

# ISLES



A Tropical Isles Report from the GUAM-MICRONESIA MISSION of SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS SPRING 2003

SPECIAL ISSUE

The  
*Resurrection*  
Of The (1908)  
*Chamorro Bible*



## ISLES

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## President's Message

I know you will be happy to see the Chamorro Brothers and Sisters read and hear the Gospel of Salvation in their own language. John the Revelator confined on the island of Patmos had the small islands of Guam and Saipan in mind when he wrote: "Blessed (happy) is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written, for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:3.

Guam Micronesia Mission realizes the shortness of time and has accepted the challenge of printing the Chamorro Bible at the cost of \$40,000.00. The Chamorro Bibles will be used for the planned Evangelistic Meetings for Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in the years to come. These Bibles will be made available to Book Stores on the islands, including the Guam Adventist Book Center (ABC). Copies will be given to Public Libraries and School Libraries.

There are 62,000 Chamorros living on Guam; Another 12,500 lives in Hawaii and 14,205 are living in the Commonwealth of Saipan. Guam has a population of 153,000 and Saipan has a population of 76,000 as of 2003. There are more Chamorro people living in the mainland USA.

Providence has led to the finding of an out-of-print Chamorro Bible that contains the four Gospels, Acts, and the Psalms. It was originally printed in 1908. Arrangements have been made to print this Chamorro Bible. This Bible will contain Chamorro on one side and English on the other. The main target is to reach the 80% of the Chamorro Ethnic group who has command of their language.

We are living at the end of the "time of the end" as signs around us indicate. Our only commission from our Lord is "Go and make disciples of every nations...tongues, and people." Paul says, "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." We have no time to spare! It is urgent that we unite our effort and bring this Chamorro Bible to the hands of our brothers and sisters who read and understand the Chamorro language. There is a warning that comes to us

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from the young prophet Amos who wrote: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea,.... they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” Amos 8:11 & 12. The Chamorro people have strong hearts that are still beating and waiting to hear the Words of God. Let us help to quench the thirst of the Chamorro people who are panting for Jesus Christ-the Water of Life.

Another note of interest, Tinian is a small island in the Commonwealth of Saipan where “Enola Gay” is located; where the well know B-29 took off with the atomic bomb that was dropped on Japan ending World War II. The Word of God written in Chamorro or any language is more powerful than that atomic bomb, for it

gives eternal life to him “that believeth and is baptized ...” Mark 16:16.

Friends of Guam and Micronesia, you will be so happy to know that your contribution to the printing of this Holy Bible will bring additional light to God’s people, the Chamorros. “The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” says the psalmist. “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth.” Ps. 119:103.

On behalf of Guam Micronesia Mission, I wish to thank you. At the same time, I appeal to you to contribute as much as you can for this worthy project.

Your friend in Christ,



Willy Nobuo

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The ISLES magazine is always looking for stories to report, updates on the various islands in the Marshalls, Micronesia, and Marianas, as well as personal experiences. If you have any articles or story ideas you would like to submit, please contact the editor at [bethanysmartin@hotmail.com](mailto:bethanysmartin@hotmail.com).



## Letter From The Editor

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**Responses to any article in ISLES is gladly welcomed. We would love to hear from you! Send your email to the Editor.**

**Do you have an article you would like to submit?**

Please email the editor at [bethanysmartin@hotmail.com](mailto:bethanysmartin@hotmail.com)

The love of God transcends all knowledge and understanding. His riches and mercy endure forever and His plan in our lives exceed human boundaries. And for that I am thankful. Never would I have imagined that I would have had the opportunity to partner-up with Him and be an instrument in bringing the Chamorro Bible back to His people.

It has certainly been quite the journey as I have participated in researching the religious history of Guam and the Chamorro Bible. There were many days when I felt overwhelmed and speechless with awe at the history being uncovered. I remember several times coming home late at night and sitting alone in the darkness with nothing to do but pray to the only One who could understand my thoughts, concerns, and sanctity of what I was handling. I felt incredibly unqualified and inexperienced to be part of a project to bring the Holy Scriptures back to the Chamorro people in their own language. But each time those thoughts entered my mind, God's voice was heard even louder: "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you..." (Jeremiah 1:7) I am so thankful that God does not call the qualified, but He qualifies those whom He calls.

I have such love, respect, and appreciation for the Chamorro people and their culture. I've been a recipient of their unconditional hospitality and walked away in amazement that they would gladly welcome a complete stranger, such as myself, into their very own homes. While they may have been missing their own Bible for nearly a century, the character of Christ is not absent from their hearts.

The resurrection of the Chamorro Bible is an exciting time for the Chamorro people and long overdue. Copies will soon be placed in the hands of every Chamorro wishing to have one. God's words are true: "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and will bring you back from captivity...'" (Jeremiah 29:11-14)

God has heard the cries of the Chamorro people and has answered their prayers. They will no longer be without the Scriptures in their own language.

It is my privilege to be placing in your hands a special issue of *ISLES* dedicated to the history and resurrection of the Chamorro Bible. I pray that you will find it informative, educational, and that most of all, you will see the hand of God reaching out to you and personally placing the Bible in your very hands. May the Word of God come to life and cause you to fall in love again with the Book of books that gives freedom and life to the soul.

May God truly bless,

Bethany S. Martin, Editor

*“O Jeova. Namandinangculo Sija Y Chechomo! Yan Jinasomo Mansentadong”*  
*Salmo 92:5 (Psalm 92:5)*

**Clarence L. Thomas, IV**

One of my favorite locations in Guam is the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC), a world-class research center and a United States crown jewel located on the campus of Unibetsedåt Guahan (University of Guam) in Mangilao, Guam. It was there that I went to begin writing an all-too-brief overview of what is, up to the present time, the most important, unexpected, and sacred turn in my life: A participant in the restoration of the 1908 Chamorro Bible.

The plan was simple: (1) Determine the availability and status of the Chamorro Bible in places where religious books are kept: Guam bookstores and public libraries, local SDA headquarters, the libraries of SDA pastors and Bible Societies and (2) acquire the Bible(s).

When the plan was placed into action on August 2001 the basic research proceeded rapidly and quietly. Based on the information coming in, it became clear that *the goal* should be to get printed copies of the 1908 Chamorro Bible back into circulation: Chamorros have a right to a Bible, Jesus’ Word, in their own language too. I also realized that to recognize the correct path towards that goal, I needed within a short period of time a clearer picture and a much deeper understanding of the Chamorro culture, Chamorro language, Chamorro secular and religious history, and the history of Seventh-day Adventist activities in the Mariana Islands.

So I went back to—and still am in—school. Some of the teachers are individuals directly involved in the Bible restoration phase, others are not. Although they may have had only the faintest glimpse of the project’s current scope, they took—correction—still take, the time to answer my Chamorro language, cultural, political, historical, and religious questions.

Here is a brief look at some of the contributions each has made and is making (unless otherwise indicated all participants are in Guam):

**Denise P. Hersey, Connecticut, USA:** Ms. Hersey, the original 1908 Chamorro Bible Yale University library loaned us has initiated actions that will reverberate for the foreseeable future. Thank you and Yale University for loaning it to us.

**Guam-Micronesia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists:** Pastor Willy S. Nobuo, GMM President, and his staff want to see the Chamorro Bible back in circulation. GMM is using its influence and resources, an example is this special issue of the ISLES, to inform people of this very important project. Pastor Nobuo’s continued personal support and the support of his office, the GMM officers and staff are much appreciated.

**Pastor Eliseo A. Jimeno:** Pastor and Mrs. Jimeno have continuously lived in Micronesia since their arrival in 1953. Although retired, as a pastor and GAA teacher respectively, they have helped me understand various aspects of Guam’s Bible history, the Chamorro culture, and Guam’s religious history. Their advice, counsel, and perspectives which come from long experience in God’s work are needed and priceless.

**Frank Leon Guerrero Taitague:** Even though Pastor Taitague, a retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor and former GMM president, is now active in other areas, he has always taken the time to place the Micronesian SDA work into perspective for me. I benefit from his long experience in the SDA work and his intimate knowledge of the Chamorro culture. Pastor Taitague arranged the meeting with Begoña Santos Flores. It was at his and Mrs. Taitague’s house, sitting at their dinner table, where that important proofreading session took place. A few weeks ago, I found out that Mrs. Taitague used to freely distribute Chamorro Bibles in Guam.

**Murray Cooper:** Mr. Cooper was GAA’s principal when the then unnamed Chamorro Bible Project unexpectedly arrived. He authorized the purchase of the OCR software used to process the scanned text, he spoke with the GMM leadership about the Chamorro Bible, he signed GAA’s first Inter-Library Loan (ILL) form so we could borrow the Bible from Yale University. When it arrived I had it for a short period of time, then returned it to his care and protection until the day we returned it to Yale University.

**Begoña Santos Flores:** During the optical recognition process (OCR) phase I noted words that the OCR software and I couldn’t recognize *or* if I had the slightest doubt about a word, I noted it to for examina-

See *Reflections* on page 30.

# The *Resurrection* Of

Bethany S. Martin

**K**ing James. New King James. New International. American Standard. English. Spanish. German. Tagalog. Sanskrit. The list could go on and on and on. A Bible can be found in pretty much any language, version, or edition, and you don't have to look much farther than your coffee table or nearest church or bookstore to lay hands on one.

Most of us have grown up having complete access to the Bible whenever we choose, to the point of almost taking it for granted. We've either moaned and groaned at the childhood obligation of joining the family for evening worship or memorizing Bible verses we learned in Church. Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that we are perhaps jaded with the concept of having a Bible at our disposal and in our own language.

The story is much different for the Chamorro people—inhabitants of the Mariana Islands, including Guam. They do not have ready access to a Bible in their own language. Many years ago, a Chamorro Bible used to exist and could be found in many homes. But for very strange and odd reasons, the Bible literally disappeared. How did it disappear? And more importantly, why?

It all began with one teacher, Clarence Thomas IV, and an 8<sup>th</sup> grade computer class at Guam Adventist Academy (GAA). It was supposed to be a very simple matter. "I wanted to do something challenging," says Thomas, "different, and useful. So we decided to create an Internet radio station."

