

Opening Pak-istan

Squeezed between the Middle East and Asia, Pakistan broke off from Hindu India in the mid 1900s and became the only nation to be established explicitly in the name of Islam. Its capitol is Islamabad. Its citizens are 97% Muslim. Like India, as you can see, it is linguistically very complicated with multiple state languages and 80+ Bibleless tribal language communities. Urdu and English are national languages, but few citizens speak them. About 50% of the population are illiterate. Accessibility to Scripture in a known language is almost nil! The Church is tiny (1.5% of the population) and persecuted. But they are persevering. The country is “sensitive” and essentially “closed”.



However, the Spirit of Jesus recently pulled a “can-opener” move.

God said: **“Contact TBT. They need you!”**

“I have King David’s key in my hand.
When I open a door, nobody can shut it...”

- Jesus (from Rev 3:7 Easy Version)

A couple weeks ago, I got an email, out-of-the-blue, from an unknown-to-me **translator-pastor guy called Irfan** [Ear-fawn], writing from Pakistan. He was requesting permission to do some volunteer translation work for the Story app into Urdu (and possibly several other state languages). I’m always very open to anyone who wants to volunteer, so I sent him a few Bible stories to translate, and he had them back to me very quickly, nicely translated. After another round of stories rapidly translated, which confirmed to me that Irfan also had good computer and file management skills, we set up a “zoom” meet. I was also happy to screen-meet Irfan’s beautiful family (wife and two boys, aged 12 and 8), and I was extremely curious to learn how this pastor-translator, with a heart for the many Bibleless in his country, had found me and why he wanted to do this work. His short matter-of-fact story will amaze you, like it did me:



A few weeks ago, Irfan was running errands around his city on his motorbike when the Holy Spirit told him out-of-the-blue: **“Contact Tyndale Bible Translators. They need you.”** Irfan did not really know what was

happening, and he certainly did not know anything about TBT, but when he got home, he googled them and started browsing around on the website. He found a page on the website and read about the Story Publisher and other apps for helping people do oral Bible translation. He read about the Story app getting launched in India and Indonesia. So, he wrote to the given email address expressing his desire to contribute his translation skills so that Pakistan could get DIY translation apps. And that is how we got connected, even though we live

on opposite sides of the globe, and we had no common people, organization or event connections. Just Jesus. Wow! I love that!



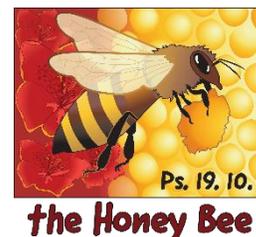
I told Irfan that he was an answer to prayer, and it seems as though God has raised him up, along with these oral Bible translation apps, to be a bridge to get the Word available to the folks in his nation! He's our "unPak Paki-man"! 😊 Irfan expressed eagerness for me to come to Pakistan to introduce the Story app to some of the Bibleless in his country. I told him that that may come in time, but first we have some prep work to do -- getting the Story app resources into major languages of Pakistan. He's eager to do this. **Remember Irfan as he begins this big work – protection from the evil one, wisdom, focus, and provision from the Father of Light.**

My doubts and stresses

Y'know, sometimes I stress about doing effective Story app and Honey Bee app promotion... is there something else I can do to let people around the world know about these wonderful, cutting-edge, freely-available translation tools? Is there something else I can do to speed up the process to make these apps and God's Word accessible to the many ethnic nations still waiting? Well, Irfan's story – how God Himself recruited him – has once again set my mind at ease about the whole "promotion-pace-provision" issue. The Captain of our Salvation has guided this endeavor from its infancy, and He is not removing His hand from the helm. Never mind what seems like "delays" or being "waylaid"... these are all elements that God has used for steering what He desires to take place in His time.

