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*"First, it was animal sacrifices."*

I was in South Asia last month at a Deaf worship service, and they were about to have the Lord's Supper. **That's how the prayer for the bread began.**

*"You decreed that animals should be sacrificed for the sins of the people. And yet, the sacrifices had to be offered repeatedly. No animal's life could fully wipe away sins and make us righteous before you. But then you sent your Son, Jesus. He came to live, teach, model, love, suffer, and ultimately die for our sins. He was enough. So we come before you today in great gratitude for Jesus' sacrifice, which allows us to live in relationship with You."*

Jesus

PAID IT ALL, ALL TO HIM I OWE



While I'm aware of the connection, I'm not sure I've ever heard a Lord's Supper prayer like that.

DOOR Bible translation teams follow an approach called Chronological Bible Translation (CBT). **Teams translate 110 selected Bible passages**, following rigorous translation principles and standards. These 110 passages were carefully chosen, with prayer and input from biblical scholars and Deaf leaders. **These provide initial access to Scripture**

**with passages from Genesis to Revelation.\*** And while not all are narrative passages, they take advantage of the high value of narrative in the Deaf community.

So when Deaf people have learned the 110 passages, they see the connections. **They see it as one big story.** If you ever thought that stories do not teach doctrine, think again. The story of Jesus' sacrifice begins in the Old Testament.

\* Many go on to later translate larger portions of the Bible.

## PRAISES:

- Safe travel during the last 2 months
- More Deaf people understanding that God knows their heart language

## PRAISE & PRAYER

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Wisdom, encouragement, and perseverance for the African Deaf translation team I spent time with recently
- Protection, wisdom, and courageous faith for our Deaf brothers and sisters in South Asia and other sensitive regions
- Ongoing growth in my love relationship with Jesus, which would overflow into the lives of the people around me

What if God only knew Finnish? We'd be in trouble! Prayer would be difficult at best. Even if you got really good at Finnish, **it would never be your first language ... your heart language.**

# God KNOWS MY language

Deaf people around the world are often told, directly or indirectly, that **God doesn't know sign language.** Some are told that they must pray with their voices, not their hands. After all, they are told, God is hearing (not Deaf).

Others are told that they can sign, but they must use the vocabulary of their sign language with the grammar of the local spoken language. That's complicated, not to mention a very odd linguistic idea.

I was just in an African country this month, teaching Deaf Christian leaders some about the linguistics of sign languages. **Due to all they had been told all of their lives, the idea that their sign language was really a complete, full, rich language was mind-bending.** While they would have agreed in theory that God knew their sign language, they always prayed with signs following the spoken language grammar, and many also used their voices.

Some thought that their sign language wasn't a real language because it had borrowed signs from other sign languages. We talked about English, and how many borrowed words it has. (They all agreed that English was a real language!) Others said that their sign language couldn't be a real language because it didn't have "the," "a/an," or verb inflections for tenses. I told them that the Thai spoken/written language doesn't have those things either. (Both spoken/written Thai and sign languages are perfectly capable of communicating those concepts; they just don't do it in the same way.)

*"The fact is,"* I signed, *"God knows your sign language even better than you do."* Some were speechless (signless?). Others looked pleasantly shocked. And a number of hands were raised to sign, *"Amen! Amen!"*

If a translation team believes that God's languages are the spoken and written ones, their translation will likely be influenced by the hearing language of the country. **When Deaf people understand and believe that God fully knows, understands, and embraces their language, their Bible translations will better reflect their sign language ... the heart language of their Deaf community.**



DOOR International's mission is to bring God's Word and reproducing Christian fellowships to the Deaf of the world. DOOR is a non-denominational, non-profit (501(c)3) Christian mission organization of many Deaf people (and a few hearing people).



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