Thomas, who stands at a lean 6'5", is a man of mystery. Never wanting to share his accomplishments and avoiding attention, he casually recounts the events leading up to the project. With a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, Thomas is well traveled, having spent a number of cumulative years in Brazil,

Austria, United States, and now Guam. His love of cultures and following God's lead is one of the reasons he is compelled to continue traveling around the world, making a difference in people's lives.

The project for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade computer class was right in line with Thomas' experience. The content for the Internet radio station would be researched and provided for by the students. Because GAA is a Seventh-day Adventist school, they wanted to provide something spiritual as a part of the Internet radio station. It was decided that they would offer readings of the Bible in the local language--Chamorro.

"All I had to do was go to the GAA library and check out a Chamorro Bible," Thomas remembers. "No problem." However, it was a problem. Arriving at the library, he found that there was no Chamorro Bible. It was just always assumed by Thomas and others that there was a Chamorro Bible. After all, how could such a religious island, such as Guam, spiritually survive without a Bible in their own language?

The bottom line was they needed a Bible for the class, so phone calls were made, and Seventh-day Adventist pastors were contacted, but still no Bibles were found. "When answering our calls, pastors would say, 'Yes we remember seeing a Chamorro Bible at some time, but we don't have one.' One man, David Flores Sr., even said that he used to have a Bible, but he loaned it out and it never came back." The same response was given by Eliseo Jimeno, a retired Filipino pastor and 50 year resident of Guam. He came from the Philippines in 1953 and established the purchase of the land that the SDA Mission, GAA, Guam SDA Clinic, and other properties are now built on. He had been instrumental in distributing Chamorro Bibles during the early 1960s and remembers that after awhile he could not get anymore copies to distribute. The Bibles he had been passing out

# The *Chamorro Bible*

were the revised Chamorro Bibles that did not have the English translation or the Book of Psalms. Several decades later, he could not even find a Chamorro Bible in his home.

The local Seventh-day Adventist FM radio station, Joy92, used to have readings of the Bible in the local language and it was assumed that they were reading from a Chamorro Bible, but the local gentlemen, Pastor Bill Taitague of the Talofoto Seventh-day Adventist Church and Fred Ulloa, would simply translate the English texts into their own language. “Is this normal for people not to question why they do not have a Bible in their own language? Why haven’t questions been asked a long time ago?” I watch Thomas’ face as he relayed these passing events and a look of exasperation and sadness flashes through.

Thomas was distraught and unsure what to do without a Chamorro Bible. Not only did he need it for his class, but he was disturbed that the people did not have a Bible in their own language. “If you want to reach people, you have to speak *their* language and it makes a clear difference when you use the Bible in their own language,” says Thomas. “How can you get anything done without a Bible? And where is this Bible?”

Janet Taitano Flores, office manager and registrar for GAA, made calls to all the libraries in Guam and none of them had a Bible. They called all the book stores and discovered that trying to locate a Chamorro Bible was a very sensitive topic. Those asked if they could locate a Chamorro Bible seemed as if it was an absurd idea, probably because they were not aware that one existed, or one which was covered in many years of pain from losing such a treasure.

“Why don’t the Chamorro people have a Bible?” questioned Thomas. “Other islanders have a Bible. Why don’t we? It just didn’t make sense. Where is the

Chamorro Bible? Why have the people gone without a Bible for so long? So I went looking for those answers.”

## Searching for the Scriptures

Thomas didn’t have to go much farther than his own computer to begin finding answers to his own questions. He researched the history of Christianity in Guam and the first Protestant missionaries to arrive on island bringing with them the Gospel. History gave the name of Francis Price and his wife, Sarah, as the first Protestant missionaries to minister to the Chamorro people. In a brief biographical summary, Price had spent several years as a missionary and linguist in China and Chuuk Lagoon as part of the Congregationalist Church and under the supervision of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. After his work was finished in Chuuk, which included translating a dictionary and part of the Bible into Chuukese, he arrived on Guam in 1900.

Following his arrival, he established the first solid protestant mission on island which included schools for boys and girls that taught them academics as well as cultural trades. Price also built a reputable repore with the local people and learned the Chamorro language extremely well with the help of his language tutor, José Mendiola Taitano. By 1907, he had translated the four Gospels, Acts, and Psalms into the Chamorro language and in 1908 the first Chamorro Bible was printed and distributed. However, in years to come, the Bible would disappear leaving an island to wonder what happened to their gem.

After connecting Price with the translation of the Bible into Chamorro, Thomas asked Flores to contact the libraries asking for anything written by Francis Price. After much searching, a book written by Price was found at the Nieves M. Flores Memorial Library that appeared

to be the translated scriptures, although it did not resemble a modern Bible in any way.

“I felt relieved that we had finally been able to secure a copy of the Chamorro Bible,” says Thomas. “I decided that we’d make a copy of the entire book the library had found and I’d be on my way.”

He went to the library and had the librarian set up the copying machine to copy the “Bible.” Before he left to go to the library, he had even written a memo to the principal at GAA, Murray Cooper

and Guam-Micronesia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists President, Willy Nobuo, saying they had found a Chamorro Bible. After making copies of the entire book, Thomas returned to his apartment and proceeded to examine what they thought to be the Chamorro Bible. Flipping through the copy, Thomas read the title page which contained the book of Psalms, but when he turned to the back of the book, he found that it only had twenty five chapters. Knowing that Psalms has 150 chapters, he knew that something was wrong. After a careful study of the book, Thomas realized that the section he was looking at was not Psalms, but Acts of the Apostles.

Although the book was part of a Chamorro Bible, it only contained the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and Acts of the Apostles. While Psalms was included in the title, the book itself was actually missing Psalms. Astonished, Thomas quickly realized that the four gospels, Acts, and Psalms had been translated into Chamorro, but for reasons beyond his understanding, the Psalms had been dismissed from the latest publication. In other words, this book was not the original Bible that Price had translated and published in 1908;

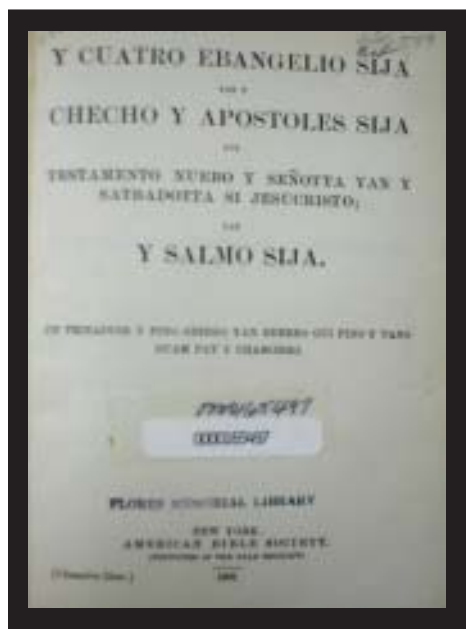
it was a 1952 republication of the original that excluded the Psalms. So what happened to the original?

Even though it was a partial publication of the Chamorro Bible that Thomas had located, he was ecstatic to see God’s Word in the local language. He shared it with Flores at GAA and asked her to translate selected scriptures to validate the authenticity of the translation. They went to several key Biblical texts and each time Flores would translate it to English, they both felt a wave of excitement sweep over them because there was finally a good translation of the Bible in the local tongue.

“I asked Flores and several others to translate key texts because I needed to have confidence in the credibility of the translation,” says Thomas as he smiles in recollection. “I’d already decided this Bible needed to get back into print. Seventh-day Adventists live and die by the Bible and it is only right that the Chamorro people should have access to the same treasure.” Thomas leans back in his chair with a look of reverence in his eyes. The sacredness in which he talks about the resurrection of the Chamorro Bible is one that can only be understood by those who it has affected first hand. A hushed silence almost demands existence.

“I’ve always wondered how God preserved the Bible through the ages,” Thomas ponders. “He really guards it, and I got a view of how He does this.” There are only a few copies of the Chamorro Bible in the world and Thomas set out to find the original publication of the Bible that Price had translated and distributed. “I was looking for a full Bible, not the partial and incomplete one we had here at the Flores library. No one should be without a Bible especially if there is a translation.”

Thomas spent many hours on the Internet searching through archives and libraries that may possibly have a copy in their library or Special Collections Department. He found references at several libraries to a Chamorro Bible, but was unable to obtain contact information in which to communicate further. Thomas understood that he was not going to be able to find what he was looking for without speaking with someone directly. He needed to make contact with a real person and dialogue with him or her to receive results. After searching many libraries, he was finally able to secure a contact number for a woman by the name of Denise Hersey at Yale University Library. She was just the person he needed to speak with. Hersey was the Coordinator of Access Services for the Mudd Library at Yale.



*Cover page of the incomplete Chamorro Bible found at the Flores Library*



## From Yale to Guam

Thomas explained that he had found a reference online to what appeared to be a Chamorro Bible in the Mudd Library and needed to verify if this was truly the Bible he was looking for. Shelved along with hundreds of other books on open shelves—not in the Special Collections—Hersey pulled the Bible referenced. She confirmed with Thomas the contents of the book and that it was the complete translated Chamorro Bible containing all four Gospels, Acts, and Psalms, and included the diglot, which is the parallel pages of Chamorro and English. Yale, and Hersey herself, did not realize what a rare and valuable book they had sitting on their library shelves. Most books with these rare characteristics and limited circulation are placed in the Special Collections department of libraries. However, the Chamorro Bible sat silently on a library shelf hidden amongst the heaps of literary publications.

At finally finding an original Chamorro Bible, Thomas was overjoyed beyond words. He petitioned Hersey as to how he could borrow the book from the Yale library. Hersey said that because it was referenced as a regularly accessible book, all Thomas needed to do was fill out an Interlibrary Loan (ILL) through another library on Guam or through the GAA school library.

Having never needed to use an ILL in Guam before, Thomas and Murray Cooper, principal of GAA at the time, were not sure exactly how to do an ILL, much less if the GAA library would be considered a credible library through which to file an ILL. Cooper filled out the form and they faxed it back to Yale the same day, saying a silent prayer.

