of preaching in the mother tongue. One young man stood up and said that to preach in English would be like playing a guitar to goats! Later in the same meeting, a pastor said that because the language area is very mixed and many people speak other languages, he feels like a driver of a truck laden with sacks. Since he preaches in Swahili, he leaves behind those people who speak the Mbeya Cluster languages as they don't understand a lot of what he's saying. Referring to his simile, he said he feels as though sacks keep falling off the back of his truck since, while many people in the church can understand the Swahili sermons, the Mbeya Cluster members of his congregation get left behind. His desire is to have the Bible translated into the Mbeya Cluster languages so that he doesn't leave people behind like the imaginary truck driver.

- **Thank the Lord for giving the Mbeya Cluster translators insight into the meaning of difficult portions of His Word.**
- **Pray that the teams will continue to show discernment as they approach the deep teachings of Scriptures and apply it to their lives and to the translation task.**

- **Praise God for the many indications that His Word in the Mbeya Cluster languages is having its desired effect in the local communities.**