

The Beans' Talk: Update from Mark and Patti Bean

Translating all of God's Word for six different groups of Quechua speakers in central Peru



Is your God my God?

Back in 1988 we helped facilitate a music festival in the village of Margos. We wanted to encourage the use and writing of praise songs in Quechua. There was lots of participation.

Town officials were included on the program. One warmly welcomed visitors. Included in his welcome he commended to us the time to worship God.

In Quechua the most common way to speak about God is to say "our God." However, instead of mentioning the time to worship "our God," this official said, "your God." Immediately a murmur rippled through the crowd.

Because of the way Quechua works, that phrase essentially meant, "*your* God, but not *my* God." So what was meant to be a welcome ended up being, at best, an embarrassment.

That works well for Pharaoh

In Quechua when Pharaoh says, "I will let you go to sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness," it is clear that God is the God of the Israelites, but not Pharaoh's God. It works for any pagan ruler to say *your* God.

But what about the prophets?

On the other hand, numerous times men of God address the people of Israel and say, "the Lord your God." In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses frequently uses that phrase: "The Lord your God has blessed you, ...has carried you, ...goes before you."

This will not work in Quechua because Moses, like the town official at the music festival, would essentially be saying, he's *your* God, but not *my* God. So, in these passages the Quechua version says, "The Lord *our* God has blessed *us*, ...has carried *us*, ...goes before *us*."

Couches versus sofas

In taking a break from working on parallel passages (explained last month), Mark started to tackle his personal list of things to check. Most of the 900-plus items on his list are things that came up in workshop settings but would have been too time consuming to complete at the moment. For example, when a team says something like, “make sure all instances of X say Y, not X,” he would add it to his list. To give a trivial example, suppose that a team said something like, “Mark, instead of the word

couch, we want it to say *sofa*. So, Mark would add to his list, “check for any stray *couches* and make sure they say *sofa*.”

One item on the list is to check all instances of *the Lord your God* to be sure that they communicate correctly for the six Bibles we are preparing.

Steadily chipping away

Each day Mark gives me a report of what he’s worked on that day. Each item on his personal list is a mini-project in itself. Praise God for daily forward progress.

Praises and Prayer Requests

- ⇒ **Praise:** Working as a consultant, Mark finished the check of Luke for two Quechua varieties that our colleagues work in. He got back to them with his observations in plenty of time for their upcoming workshop.
- ⇒ **Keep praying:** for sustained attention to detail so that these finished Bibles will be well done..
- ⇒ Although we continue working in the States, in September we both have commitments in Peru. **Pray** that we would be effective communicators and encourage those God places around us.
 - ⇒ **September 9–16** Patti will be part of a team leading a workshop outside of Lima for Peruvian colleagues.
 - ⇒ **September 16–18** Mark will be teaching Quechua pastors in a provincial capital.
 - ⇒ **September 22–25** Mark will be the speaker at a “convention” of Quechua churches in another town.

Thanks for supporting us as we keep chipping away.

Mark + Patti

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