On September 10, 2001 (EST), Yale approved the ILL and Hersey contacted Thomas to let him know that they would be shipping the Bible next-day air and that Yale would cover the cost; GAA needed to pay for sending it back to Yale. Amazed at Yale's generosity, Thomas and Cooper both were astounded and speechless at how God's hand was at work. Yale would be shipping the Bible the next day.

September 11 brought a rude awakening to America as the terrorists attacked New York city and Washington D.C. As history will recall, it was a day of confusion and disturbance. Aware of what was going on in the mainland, Thomas was instantly concerned for the whereabouts of the Chamorro Bible that Yale had

just shipped. Due to the terrorist attacks, planes were grounded, shipments were halted, and not much later, the anthrax scare threatened the U.S. postal system which decreased productivity for awhile. There was nothing Thomas could do to ensure the travel safety of the Bible except to pray. This rare book that has disappeared over the years could just as easily disappear in the chaos and disturbance of this new war on terror that was on America's horizon. It was out of Yale's hands and out of Thomas'. He could only wait.

Nine days later, on September 20, Cooper walked in Thomas' classroom holding a box and a grin spanning the width of his face. They both knew what was in that box and they both said a prayer of thanks. Thomas checked the tracking details which revealed the shipment process of the Bible. Despite the terrorist attacks that threatened the nation, Yale had mailed the Bible on September 11 at 3:23 p.m. and it was transported from Connecticut to Kentucky, California, Hong Kong, and finally arrived on Guam at 12:15 p.m., September 20, Chamorro Standard Time, which is 15 hours ahead of EST. Divinely guided and kept from obvious delays, the Chamorro Bible had finally made its way back home.

## The Chamorro Bible Project

When the Bible was finally held in Thomas' hands, he recounts that he realized this was an amazing experience to be holding such a priceless treasure. "No one foresaw the importance of this, and we're only seeing the beginning," explains Thomas. "We've only seen the tip of it. It's a rare Bible. The people have a right to their own Bible."

Once again, Thomas set out to make copies of the true original Chamorro Bible containing the four Gospels, Acts, and Psalms, as well as the Chamorro and English translation. It became very clear to Thomas that this Bible must be reprinted so that the Chamorro people could have unlimited access to the Word of God.

"Having a Bible in the Chamorro language says that Jesus hasn't forgotten them. It says, 'Hey, Jesus knows my language too.'"

Thomas handled the progression of the Chamorro Bible Project with fragility and tenderness, most of the time not knowing how or in which direction to move next. "Don't play with God's Word," Thomas says with conviction. "It is a whole different piece of literature.

See **Project** on page 17.

# Who Is Francis Price?

Bethany S. Martin

Francis Marion Price was the first Protestant missionary to arrive on the island of Guam. He and his wife, Sarah, were lifetime Congregationalist missionaries serving under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the first American overseas missionary agency. After America received control of Guam as a result of winning the Spanish-American War, ABCFM saw this as a divine opportunity to bring the Gospel to the people of Guam.

Price began petitioning ABCFM in favor of a Guam mission and eventually won the case. Price offered himself as the one to begin establishing the mission and on November 27, 1900, he and his wife arrived on the island to begin the Gospel work. A graduate of Oberlin Theological Seminary, Price was a preacher by trade and a linguist by talent.<sup>1</sup> He acquired various languages with amazing ease and proficiency and this gift is what enabled him to share the Gospel and establish missions in places otherwise impenetrable. His study and fluency of Hebrew and Greek enabled him to do a considerable amount of translation work. Previous to Guam, Price had spent many years as a missionary in China translating the Bible and in Chuuk, Micronesia establishing a Protestant mission and translating the Bible and dictionary into the local language. It is not surprising that he would also quickly learn the Chamorro language with astounding accuracy.<sup>2</sup>

Upon landing on island, Price was greeted by José Custino, a former whaler and Chamorro convert to Protestantism. Custino and his brother Luis sailed on British and American whaling ships that frequented Guam in the 1800s and they eventually settled in Hawaii where they changed their surname from Castro to Custino to accommodate the Hawaiian pronunciation of their true surname. The Custinos eventually married Hawaiian girls and were converted to the Protestant faith and be-



*Rev. Price and the first Protestant church members*

came active members in their local church.

After hearing of the American conquest of Guam in 1898, the Custino brothers decided to return to their native island and evangelize among the Chamorros. Arriving in 1899, the Custinos met José Mendiola Taitano, an elderly Agana resident born in 1839 and popularly nicknamed “Cueto.” Taitano had embraced Protestantism many years before as a result of discovering the Scriptures for the first time while working aboard whaling ships. He was not allowed to publicly practice his new found Protestant faith under the Spanish regime, but he couldn’t be forced to practice Catholicism either. It was with great eagerness that Taitano and his 10 children supported the Custino brothers and became the first members of the Protestant mission they were working to establish.

By active evangelism and the distribution of Bibles, the Custinos succeeded in converting the Flores brothers, nicknamed the “Cabesa” family, who farmed in the Mt. Santa Rosa area of Yigo. The Custinos, Taitanos, and Flores families formed the core of the first

Chamorro Protestants to begin worshipping in the Custino home.

### Establishing a Mission

In 1901, Price purchased 12 acres of land at Adelup for \$250 to establish the first Protestant mission. It was large enough to accommodate two residences and a school for boys and a school for girls. Before long, Adelup became known as Missionary Point.<sup>3</sup>



*Luís Custino*

Price soon found that his fluency of the Spanish language did not get him very far in communicating with the people. After the establishment of the Catholic mission during the Spanish regime in the 1600s, the padres and Jesuits began instructing the people in the Spanish language. Although the use of the Spanish language was not stressed in the 1600s, during the years 1787-1789 a new policy was executed which gave imperative orders to absolutely forbid the natural use of their national idiom. Although the Castilian language of Spain was indoctrinated in the schools and churches, the Chamorros still succeeded in speaking their native language in their homes and social circles and hence kept the language alive.<sup>4</sup>

Learning that the people never truly learned Spanish and that they preferred and retained the Chamorro language, Price saw that it would prove more valuable to his mission to learn Chamorro and converse with the people in their own tongue. José Mendiola Taitano became Price's tutor and Price soon learned the language. Eventually, he conducted morning worship services in Chamorro and evening services in English.<sup>5</sup>

Upon learning that the Chamorro people did not have any Holy Scriptures in their language, Price began working on translating the Bible. In a letter written by Price to Reverend William Haven at the ABCFM Board on May 9, 1905 he stated that the only Christian literature that had been published in the Chamorro language at that time were part of a catechism published by the Catholic mission that contained "the Lord's Prayer in

short form and also the Ten Commandments in brief form; but in these commandments the second commandment reads: 'Keep sacred the feast days.'" There was another pamphlet published by the Catholic mission in the Chamorro language that was devoted to explaining the sacraments and festivals of the church, but this was not the Holy Scriptures.

### Translating the Bible

Price began translating the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the book of Acts, and the Psalms. As he would complete the translation of different sections, he circulated leaflets of them amongst the people. "This is all the scripture that has ever been published in the Chamorro language, so that these leaflets of ours are really the first portions of scripture ever circulated in Guam."<sup>6</sup>

Price saw the urgent need of the people having access to a Bible in their own language. In another letter written to Rev. Judson Smith at the ABCFM written on May 9, 1905, Price stated, "I shall have the Gospels, the Acts, the Psalms, Genesis and part of Exodus ready to publish next winter, if I keep well." Price had left Guam for medical treatment, but was continuing the work of translating the Bible. "You will see by my letter enclosed that my plan is to go (*return*) to Guam and perfect these translations before publishing them. It is very



*First on left is Rev. Price's home; next door to the Price home was the temporary church building*

important that these translations be as nearly perfect as it is possible to make them." Ending his letter, Price declared, "I feel that the one great crying need of Guam is for the Holy scriptures..."

In the enclosed letter to Rev. Haven, Price expresses the fluency in which he ob-



Left: Price, second from right. Right: Price and initial Protestant converts.

tained the Chamorro language. “As to my own knowledge of their language, I think I spoke the language fairly well. I acquire languages perhaps a little more readily than some others. The best teacher I had in Guam (*José Mendiola Taitano*) was accustomed to say to me: ‘You know more about the Chamorro language than I do.’ Which was true, and not true. It was not true that I know more of the peculiar forms of expression in which all languages abound and with which all natives are very familiar; but it is true that I had a larger vocabulary than he did and a profounder knowledge of the grammar and structure of the language.”

Continuing on, Price gave a very detailed explanation of the process of translating the Bible into Chamorro. They apparently had access to Spanish Bibles,<sup>7</sup> possibly brought in secretly by whaling ships, because Price and his tutors would begin by translating from Spanish to Chamorro. This gave him a grasp of the forms of expressions used for meaning in Chamorro and enabled him to secure a correct translation of the Greek texts. “...Taking these I revised them comparing with the Greek and had copies made of them on the typewriter. I am now going over these copies comparing them carefully with the Greek text and putting them in the best shape possible...In order to secure this end, I propose to return to Guam and go over the translations again with the very best native help I can obtain and there put them in their final form.”

Price was obviously very committed to the accuracy of the translated scriptures and went to great

lengths to secure their credibility. His background in Greek and Hebrew prepared the way to make these translations perfect. In the same letter, he explains, “I have kept up my Greek ever since I left college and in recent years have read in the Greek Testament almost every day when at home. When I went to the Islands in 1894 (*Chuuk, also known as Truk*), knowing that I would probably translate the Old Testament into the language, I secured Dr. Harper’s instruction books in Hebrew and went over the entire course after reaching my field, which required about two years time. This gave me a working knowledge of the Hebrew.” Unquestionably, Price was well versed in both the original Greek and Hebrew texts in preparation for the translation work he would be accomplishing as a missionary in China and in the islands of Micronesia.

