



BIBLE news & notes

The Same Today As Yesterday

By David G. Burke

(NAPSA)—What does a writer of 3,000 or 2,000 years ago have to say to us today? Everything! We share little with their society and common understandings, yet the Holy Scriptures affirm the power



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of God to speak to every generation. The differences of culture and society, language and custom can be bridged by the careful work of Bible translators.

The critical task for these scholars is to bring the thoughts and images of one time and place into a language that is clear, natural and understandable for modern people. This is no small task.

What translators are trying to do is to convey the meaning of the Bible's original language texts in the clearest contemporary language. Some worry that this is "changing the words of the Bible." Nothing could be further from the truth.

All the words of the Bible remain—in the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek manuscripts from earlier times. What translators do is convey the meaning of those original language Scripture texts as clearly and effectively as possible into a language people speak today.

This is more complicated than

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usually is assumed. It's not a "word-for-word substitution" approach. Something more is required to guarantee accuracy in understanding. Here is an example of simply moving words from Greek to English: 1 Peter 1:13, "Gird up the loins of your mind." Few of us have any idea what this means. A more understandable translation into English would be, "Prepare your minds for action."

This rendering demonstrates the contemporary approach of transferring meaning across the enormous language and culture gap from the ancient biblical text to the modern language text. A "thought-for-thought" approach captures the elements of meaning and brings them into the most natural English sentence structure and understandable wording.

The work of Bible translators is vitally important as attitudes and concepts from the ancient times of the Scriptures are transferred from their original setting to our own day. It is a daunting, but essential, task in making the Word of God come alive for us today.

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