

Megahans: In His Service

Spring 2019



Lutheran Bible
Translators

Jo Ann and Michael Megahan
Adjunct Missionaries with Lutheran Bible Translators:
Botswana and Tanzania

He Dressed in Dried Banana Leaves

Jonah 3:6 (NIV): "When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust."

This might seem like a simple verse to translate. But, in a culture where there are no kings, what are "royal robes"? What is "sackcloth" and why wear such garments? Why sit in the dust (Hebrew says 'ashes')?

The Kerewe team (Tanzania) discussed these concepts for a lengthy time. Suddenly, as we talked about sackcloth worn to symbolize mourning or repentance, one of the members exclaimed, "We have the same custom only we say that a person dresses in *dried banana leaves*." The others agreed with him.

Many cultures have similar concepts, but talk about them in different ways. For example, *sackcloth* symbolizes mourning and repentance in Hebrew, whereas the same is expressed as clothing made of *dried banana leaves* in Kerewe.

After a team understands the *meaning* of a text and how to communicate the meaning in their language, there is the need to decide whether or not to change the text to fit the local culture or to be "literal" in the text and then add a footnote of explanation for the culture. That is, does the Kerewe team write some words that seem to say "sackcloth" in the main text and then explain in the footnote that culturally they would say "dried banana leaves," or use the latter in the text and then add a footnote that says the literal Hebrew is "sackcloth"?



Rev. Mahendeka Mrs. Luzwilo Ev. Makene Rev. Malelo

Our Mission:

Putting God's Word of Life into every language. Please join us in this ministry with prayer and financial support

(Romans 10:12-15)

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When translating, the individuals do not just copy words, but try to communicate the meaning of the text in a way the readers can easily understand in their own experience of the world. It takes time, research and lots of prayer. Please keep us in your prayers to the glory of God.

UPCOMING EVENTS and PRAYER REQUESTS

1. June 22 to July 23: Michael will be traveling to Tanzania (Kerewe project) and then to Botswana (Khwe project). Airfares have soared for various reasons, so please keep the financial needs for the trips in prayer. Please keep Michael's safety in prayer and guard Jo Ann as Michael will be gone one month.
2. Future: After the July trip, Michael plans three more activities for the year: September visit: Tanzania and Botswana; October: Bible Translation Conference in Dallas; November (or December) possible trip to projects. Our financial support level is very low for the year (to date) and so we ask for prayer for these upcoming plans.
3. We have a great desire to visit you or your congregation. We ask that if you have a time slot for us to come, please give us a phone call or e-mail and we will make plans.



Dear Friends of Megahans,
I love working with Dr. Michael Megahan. His 45+ years of missionary and ministry experience is a HUGE factor in the work he does.

In the African context, AGE MATTERS. Those who are over 50 are given more respect and more attention. Those over 60 or over 70, even more so!

This means that when Michael communicates with the translators, it has a BIG IMPACT. This happens whether in person, by email or even WhatsApp messenger.



Thank you for your prayers and support!
Jim Laesch, LBT Regional Director