Ending his letters, Price concluded with the surety of providing these translated scriptures to the Chamorro people. “I think if we should publish the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, perhaps one or two of the Epistles, and the Psalms in one volume; and Genesis and the first twenty chapters of Exodus in another volume, we should be fairly well equipped for our work there for sometime to come. The other portions of the scriptures might be translated more leisurely...Our people who have been deprived of the scriptures appreciate greatly these portions which have been given them (*see note on endnote 6*) and their delight is real at the assurance that someday the entire Word of God will be given them. Do we not owe this to them?”

## Printing the Bible

Price continued working on the translations of the scriptures and true to his word, he returned to Guam to put the finishing touches on the translations and secure language accuracy. In a letter written to ABCFM on November 10, 1906, Price gave an update on the work and excitement of the promise of a Bible in the local language. “I am greatly enjoying the work here. The people are all so delighted that they are to have the Gospels in their own tongue and enter into the work assigned to them so eagerly that one feels inspired to do the best things for them. They desire the work printed in English and Chamorro, parallel columns. The natives say that it will add very materially to the value of the book and secure a wider reading for it. The Governor expressed his interest and offered to aid me in every way possible to him. Undoubtedly, the publishing of this portion of scripture will give a new impulse to the work. I regard it as the best work I have ever done—most valuable to the kingdom of God on earth.”

In 1907, Price finished the translation of the four Gospels, Acts, and Psalms and began the process of having them published. He secured the permission of the American Bible Society to have the books printed in New York at a cost of \$250 for 1,000 copies. A letter written on March 16, 1907 revealed the anxiousness of the printed translations: “It was the earnest desire of all in Guam that the translations should be published in English and Chamorro, parallel columns. I estimated that the additional cost would be about \$150. I told our Chamorro people about this and asked them to help. To my surprise and delight, they and their friends raised more than \$130 toward this amount. This is the largest amount ever raised by them for the work and is interesting because it reveals their consecration and their interest in the publishing of these portions of Scripture.”

The translated Scriptures were finally published in 1908 and distributed amongst the people in Guam much to their delight. To a population of nearly 11,000 who had been deprived of a Bible for most of their existence, spiritual freedom had arrived and God was nearer than ever.

Price and his wife returned to California where he later died on September 5, 1937 in Berkeley, California. Price was satisfied with the role he had been commissioned to complete and rejoiced over the mission. “I

am thankful to the Divine Father, that it has been our privilege to do this great work for the neglected Guam people, and that our health has stood the strains of the heavy task. It has been to me the most delightful work I have ever been privileged to do.”

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> *The Year Book of the Congregational and Christian Churches, Combining the Congregational Year Book, Volume No. 60, and The Christian Annual, Volume No. 66: Statistics for 1937*, page 56, General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Marion Price, to William Haven, May 9, 1905. Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for the Foreign Missions (ABCFM), Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC) at the University of Guam.

<sup>3</sup> Forbes, Eric, “*Guam History: Perspectives*,” MARC, University of Guam, 1997, pgs. 123-128.

<sup>4</sup> Thompson, Laura, “*Guam And Its People*,” Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1947, pg. 215.

<sup>5</sup> Pesch, William D., *Praying Against The Tide—Challenges Facing The Early Protestant Missionaries To Guam 1900-1910*, University of Guam, 2001, pg. 8.

<sup>6</sup> F.M. Price to William Haven, May 9, 1905. PABCFM, MARC. It appears from correspondence that these leaflets either remained within the Congregationalist group or were more widely circulated among the island people.

<sup>7</sup> Spanish Bibles were not publically allowed because the priests forbade the reading of the Holy Scriptures. However, it is possible that Bibles entered Guam by way of whalers, ships passing through Guam, or Protestant missionaries who were already in the Micronesian islands and using Spanish Bibles due to Spanish presence.

\* *Photographs used with the permission and courtesy of Don Farrell.*

# Taitano

## Family Translators

Bethany S. Martin

**J**osé Mendiola Taitano joined the Custino brothers and the Flores family in forming the first Protestant church on Guam. Born in 1840, Taitano was a Roman Catholic who later converted to Protestantism after discovering the Holy Scriptures while working as a whaler in the mid to late 1800s. After returning to Guam, he could not practice his new Biblically found faith under the prohibitive Spanish regime, but he could not be forced to practice Catholicism either. “So he waited and did nothing, only he discarded the grosser superstitions such as the wearing of Carmelite belts and other charms and amulets, and hoped and prayed for deliverance.”<sup>1</sup>

The era under the Spanish regime was brutal and cognitively and spiritually restrictive. It was a public misdemeanor to disobey the priests and many obeyed out of fear instead of conviction. The Bible was not allowed to be read and very few of them existed on island. Prior to the 1850s, Bibles had been secretly brought to Guam, perhaps by whaling ships, and “found their way into a few families, and were read with eagerness by the more earnest men.”<sup>2</sup> When one reads the Word of God, a hunger is stirred within the heart and a longing to know more of Jesus’ love takes place that only the Bible can quench. The Bread of Life ministers healing to the soul and the earnest seeker is compelled to share the Prince of Peace with other family and friends.

The reading of the Bible spread amongst the people, and “finally knowledge of this reached the priest’s ear; then the priest and ruler combined to stop it. Diligent search was made for the Bibles, and three large baskets of them were publicly burned in the plaza about 1856. Some successfully hid their Bibles and have them still. One remarkable man, José [Mendiola] Taitano, who has been reading the Book of books for many years, was long ago convinced that there was a better way....”<sup>3</sup>

The government and the Catholic church were against Taitano and kept a careful watch over him. When the Custino brothers arrived on Guam immediately following the American liberation in 1898, Taitano and his 10 children welcomed them joyously, recognizing that fellow



*José Mendiola Taitano*

Protestants meant spiritual freedom for his heavy heart. “The priests threatened them, telling them that they were still under Spanish law, and would be punished as soon as the Americans left.”<sup>4</sup> But the Americans did not leave and the door was opened for freedom of worship and a spiritual liberation such as they had never known was executed, resulting in the first Protestant church formed by Francis Price and the Custino brothers.

God enables all people to come in contact with His Word. No matter what human restrictions are placed on the written Word, the King of the Universe loosens those bonds and brings Water to the thirsty. Though humanity may seek to silence the Holy Bible, the Ancient of Days looks down and preserves with loving care the Book of books. Though It may pass through the fire, the Lord of lords claims with sovereignty that His Word shall endure until time passes away. The Bible survived beyond all human efforts made to erase it from history, and it was not without the working of the Lord through people such as José Mendiola Taitano.

## Taitano Family Translators

José M. Taitano and his 10 children joined the Custino brothers and Price as members of the Congregationalist Church, the first Protestant church on Guam. Taitano and his family were key leaders of the church and worked at the Mission established in Adelup that included a school for boys and a school for girls. His daughters, Ana Taitano (Gay) and Rosa Taitano (Custino), were school teachers as well as Sunday School teachers at the Mission, and his son José San Nicolas Taitano lived at the Mission and worked as the groundskeeper and was a deacon in the church.<sup>5</sup> José M. Taitano not only served as a key leader in the church, but during the years between 1901 and 1905, he served as an associate justice of the Court of Appeals.<sup>6</sup> Taitano was a man of dedication and intellect that balanced his calling to serve God and to minister to his fellow man.

In letters written by Price to the American Board of Commission for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), he names a José Taitano as his tutor in the Chamorro language. Without specifying if it was José Mendiola Taitano or his son, José San Nicolas Taitano, the possibility is substantiated that it was José Mendiola Taitano who was referred to as the tutor because he had a working knowledge of English, Chamorro, and Spanish. José San Nicolas Taitano did not have a command of the English language until many years later.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, according to former Congressman Robert A. Underwood, the story passed down through the Taitano family was that José Mendiola Taitano was the most likely to have tutored Price because of his knowledge of the English language.

Under the tutelage of José M. Taitano, Price obtained the Chamorro language rather quickly and with much proficiency that Taitano complimented Price by saying, “You know more about the Chamorro language than I do.”<sup>8</sup>

When Price began working on translating the Holy Bible into the Chamorro language, the Taitano family played a significant part in aiding the translation of the Word of God. This divine role is one that should not go unrecognized as it is a substantial contribution to Christianity, the Chamorro people, and forever written in the books of Heaven.

Price worked with a teacher and several others at the Mission as part of the translating process. As men-

tioned before, Rosa Taitano Custino and Ana Taitano Gay were teachers at the Mission school and José S.N. Taitano worked as the groundskeeper. In a personal interview with Carlos Pangelinan Taitano, son of José San Nicolas Taitano, he recalls hearing as a young boy his family speaking of the Chamorro Bible. “They were very proud of that Bible,” says Taitano. “No one claimed to be the principal translator helping Rev. Price because they were all involved. José



*José San Nicolas Taitano*

Mendiola Taitano, José San Nicolas Taitano, Ana Taitano Gay, Rosa Taitano (Custino), and Francisco Taitano all assisted in the translation of the Bible.” Underwood also states that, “Everyone was of assistance.” Reverend Joaquin Flores Sablan in his book, “My Mental Odyssey,” additionally confirms the Taitano family as helping to translate the Scriptures.<sup>9</sup>

According to the recollection of Carlos P. Taitano, he says that his father, grandfather, uncles and aunts all served as advisors to Price as he worked on translating the Scriptures. When Price needed clarification or special assistance, he would enlist the help of whichever Taitano was around at the time. It is not surprising that Price did most of the translating on his own because he had a strong command of the Chamorro language. However, the Taitano family should be acknowledged as servants of Christ whom God entrusted with this most precious work of securing a Bible in the native language of His island people and should be added to the history books as such.

## Faithful Stewards

José M. Taitano retired from the Courts in 1905 and entered retirement, continuing to serve as a dedicated leader of the Protestant church, and passed away on February 20, 1934 having lived a joyful 93

years. His son, José San Nicolas Taitano, continued to work as a groundskeeper for the Congregationalist Mission until it left in 1910. After the Mission closed, José



*José San Nicolas Taitano  
with wife, Dolores  
Pangelinan Taitano*

San Nicolas Taitano continued shepherding the congregation and began farming his land. He was a faithful steward and took the Gospel to many people under much scrutiny. “I remember that people would throw stones at him during Bible studies in Agat,” says Carlos Pangelinan Taitano, son of José San Nicolas Taitano.