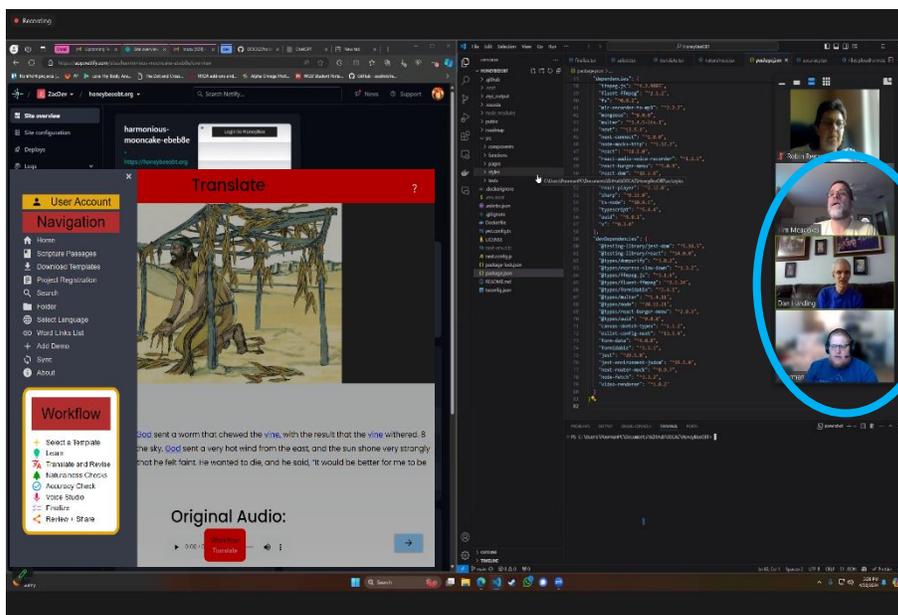
Honey Bee (HB) progress

The requests to use the HB app in the field to do oral Bible translation, are coming more frequently (i.e. from Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico...). But the HB is still under construction. Like the Story app, there are two parts to developing the HB:



- (1) the **software**;
- (2) the **Bible resources**.

Pray for the volunteer software team (Zach, Dan, Tim, others?)! Recently it was great to zoom with these few gifted techies. The **software** coding under-the-hood is pretty much Greek to me, but I hang with the engineers now and then to monitor how the app looks and functions – giving input from a "driver's" perspective.



The HB resources development progression:

- Scholar-linguist Galen (81) drafts.
- Robin reviews and edits.
- Consultant Elly checks. We all correct.
- Robin adds images and AI audio.
- Translators translate into major languages.

The small but potent team that I am working with on the HB **Bible resources** is steadily making progress. **Ask the Lord to send another translation consultant to join our team.** We are about 10% finished with the entire Bible. Finished this month are: Genesis, Jonah, Ruth,

Matthew. Half-finished are: Exodus, Luke, Acts, Ephesians. **Ask God to sustain us with His grace to continue this work for some years until it is complete.** We are essentially writing a new “unpacked” translation of the Bible that is as easy as possible for other language speakers to translate. This new translation also includes embedded, synthesized **Brief Exegetical Notes (BENs)** so that local translators do not have to do overwhelming research through vast quantities of commentaries and translation helps in a 2nd or 3rd language to find the meaning of a passage when it is not clear.

Other Encouraging News Bytes



Jim and Cindy and I did our linguistic and translation training at the same time waaay back in the day. They recently retired from their career work facilitating the remote Culina tribe in Peru to get the New Testament in their language. These two experienced servant-saints are now putting their energies and skills toward helping us complete resources in **Spanish** for the oral translation apps. Their “re-tread” efforts are going to reach and bear fruit for the Kingdom far beyond the Peruvian border. **I’m so thankful for them!**



Laurent and his buddies are **French**-speaking, third-generation Story app trainers. They are conducting a short training this month – Evangelism + SPadv app – for a church in their West African country. He says, **“Great is my joy in serving the Lord through this wonderful app that produces Bible story videos.”**



This photo shows part of the **Indo1000** team meeting in the world’s largest Islamic nation to sort out details for moving into the central island of Sulawesi with the Story app, so that hungry new believers can quickly get some Bible content in their tribal languages and grow in the Lord. **Ask the Lord to raise up local translators in each tribal group, and “young apostles” to be sent out to train them.**



My friend **Connie** and I also go waaay back to our Bible college and choir tour days. She’s flying down from Montana to visit me for a long weekend. Whoop! We gonna play some pickleball an swim an sing an enjoy leetle bit reprieve from da normal daily dailies. Hallelujah for fun friends willing and able to travel! 😊

Thank you for your partnership in this work! May the Lord encourage you with a glimpse behind the veil this week.

Pressing on,

Robin

Summary Prayer and Gr8ful Items:

- Strength and perseverance for **major language story translators** like Irfan, Cindy, “Barny”, Ciró ...
- Perseverance and wisdom in developing **Honey Bee app software** and **exegetical resources** to be ready for field testing soon...
- The army of “young apostle” **Story app trainers and disseminators** God is raising up like Laurent and Larry...
- The **Word to spread** like wild fire among the Bibleless!

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