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IN THIS LETTER:

- 1. U.N. Recognizes a Sovereign
Palestinian State**
- 2. Burmese Translation of Sabbath
booklet almost ready to print.**



Flag of Palestine¹



Mahmoud Abbas, President of the
Palestinian Authority²

Dear Friends and Fellow Laborers,

Palestine is one giant step closer to being recognized by the United Nations as a sovereign member state. In a vote by the U.N. General Assembly on November 29, by an overwhelming margin, Palestine entered the U.N.

The United Nations voted overwhelmingly today to recognize a Palestinian state, a long-sought victory for the Palestinians but an embarrassing diplomatic defeat for the United States. The resolution upgrading the Palestinians' status to a nonmember observer state at the United Nations (on par with the Vatican) was approved by a more than two-thirds majority of the 193-member world body—a vote of 138-9³

There are two important points we should notice. First, the vote was won by a great majority. This means that, even with abstentions, it is clear that the vast majority of the world wants a Palestinian State. The second thing we need to

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_Palestine.svg

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mahmoud_Abbas.jpg

³ <http://www.washingtonpost.com>

notice is that the Palestinian State now has access to international bodies such as the International Court, where Israeli leaders could be accused of war crimes and other claims could be pursued.

Guess where the State of Palestine claims a capital? East Jerusalem (location of the Temple Mount). Can we see what's coming?

BURMESE LANGUAGE SABBATH BOOKLET

Translating is never easy. Languages are based on culture and history. To translate from English into, for instance, German or French, is not as difficult as say, English into Japanese or Thai. This is because the cultures and histories are very different. The German culture and historical roots are much closer to the English-speaking world than the cultures and linguistic histories of Asia. The roots of English are different than the roots of Burmese. English is basically a Germanic language as spoken by the Saxons and other northwestern Germanic tribes that invaded and migrated into Celtic England. There are some Latin-based words in the Old English because of Roman influence and even occupation. The Vikings brought a Scandinavian form of German into Danish settlements in England. Then Duke William of Normandy brought his Old Norman speaking army and invaded England in 1066 A.D. The language of the court, education and government became Norman French, while the populace still spoke Saxon/Scandinavian-based Old English. The church brought Latin, which also influenced the language. The Renaissance brought Latin, Classical Greek, and even Dutch words into the language.

The meanings of words change. Today, our English language continues to evolve. There are now words I hear young people saying that I don't even understand! This leads to many misunderstandings. For instance, the general greeting of young people in the U.S. is "Hey Guys!" In my teenage time, "guys" were male and "gals" designated the female gender. It would have been weird to call girls "guys." Now, both genders are "guys." I will never get used to it.

There are also many idioms that are used in one language that have no direct translation into another language. One example would be "saved at the eleventh hour." Most English speakers will understand what that means. But if we try to translate literally, then we have a problem because its meaning is more than just the words. A translator unfamiliar with this idiom might

translate this phrase as “saved at 11 o’clock” which does not convey the meaning at all.

Much of our church literature has been written to an American audience and even more difficult, an American Church of God audience. There are a lot of doctrinal points that are taken for granted as understood. But, to a Burmese-speaking audience, they have little or no Church of God background.

There is also the assumption that the reader has access to several different English language translations, as well as lexicons, commentaries, and one or more concordances. In Burma, if the reader even possesses a Bible, it is only one of two translations into the Burmese language and/or other Bibles translated into Kachin, Karen, or various other tribal languages that are translations done by Protestant missionaries from a modern English language Bible. There are no concordances, commentaries, Bible dictionaries, lexicons, or other Bible helps in the Burmese language or other tribal languages.

Idioms and references to Bible helps or various translations to clarify a meaning are useless. I have tried to review COG literature for translation and have discovered that most of it has to be edited and even re-written for translation to an Asian audience. This is very time consuming and frustrating.

In the case of our new Burmese language Sabbath booklet, I stopped trying to re-write someone else’s text and edit out all idioms and culture based language and references. In desperation, I just researched and wrote it myself for translation into Burmese. I know the audience. I know the culture. I know the level of education of most of our potential readers. And while I am not a speaker of Burmese, I do speak Thai and have a better understanding of the need for clarity of ideas and concepts, not just a direct translation of the words.

This is a lot of work, but absolutely necessary. I covered the Sabbath in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. I showed where the Sabbath came from, who created it, why a New Covenant Christian should keep the seventh day Sabbath, and proof that Jesus and the Apostles kept the Sabbath.

Adja Shan, a Legacy graduate who is educated in Burmese language, translated my English text into Burmese and typed it all up with a Burmese word processing program. I then sent the text to Jack Aungmin, a COG member in North Carolina who has helped us with translations into Burmese

and Karen over the years. He is checking the Burmese language and making corrections. Meanwhile, Adja is setting up a booklet format on her computer. As soon as Jack has finished his checks, he will connect with Adja on Skype and discuss changes. Once this is done and the booklet is created on Adja's computer, copies will be made and sent to U Myo Zaw, our COG deacon in Rangoon, and he will photocopy and send out. We also plan to post our Burmese translations online at our Legacy Institute website so that it is available to Burmese speakers everywhere.

None of this would be possible if we did not have our Legacy Institute school in Thailand. Both Jack and Adja were educated at Legacy in Thailand. Now God can use them to spread the Gospel of the Kingdom throughout all parts of their homeland. Even though Burma at one time was part of the British Empire's Raj, few still speak English. English language COG literature will reach a very few who can read English. Burmese language COG literature will reach into all the high mountains and hidden valleys as far as Tibet and into China. God's Work in Asia is being advanced once again.

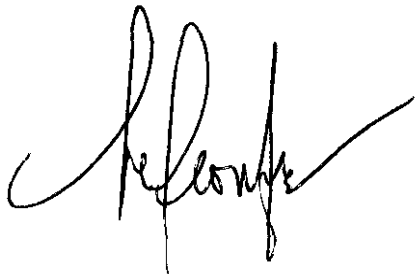
Please remember Adja and Jack in your prayers. Ask Him to give them more of His Holy Spirit to help them with these important translations. The next one is about the doctrine of clean and unclean meats. I have already researched and written the text and am now checking and editing.

There will be many more booklets to come. We are going to blanket Burma with the knowledge of God's Truth. Stand still and watch the power of God in action.

Psalms 46:10

*Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."*

Serving the Great and Holy Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a stylized, flowing script.

T. Leon Sexton

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