“But the same people who would criticize and throw stones would hide

in the bushes and listen to the Bible studies that were being conducted and to the music being sung. The people loved the songs we were singing and pretty soon the Catholics adopted many songs from the Protestants.”

Despite opposition, José San Nicolas Taitano labored diligently for the Lord, leading as many people as possible to the Word of God that brought fulfillment to his soul. He lived a full life and died in 1965 at the age of 90. Rosa Taitano married Joe Custino, Jr., and continued teaching at the Mission Day School until it closed shortly after the Congregationalists left. Ana Taitano Gay continued to serve as a teacher and Sunday School teacher and later became a Seventh-day Adventist, in 1950, after the Seventh-day Adventists arrived on Guam in 1946 and the SDA Mission was established in 1950. The land that the Guam-Micronesia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, Agana Heights SDA Church, and Missionary housing across the street sits on was donated to the SDA Mission by Ana Taitano Gay and, at her request, a chapel was built on the property. The chapel was destroyed in a typhoon and the Agana Heights SDA Church was built to replace the chapel.

“They knew their Bible,” says Carlos P. Taitano referring to his father, José S.N. Taitano and aunts, Ana T. Gay and Rosa T. Custino. “They carried the Bible with them everywhere.”



*Ana Taitano Gay, far left, with the school children at the Mission*

The Taitano family was honorable, bold in character and steadfast in conviction. Enduring much social persecution, they held the Bible high and let the Word speak for Itself. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” (John 12:32)

While the Lord does not depend on human agents to sustain His written Word, it is the privilege of every man and woman to become co-laborers with the Creator of the universe in bringing more children into the knowledge of His infinite love. The Bible has withstood suppression, opposition, and agents who wish to silence its authority, yet it stands on its own firm Foundation. A Foundation that man cannot remove.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Francis M. Price, “The Island of Guam and Its People,” *The Missionary Review of The World*, vol. 15, no. 1, Jan. 1902, pgs. 17-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Personal Interview with Carlos Pangelinan Taitano, April 3, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> *The Guam Recorder*, vol. 10, no. 12, March, 1934, p. 207.

<sup>7</sup> Personal Interview with Carlos Pangelinan Taitano, April 3, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> F.M. Price to William Haven, May 9, 1905. PABCFM, MARC.

<sup>9</sup> Sablan, Joaquin Flores, “*My Mental Odyssey*,” Stinson Press, Missouri, 1990, pgs. 122-123.

\* Photographs courtesy of the Taitano family.



**Project**, continued from page 9.

There's something about it. It's supernatural; it's protected." Thomas hesitates a moment as if searching for the right words to describe what he has experienced and is still feeling. "To be working this close with God's Holy Word is a whole different thing. I wanted to get out of it because I could see that it wasn't human. I was scared of making a mistake; I'm not qualified. Who am I to be involved in something like this?"

Setting out with the Xerox copy in hand of the Bible, Thomas sought out several Chamorros whom he knew were fluent in the language. He needed to know that Price's translation was credible and a faithful translation into the Chamorro language. Speaking with David Flores, Sr., resident of the village of Talofof, he assured Thomas that Price's translation was written in excellent Chamorro and could be understood. Comparing the Chamorro with the English and Hebrew/Greek translation, he joyously discovered that in many places the Chamorro text was purer and truer to the original Hebrew/Greek texts than the English translation. Thomas also showed the copied texts to a Chamorro bus driver. The driver was shocked and surprised to see a Bible written in his own language. "He wanted to know how much he would have to pay in order to get a copy of my copy of this Bible," Thomas grins. "That has been the response from everyone who has come in contact with the Bible. 'A Bible in my own language?' They'd never seen it before." Recently, a woman by the name of Josephine Chargualaf Varley was shown the

Bible and her response was much like the previous gentleman's.

"Wow! This is terrific!" She automatically read the title on the cover and began thumbing through the Psalms stopping periodically at certain verses. "I never knew a Bible in Chamorro ever existed," exclaimed Varley. "I always wondered why, and thought it would be great if someone took the time to translate. I remember reading the novenas as a child and thinking it would be great to have a Bible in my language."

Varley continues skimming through the Bible and holding it close to her chest in amazement. "Reading a Bible in your own language makes God so much more personal. This is absolutely wonderful. I want a copy."

Thomas realized with surety that he must go ahead with the project.

A year and a half later, Thomas sits in my office with a look of astonishment that has not faded mingled with a tinge of undetected sadness at the deprivation of the Word for so long. I can see a few droplets of tears glass over his eyes at his intuitive knowledge that God has His very hand in this project and in the spiritual survival of the Chamorro people. It's been a sacred journey that is reflected in the essence of Clarence Thomas and this story.

"This has been my role, and Bethany, it's enough. It's enough." Thomas nods his head fighting back the tears that threaten to betray his countenance. "I have worked with the angels and it's been a real privilege."

# Why Did The *Chamorro Bible* Disappear?

Bethany S. Martin

**T**he disappearance of the Chamorro Bible is truly a mystery. Why such a gift to the Chamorro culture would have been lost, is a question no one knows the answer to. However, clues into the disappearance of the Chamorro Bible can be found in the suppression of the language itself.

As referred to in a previous article, the Chamorro language was restricted and forbidden in replacement of the Castilian (Spanish) language, under the Spanish rule in the 1700s, and again by the Americans after the U.S. gained control of the island in 1898.

Upon gaining control of Guam and implementing an American government under military rule, the Americans also brought to the island Western ideals and methods of administration and education. By 1922, a public school system was introduced and underway that was patterned after the California educational system. American teachers and local English-speaking teachers were used in the classrooms and all children were required to attend school.

While this was a well-intended educational system that was being introduced to the island for the intellectual improvement of the people, the indoctrination of Western ideals trampled underfoot the very heart of the culture of the Chamorro people: the Chamorro language. “When the U.S. occupied our island, it took more than our land; it took away our culture, our way of life, and supplanted these with its own imported values.”<sup>1</sup>

In a book by Dr. Laura Thompson, “Guam And Its People,” she relays a deep excavation of the history of the island and its people and the impact that Westernization had on the culture. Thompson spent several years studying the history and culture of Guam and the Chamorro people as well as spending 1938-1939 on the island conducting field research. She was also employed as a Consultant on Native Affairs to the naval governor of Guam, and “following her critical disclosure of naval practices on Guam, she was barred by the Navy from returning to the island.”<sup>2</sup> In regards to the research of the public school system introduced by the Americans, she writes: “All instruction was in English, and Chamorro was prohibited in schools and on playgrounds. Chamorro dictionaries were collected and burned.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition, Thompson kept a diary during her time on Guam, 1938-1939, in which she writes, “By gov’t order about 900 dictionaries were burned. Now out of print—only one or two in Guam.”<sup>4</sup> This same diary reference specifically names the 1918 von Preissig dictionaries as the ones which were burned.

Ironically, the von Preissig dictionaries that the naval government ordered to be burned were the same dictionaries that they themselves commissioned to be written. “A dictionary and grammar of the language has been compiled by Lieut. Edward R. von Preissig (S.C.), United States Navy, and printed at the Government Printing Office, Washington, 1918.”<sup>5</sup>

The naval government was very proud of the Chamorro-English Dictionary as endorsed in the prefatory correspondence of the dictionary: "It is believed that this dictionary would be of great value to the department of education of the island," M.G. Cook, Department of Education. "This is a highly creditable piece of work, which has been accomplished at the cost of much labor. Nothing exists on the same scale. It is bound to be of great value to all the inhabitants of Guam," Roy C. Smith, Government House.<sup>6</sup>

Why these precious dictionaries were burned is beyond surface comprehension, but definitely deserves further inquiry. It should also be noted that members of the Taitano family who helped in the translation of the Chamorro Bible also aided in the compilation of the Chamorro dictionary; both Juan Taitano and Francisco Taitano are acknowledged by von Preissig in the introduction of the dictionary.

### Resiliency of the Language

The fact that the Chamorro language was forbidden and dictionaries burned speaks volumes to the extent that the U.S. government went to in order to establish Guam as a mirrored extension of the mainland. "Military government almost destroyed the indigenous people and was consistently inadequate in providing for the needs of the society that Spain sought to create in its own image on Guam."<sup>7</sup> These sentiments demonstrate the continual desires of governments to convert the local people into images of their respective cultures instead of allowing the Chamorros their own history and culture in which to flourish. The price of this pompous ideology is one of the major contributing factors in the near death of the Chamorro language.

However, the language has a great survival capacity. There is a remarkably high level of resiliency of this native tongue that has withstood hundreds of years of suppression. Thompson says, "attention should be given the problem of enriching the school and adult education curricula through the teaching of the Chamorro language, especially the written language, and the development of Chamorro literature...such help is needed to keep the language from perishing."<sup>8</sup>

Dr. George Bedell, Professor of Linguistics and Director of the Research Center for Japanese Language Education at the International Christian University in Tokyo Japan, says that it is not terribly surprising that the

Chamorro language has survived throughout the years of government suppression. While Bedell is not an expert on the linguistics of the Chamorro language, but an interested observer, his professional background and interest in the island of Guam lends credible thoughts concerning the state of the Chamorro language. "When you see yourself as lower class and are being exploited by people outside your culture, you cling to your roots." He speaks in reference to the American government hoping to silence the Chamorro culture and language in exchange for Western philosophies and the English language, as well as the invasion of the Japanese during World War II and the pain they inflicted upon the local islanders. "The people, ages 60 and above, feel it is incredibly important to retain their language. I'm afraid that once they are gone, there will be no more Chamorro."

So how does one ensure the survival of a dying language? "You learn the language when you are a child," says Bedell, sitting casually in khaki pants and an untucked button-up shirt. "The foundation for the fluency of a language is best gained as a young child." He leans back in his chair and rubs his white beard and peppered mustache. "The problem with the Chamorro language is that the pool of native speakers is not being replenished." He peers down over his thick-rimmed glasses and speaks in earnest, "When you have to start teaching the native language at school it is already too late. That's my personal opinion."

But is it too late? Bedell counters his statement with his own interest in the Chamorro language and its linguistics. "The Chamorro language is in a fragile state. We must study and preserve what we can while there is still time."

That time has been extended. With the resurrection of the Chamorro Bible, the people have been returned a great historical and cultural work to use to their advantage.

### Importance of the Chamorro Bible

David Herrera, Engineering WHE Test Director for Raytheon Technical Services and a local Chamorro Seventh-day Adventist who was deeply involved in the transfer of the Chamorro Bible into electronic format and responsible for the red lettered contribution, says, "This is a serious matter for us Chamorros. You discover that it has been taken away from us and prohibited and that's awful."

Herrera remembers attending school during the days that the Chamorro language was prohibited to be spoken in the schools or on the playgrounds under penalty of being fined. “It was years later that we discovered that Chamorro was a sovereign gift from Almighty God who gave us different tongues,” Herrera shares with passion.

Not until 1972 did the Twelfth Guam Legislature pass Public Law 12-132 declaring Guam as having two official languages: Chamorro and English. Up to that time, Chamorro technically remained illegal in all government offices, and signs remained posted in all government buildings stating that code. Public Law 12-31 was also passed which gave authority to the Board of Education to “develop a bilingual/bicultural educational program emphasizing the language and culture of the Chamorro people.”

“This Chamorro Bible is important for two main reasons,” says Herrera. “There is not much classic Chamorro literature and that’s one thing that makes this Bible unique. It’s a great tool to be used for studying and learning the language.” He goes on to express that the Chamorro Bible will be “an important addition to the educational curriculum and a valuable tool for all language and literature teachers. It should be required material for all teachers.”

Second, Herrera emphasizes that the Chamorro Bible is a great source for reaching people with the Gospel of Christ. “This is great for all of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Most people on the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Luta (Rota), and the manamku (elders) on Guam, only speak Chamorro. They must not be deprived of a Bible in their own language when one exists.”

### **Chamorro Bibles in the 1960s**

While the excitement of discovering a Bible in their own language is expressed by every Chamorro who has come in contact with the Chamorro Bible, it is still not clear why the Chamorro Bible disappeared to begin with. Is it possible that while Chamorro was prohibited to be spoken in the schools and dictionaries were collected and burned that reading the Chamorro Bible was discouraged as well? Or could it be as simple as copies having been lost due to natural disasters and wars that occurred over the years? Remember that Guam is in “typhoon alley” and receives numerous typhoons and earthquakes which destroy buildings and homes resulting in the loss of books, furniture, and priceless belongings. Did the few copies of the Bible

that remained on Guam eventually become obsolete in wake of these disasters over the years?

Eliseo Jimeno, a retired Seventh-day Adventist Pastor, came to Guam from the Philippines in the early 1950s. He clearly remembers the Chamorro Bible in circulation and even in a local Christian bookstore. “The Bibles were available for purchase at Faith Christian Bookstore,” says Jimeno, “until they were discontinued for unknown reasons.” In the 1960s, Jimeno, along with other church members, would visit families in their homes and provide them with Chamorro Bibles if they did not already have one. “The Bibles were just paperback material, not even hard covers, and for some reason did not contain the book of Psalms,” he recalls.

“That is something that remains a mystery,” says Dr. Lawrence J. Cunningham, Research Associate for the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center. “I just can’t figure that out, why an entire book would be omitted.” To date, no one has been able to offer any solid answers as to why the book of Psalms was omitted from the reprinting of the Chamorro Bibles in 1952.

The quality of the paperback Bibles gives plausible reason to the theory of Bibles being lost during natural disasters such as typhoons. Wet paper tends to simply disintegrate and become unsalvageable when exposed to torrents of rain and flooding. And the horrendous destruction from World War II that laid to waste an entire island secures reason that many of the original Chamorro Bibles were lost during the war.

The years during the war when the Japanese controlled the island were years of brutality and sadness. The Japanese stormed the island and ran people out of their homes, off their land, and in to concentration camps. They established Japanese bases in seized homes and looted foods and personal materials for their use or their destruction.

As one Chamorro elder who lived during the war and was forced in to a concentration camp says, “Guam was the only U.S. soil that was taken by the enemy during the war and it was the only place where U.S. citizens were held hostage.” She was one of those citizens.

Under those extreme conditions, it is not unlikely that original Chamorro Bibles from the early Protestant church were destroyed, never to be found again. But after the war, Protestant churches resumed their role of distributing the Holy Scriptures.

“The General Baptist church was also engaged in distributing the Chamorro Bibles during the 1960s,” explains Jimeno. “There was even talk of them expanding the translation to include all books of the Bible in addition to the six books that already existed in the Chamorro language.” But over time, the dream died out, or perhaps was lost itself. “It just didn’t seem to click at that time. The thought of expanding the translation could have died because of a change of pastors. Plus, a real ‘think tank,’ so to speak, of dedicated Chamorros was needed who truly knew the language in order to do the translation work. Those resources were not available.” Jimeno goes on to explain that the newer generation was not raised learning how to speak the Chamorro language, therefore, draining the well of native speakers. “One of the problems as to why the newer generation does not speak Chamorro, I believe, is because it is not a frequently written language.”

The scarcity of a written language makes the instruction of the language extremely difficult. Such is the case with the Chamorro language. Without an ample array of Chamorro literature constantly being circulated, especially a Book as useful and pertinent as the Bible, the language began to disappear from the tongues of the newer generations.

“If Chamorro is not revived,” says Jimeno, “it will soon be a forgotten language. I don’t know why the Chamorro Bible was discontinued. It looks like it has been neglected until now.”

### Community reacts to the Bible

The future of the Chamorro language proves to be getting brighter with the resurrection of the Chamorro Bible. Every individual who has learned of its existence is thrilled with having God’s Word in his or her own tongue, and that alone declares that the language and the people have not been forgotten.

“I didn’t want to let go,” remembers Herrera about his first encounter with the Chamorro Bible. “I said, ‘Really—back then—a Chamorro Bible?’”

And David Flores Sr., who also helped in the proof-reading of the Chamorro Bible, and is the grandson of José Aguon Flores who was the first Chamorro Protestant pastor on Guam who also worked with Francis Price and led the Congregationalist Mission in the village of Inarajan, said,



*Presentation of the Chamorro Bible to MARC. From right: John P. Sablan, Pastor Eliseo Jimeno (ret.), David Herrera, Pastor Willy Nobuo, Clarence Thomas, Murray Cooper, Pastor Frank Taitague (ret.), Omaira Brunal-Perry and staff.*

“I saw this and wanted to have one in my hand. I must have this in my possession.”

The Chamorro Bible is neglected no longer. It is currently available for public access via its website, [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org), and is one of the newest additions to the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center at the University of Guam (MARC).

On September 25, 2002, two copies of the Chamorro Bible were presented to MARC upon their request and have generated a number of interests. “This was a great addition to our materials because it represents the history of the culture of Guam,” says Mrs. Omaira Brunal-Perry, Associate Professor of Spanish Legal Historiography and Head Librarian of MARC.

MARC specializes in Guam-Micronesian materials and is an incredible hub for research of the history, languages, and cultures of Guam and the many islands in Micronesia. “Having the Chamorro Bible in our library is a tremendous addition to the Chamorro language studies and a great contribution to the Chamorro culture,” says Perry. “Since its introduction, several students and members of the community have seen it on the shelf or requested to view it. It is definitely being used.”

Regardless of the many reasons as to why the Chamorro Bible disappeared in the first place, a resurgence of interest shows the immortality of God’s Holy Word and its importance to the Chamorro people. It is clearly evident that God has placed His protective hand over the Bible and it has survived war, natural disasters, and human efforts to silence the written Word.

It is no coincidence that the Chamorro Bible is now becoming available once again for such a time as this. Jesus never leaves His people without personal access to His Word and the letters He has written and preserved especially for them. He requires each individual to heed the Word He has provided to them and to share it with others so that no one is left in darkness. Such is the purpose of the resurrection of the Chamorro Bible. And a heavenly dawn is breaking for the Chamorro people.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, Michael F., “*Kinalamten Pulitikat: Sinenten I Chamorro/ Issues in Guam’s Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective*,” Guam, 1996, pg. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Hattori, Anne P., “*Kinalamten Pulitikat: Sinenten I Chamorro/ Issues in Guam’s Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective*,” Guam, 1996, pg. 63.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson, Laura, “*Guam And Its People*,” Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1947, pg. 218.

<sup>4</sup> Thompson, Laura, “*The Laura Thompson Papers, Diary—Field Work in Guam 1938-39*,” MARC and by courtesy of Dr. Laura Thompson.

<sup>5</sup> Cox, L.M., “*The Island Of Guam*,” Naval Government of Guam, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1926, pg. 5.

<sup>6</sup> von Preissig, Edward R., *Dictionary and Grammar of the Chamorro Language of the Island of Guam*. Washington, United States of America: Government Printing Office, 1918. Dictionary can be found on [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org).

<sup>7</sup> Rogers, Robert F., “*Destiny’s Landfall*,” University of Hawai’I Press, Honolulu, 1995, pg. 106.

<sup>8</sup> Thompson, Laura, “*Guam And Its People*,” Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1947, pg.233.

<sup>9</sup> Lujan, Pilar C., “*Kinalamten Pulitikat: Sinenten I Chamorro/ Issues in Guam’s Political Development: The Chamorro Perspective*,” Guam, 1996, pg. 22.

### STANZA 1

Jesus loves me! This I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to Him belong;  
They are weak, but He is strong.

### REFRAIN

Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
The Bible tells me so.

### STANZA 2

Jesus loves me! This I know,  
As He loved so long ago,  
Taking children on His knee,  
Saying, “Let them come to Me.”

### STANZA 3

Jesus loves me still today,  
Walking with me on my way,  
Wanting as a friend to give  
Light and love to all who live.

### STANZA 4

Jesus loves me! He who died  
Heaven’s gate to open wide;  
He will wash away my sin,  
Let His little child come in.

### STANZA 5

Jesus loves me! He will stay  
Close beside me all the way;  
Thou hast bled and died for me,  
I will henceforth live for Thee.

### STANZA 6

Jesus loves me! Loves me still,  
Though I’m very weak and ill,  
That I might from sin be free  
Bled and died upon the tree.

# The Scriptures A Safeguard

Mrs. Ellen G. White

God has given us his Word that we may become acquainted with its teachings, and know for ourselves what he requires of us. When the lawyer came to Jesus with the inquiry, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the Saviour referred him to the Scriptures, saying, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" Ignorance will not excuse young or old, or release them from the punishment due for the transgression of God's law, because there is in their hands a faithful presentation of that law and of its principles and its claims. It is not enough to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right, or what the minister tells him is right. His soul's salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. However strong may be his convictions, however confident he may be that the minister knows what is truth, this is not his foundation. He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything.

It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light, and encourage others to follow his example. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought, and comparing scripture with scripture. With divine help, we are to form our opinions for ourselves, as we are to answer for ourselves before God.

We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures, and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods as are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that selfreliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God, and a sincere desire to learn his will. We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, evil angels will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth.

Many a portion of Scripture which learned men pronounce a mystery, or pass over as unimportant, is full of comfort and instruction to him who has been taught in the school of Christ. One reason why many theologians have no clearer understanding of God's Word is they close their eyes to truths which they do not wish to practice. An understanding of Bible truth depends not so much on the power of intellect brought to the search as on the singleness of purpose, the earnest longing after righteousness.

The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart to so comprehend God's Word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist's petition our own: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." [Psalm 119:18] Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons. But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity, they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." [Isaiah 59:19]

All who value their eternal interests should be on their guard against the inroads of skepticism. The very pillars of truth will be assailed. It is impossible to keep beyond the reach of the sarcasms and sophisms, the insidious and pestilent teachings, of modern infidelity. Satan adapts his temptations to all classes. He assails the illiterate with a jest or sneer, while he meets the educated with scientific objections and philosophical reasoning, alike calculated to excite distrust or contempt of the Scriptures. Even youth of little experience presume to insinuate doubts concerning the fundamental principles of Christianity. And this youthful infidelity,

See *Scriptures* on page 27.

**Bethany S. Martin**

The handling of God's Word is something one should not take lightly. It is a special Book and deserves the utmost regard and respect concerning its preservation. So how does one go about making it available to others when no previous electronic text exists? Or, to cut to the real issue, how did the Chamorro Bible become available on the World Wide Web without having to retype the Bible in electronic format? To answer that question, we must take a step back and look at why it needed to be online in the first place.

The Chamorro Bible had been lost among the native people for decades. There were only a few copies left in the entire world and none of them seemed to be on the island for which it was intended. The Chamorro Bible had been nearly erased from history without a trace. But in August of 2001, began the resurrection of the Chamorro Bible. It brought life and refreshment to all who crossed its path. When a person is able to see the effects that the Bible has on individuals, especially having one in their own language, it leaves no doubt in the human mind that this Living Water must be provided to everyone and be easily accessible so that all may benefit.

Clarence Thomas IV, pioneer and pilgrim with the Chamorro Bible project and teacher at Guam Adventist Academy, was convinced that God's Word needed to be provided to His people in the Marianas Islands in their own language. But in his study of the Chamorro culture and language, he knew that the language had undergone changes in spelling—orthography. How significant would the Bible be considering the spelling changes that had taken place in the Chamorro language over the past decades? Would the written Chamorro be understood by people who were only familiar with the most recent Chamorro orthography?

"I agonized over continuing with the idea of re-printing the Chamorro Bible," says Thomas. "I needed to know that people would be able to read and understand the older Chamorro spelling."

His answer came soon after his concern. David Babauta Herrera, Engineering WHE Test Director for Raytheon Technical Services on Guam, read through much of the Chamorro Bible with elated interest. He told Thomas with enthusiasm, "The spelling is different, but it can be understood. This is very good Chamorro."

Thomas' concerns were answered once again during GAA's Chamorro History week during the 2001-2002 school year. A speaker was arranged for each day of the week, but Friday's speakers fell through and they had no one to speak about Chamorro history or culture. Picking up the baton, Mateo Aggabao, history teacher for GAA, asked Thomas to share an update on the Chamorro Bible.

"What if someone can read in Chamorro?" asked Thomas. Two high school students were selected who could read in Chamorro: Jennifer Mafnas and Rosabella Flores, the daughter of GAA's office manager and registrar, Janet Flores. Thomas gave them a copy of Psalms 19 and they reviewed it for five minutes and divided the texts in half to be read. Thomas spoke to the students about the Chamorro Bible and asked if they would like to hear it read in their own language.

"Jennifer and Rosabella read through Psalms 19 perfectly with the original orthography," remembers Thomas. "They knew about the substitution of different characters to correspond with the present day Chamorro orthography and it was not a problem. Once again, I was comforted knowing that the older language of the Chamorro Bible was not useless and



ChamorroBible.org

www.ChamorroBible.org

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it could be read.”

Later that day, Thomas was speaking with another Chamorro student and asked her if she was able to understand what Jennifer and Rosabella had read earlier that morning. “She said that she understood everything that they read,” said Thomas. “This was just wonderful. God took this opportunity to confirm that this Bible can be read and understood by the people.”

That conviction was what propelled the duplication of the Bible into electronic format.

But what venue would be the safest against tampering, provide security of its existence, and allow every person access? Let us not forget that God works through technology and uses it to further the Gospel to people who may otherwise not be able to receive it. The Internet is able to enter countries where missionaries cannot go. It is able to reach people who would be persecuted for seeking Christianity. It is able to instantly reach an island where printed copies of the Written Word have been lost. Introducing, [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org).

### Technical specifics

It wasn't without great lengths that Thomas was able to convert the printed text into electronic text. When a large amount of text is needed to be entered electronically, there are several ways it can be done: typed into a word processor, use speech recognition software, or use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software on the scanned text. One function of the OCR software is to take scanned content and reproduce the same text in a version that can be edited in a word processor.

How exactly does OCR work? Thomas scanned every single page of the Chamorro Bible and saved each page as its own file. After the entire Bible was scanned,

the OCR software was used to process each file. The software is able to recognize scanned characters in several different languages. Spanish was selected since Chamorro was not available and the next closest language, as far as the spelling characteristics of the Chamorro language are concerned, is Spanish. Selecting a specific language in which to reproduce the text is important because it provides for more characters to be used than what is used in the English language. For example, because the letter “ñ” is used in Chamorro and not English. Running the OCR software with the Spanish option where that letter *does* exist allows the program to recognize the “ñ”. The OCR software was run on every page of the Bible until a complete copy of the Bible was reproduced in the Chamorro language in a word processor format.

### Perfecting the work

The OCR process is not without its limitations. Because the program recognizes the characters the best that it can, there is always the risk that a letter is mistaken for another character of the alphabet or that a spec of dust is interpreted as a character. Therefore, a complete and careful proofreading must take place. The first proofreading session was done during the OCR process (mechanical); the second and subsequent sessions required human involvement.

David De Leon Flores, Sr., and David B. Herrera, who both speak Chamorro, assisted in the proofreading of the text and took their roles seriously. They understood the sacredness with which they must handle God's Word. All three men would sit down together and one would read from the original Chamorro Bible and the other would follow along with the reproduced electronic

text and make sure that the spelling and punctuation was identical to the original. If a character in the electronic copy differed from the original text, then that was highlighted and Thomas would analyze the difference later. Begoña Santos Flores, Principal of George Washington High School in Mangilao was also consulted early on in the first proofreading session.

Additional proofreading methods were consecutively taken to expedite the proofreading process. During this time, Herrera expressed the idea that the Bible should be available with red letters. "Mr. Herrera said," states Thomas, "The Bible should be made available with Christ's words in red. Wouldn't it be really great if we had the Gospels in red letters like other Bibles do?" He was completely right."

Herrera took a real protective care and devotion to reading through the Gospels and Acts and highlighting Christ's words that should appear in red. "It was a project that was real dear to his heart," expresses Thomas. After Herrera finished designating Christ's words to be printed in red letters, Thomas electronically changed the color of those words to red completing the electronic copy of the Chamorro Bible.

"At the beginning of each proofreading session I began with prayer, asking God to be with the pens and pencils and with those of us involved in checking for proofreading errors," verifies Thomas. The completion of the OCR proofreading came on April 7, 2002 after the entire Chamorro Bible was proofread with many prayers and a fine toothed comb.

[www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org)

Having the Bible in electronic format provided the opportunity to make it available on the Internet. On May 31, 2002, Chamorro Standard Time (ChST), [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org) officially opened. This is the first Micronesian Bible to our knowledge to be made available on the Internet and is the first to be produced as a red lettered edition. There is no other Bible in these territories that provide those same characteristics. Anyone can access this website and will find a complete copy of the Chamorro Bible in the Chamorro and English language, as well as the 1918 Chamorro-

English Dictionary and a Chamorro Language Grammar book.

Since the publication of the website, several emails have been received from fellow Chamorros who have browsed the site and are excited to find a Bible in their native tongue. Here are a few comments:

"Buenas. Thank you so much for the information regarding the Chamorro Bible. Our native islanders, the Chamorros, should be proud of this Chamorro Bible. As I read the words, I felt a wonderful feeling in me. My question to you is, how many Chamorros have

been reached about this? I just want to be sure that all Chamorros here in Guahan, Luta, Saipan, Tinian and the other Mariana Islands and abroad be reached about this important Chamorro history."

"Hafa Adai, Chelu! The website is very informative and the words are truly Chamorro. Keep up the good work and my family looks forward in seeing this Bible out soon for all Chamorros to have."

"Biba Chamorro! Thank you for this website! Awesome! It's about time that our Chamorros have a Bible written in their own native language. Looking forward to seeing this be published."

"Buenas, Chelu! In regards to the website, I would like to say thank you! We the Chamorro people have waited for this to happen...I was so amazed to see the words from the Bible written in our native language. I look forward in knowing more about this."

"I never knew that this website would create an impact on our Chamorro people, but it is. And, I am so happy! It is about time that our native Chamorros be afforded a Bible in our native language. Keep up the great work. I know that some of the manamkos would find this [Chamorro Bible] a word of God!"

There is no mistaking that [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org) is revolutionizing the Chamorro people. God truly does use the art of technology to reach His people in unexpected ways.

"I never knew that this website would create an impact on our Chamorro people, but it is... It is about time that our native Chamorros be afforded a Bible in our native language."

**Scriptures**, continued from page 23.

shallow as it is, has its influence. Many are thus led to jest at the faith of their fathers, and to do despite to the Spirit of grace. Many a life that promised to be an honor to God and a blessing to the world, has been blighted by the foul breath of infidelity. All who trust to the boastful decisions of human reason, and imagine that they can explain divine mysteries and arrive at truth unaided by the wisdom of God, are entangled in the snare of Satan.

We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future wellbeing, and also the salvation of other souls, depends upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon his Word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey.

Many are deceived as to their true condition before God. They congratulate themselves upon the wrong acts which they do not commit, and forget to enumerate the good and noble deeds which God requires of them, but which they have neglected to perform. It is not enough that they are trees in the garden of God. They are to answer to his expectation by bearing fruit. He holds them accountable for their failure to accomplish all the good which they could have done through his grace strengthening them. In the books of heaven they are registered as cumberers of the ground. Yet the case of even this class is not utterly hopeless. With those who have slighted God's mercy and abused his grace, the heart of longsuffering love yet pleads. "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, . . . redeeming the time, because the days are evil." [Ephesians 5:14-16]

When the testing time shall come, those who have made God's Word their rule of life will be revealed. In

summer there is no noticeable difference between evergreens and other trees; but when the blasts of winter come, the evergreens remain unchanged, while other trees are stripped of their foliage. So the falsehearted professor may not now be distinguished from the real Christian, but the time is just upon us when the difference will be apparent. Let opposition arise, let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the halfhearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true Christian will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity.

Says the psalmist: "Thy testimonies are my meditation." "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." [Psalm 119: 99, 104]

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." [Proverbs 3:13; Jeremiah 17:8]

*~This article was published in the Advent Review and Herald, September 10, 1914.*

*\* If you would like to read more about the history of the Bible through the years, a detailed history can be found in the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary, 1979, Review and Herald Publishing Association.*

# The *Transmission* Of The

**500 BC:** Completion of All Original Hebrew Manuscripts which make up the 39 Books of the Old Testament.

**200 BC:** Completion of the Septuagint Greek Manuscripts which contain the 39 Old Testament Books AND 14 Apocrypha Books.

**1st Century AD:** Completion of all Original Greek Manuscripts which make up the 27 Books of the New Testament.

**390 AD:** Jerome's Latin Vulgate Manuscripts produced which contain all 80 Books (39 Old Test. + 14 Apocrypha + 27 New Test.).

**500 AD:** Scriptures have been translated into over 500 languages.

**600 AD:** Latin was the only language allowed for Scripture.

**995 AD:** Anglo-Saxon (early roots of English language) translations of the New Testament produced.

**1384 AD:** Wycliffe is the first person to produce a (hand-written) manuscript copy of the complete Bible; all 80 Books.

**1455 AD:** Gutenberg invents the printing press; books may now be mass-pro-

duced instead of individually hand-written. The first book ever printed is Gutenberg's Bible in Latin.

**1516 AD:** Erasmus produces a Greek/Latin parallel New Testament.

**1522 AD:** Martin Luther's German New Testament.

**1525 AD:** William Tyndale's New Testament; the first New Testament to be printed in the English language.

**1535 AD:** Myles Coverdale's Bible; the first complete Bible to be printed in the English language (80 Books: O.T. & N.T. & Apocrypha).

**1537 AD:** Matthews Bible; the second complete Bible to be printed in English. Done by John "Thomas Matthew" Rogers (80 Books).

**1539 AD:** The "Great Bible" printed; the first English language Bible to be authorized for public use (80 Books.)

**1560 AD:** The Geneva Bible printed; the first English language Bible to add numbered verses to each chapter (80 Books).

**1568 AD:** The Bishops Bible printed; the Bible of which the King James was a revision (80 Books).

# Bible TO English

**1609 AD:** The Douay Old Testament is added to the Rheimes New Testament (of 1582) making the first complete English Catholic Bible; translated from the Latin Vulgate (80 Books).

**1611 AD:** The King James Bible printed; originally with all 80 Books. The Apocrypha was officially removed in 1885 leaving only 66 Books.

**1782 AD:** Robert Aitken's Bible; the first English language Bible (a King James Version without Apocrypha) to be printed in America.

**1791 AD:** Isaac Collins and Isaiah Thomas respectively produce the first Family Bible and first Illustrated Bible printed in America. Both were King James Versions, with all 80 Books.

**1808 AD:** Jane Aitken's Bible (Daughter of Robert Aitken); the first Bible to be printed by a woman.

**1833 AD:** Noah Webster's Bible; after producing his famous dictionary, Webster printed his own revision of the King James Bible.

**1841 AD:** English Hexapla New Testament; an early textual comparison showing the Greek and 6 famous English translations in parallel columns.

**1846 AD:** The Illuminated Bible; the most lavishly illustrated Bible printed in America. A King James Version, with all 80 Books.

**1885 AD:** The "Revised Version" Bible; the first major English revision of the King James Bible.

**1901 AD:** The "American Standard Version"; the first major American revision of the King James Bible.

**1908 AD:** Francis M. Price translates the four Gospels, Acts, and Psalms into the Chamorro language.

**1971 AD:** The "New American Standard Bible" (NASB) is published as a "Modern and Accurate Word for Word English Translation" of the Bible.

**1973 AD:** The "new International Version" (NIV) is published as a "Modern and Accurate Phrase for Phrase English Translation" of the Bible.

**1982 AD:** The "New King James Version" (NKJV) is published as a "Modern English Version Maintaining the Original Style of the King James."

\* Chart used with the permission of Greatsite.com.

**Reflections**, continued from page 5.

tion later. Once the OCR process was finished, Mrs. Flores was the first person to sit down with me and go through the that multipage list. Because of that meeting, the Chamorro Bible Project significantly moved forward.

**David Babauta Herrera:** When the Chamorro Bible is printed it will be a red-letter edition: the words of Jesus will be in red. We can thank Mr. Herrera for the many hours he sat at a table in GAA's computer lab highlighting a Chamorro Bible, generated from the OCR'd text, the Bible words that should be red-lettered. Our proofreading sessions were also my Chamorro history, culture, political, and language lessons, during which his love of the Chamorro language and culture was clearly communicated. I'm deeply appreciative for his patience, persistence, and dedication.

**Josephine Chargualaf Varley, Pennsylvania, USA:** On April 16, 2003 ChST Mrs. Varley arrived at GAA to record a few chapters of the Chamorro Bible. It is her voice you hear reading Salmo 8, Salmo 19, and Salmo 23 at [www.ChamorroBible.org](http://www.ChamorroBible.org). These freely distributable audio files represent an important milestone. Publishing the Bible in audio form is a most important way of spreading Jesus' Word *and* a way for people to learn and brush-up on the Chamorro language.

**David De Leon Flores, Sr.:** I pressed Mr. Flores on Chamorro language issues and usefulness of the Chamorro Bible, listening attentively to his responses. He met my concerns and questions with tact, patience, openness, and directness. In addition to inadvertently becoming my Chamorro culture teacher, he was also involved with the proofreading phase of the project.

**Janet Taitano Flores:** Searching for a Chamorro Bible, Mrs. Flores called all Guam's public libraries and perhaps some other places that I'm currently unaware of. Whenever I've requested a literal Chamorro-to-English Bible verse translation so I could have a better grasp of the quality of the translation, she always provided it. Mrs. Flores great-grandfather, José Mendiola Taitano played an important role in the translation of the 1908 Chamorro Bible.

**American Bible Society, New York, USA:** Dr. Liana Lupas and her staff sent information from their archives on the history of the Chamorro Bible. Dr. Lupas also resolved a proofreading question that perplexed us. I wish I could say more about the ABS' Licensing Depart-

ment staff, but for now, please accept a heartfelt thank you. It's difficult to overstate the American Bible Society's importance.

**Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center:** The Micronesian Area Research Center is near-and-dear to my heart. The assistance of and materials provided by the professional staff of this priceless research center is deeply appreciated and will not be forgotten.

**Congregational Library of the American Congregational Association, Massachusetts, USA:** Dr. Harold F. Worthley and his staff provided information about Francis Marion Price, a Congregationalist missionary and translator of the 1908 Chamorro Bible. Dr. Worthley's assistance and permission to publish the information is appreciated.

**Two Participants Requesting Anonymity:** Thank you for your continuing and important role in the Chamorro Bible Project.

I finish this article at Guam Adventist Academy, the hub for the restoration project. Jesus has really honored this SDA school by giving it the privilege to cooperate with Him in restoring a Chamorro Bible to *all* Chamorros. I find it simply remarkable that *everything* was in place for this project to be where it is today: events, students, staff, technical tools, beautiful setting, the bird choir which sang at sunrise and sunset, telecommunication facilities, and the protection of His Word through two major earthquakes and typhoons.

There are times when I see past the trials, disappointments, failures, and successes, and for brief moments see and feel the grandeur, the nobleness, the sacredness, the continuity, the majesty, and the power of Jesus' Word, the Bible: "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" "Thy Word is very pure: therefore Thy servant loveth it." "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!" Psalm 8:4; Psalm 119:105, 140; Psalm 8:9.

"Jaye y taotao, para uguaja guiya güiya jinaso? yan lajin taotao para ubinesita güe." "Y sinanganmo y candet para y adengjo, yan manana gui chalanjo." "Y sinanganmo sengasgas: enao mina jaguaeya y tentagomo." "O Jeova, Señorname: jafa muna mauleg y naanmo gui todo y tano." Salmo 8:4; Salmo 119:105, 140; Salmo 8:9.





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