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## **Bible translated for mobile phones**

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0510/051008-bible-e.html>

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**8 October, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Bible translated for mobile phones**

**BNE:** The Australian Bible Society has just created a new version of the Bible. People can now read the holy book in SMS message form. This is the text language used in millions of e-mail messages sent from mobile phones. It is the world's most modern form of communication. Bible Society spokesman Michael Chant said: "The old days when the Bible was only available [with a] black cover with a cross on it are gone....We want to open it up for people of all ages, backgrounds and interests." It took one person four weeks to translate all 31,173 verses of the Bible.

Traditional Bible readers are a little shocked at the shortened Bible. Many people believe it lacks the quality and charm of the original book. However, many younger people do not read the Bible because they think the language is old and boring. Mr. Chant said the text version would open the Bible up to the young, who are almost addicted to their mobile phones. He added: "The idea is that the Bible can be...up-to-date, just like...reading a horoscope." Although the new service is very popular, it is not cheap. The whole Bible would cost \$US6,000 to send by text.

## WARM-UPS

**1. HOLY BOOK:** In pairs / groups, talk about your history with holy books. When did you first start reading one? Do you like or dislike them? Have you read holy books from different religions? Do you have favorite verses?

**2. TXT MSG:** How much do you know about text language in English? With your partner(s), try to guess the meaning of the words in the left column. If you have difficulty, match them with the standard English on the right.

- |           |                   |
|-----------|-------------------|
| a. b4     | 1. Are you OK?    |
| b. gonna  | 2. before         |
| c. luv    | 3. excellent      |
| d. xInt   | 4. going to       |
| e. ruok   | 5. great          |
| f. cul8er | 6. love           |
| g. 2moro  | 7. Oh, I see.     |
| h. sum1   | 8. See you later. |
| i. gr8    | 9. someone        |
| j. oic    | 10. tomorrow      |

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Australia / Bible / holy books / e-mail messages / communication / cross / translations / boring language / mobile phones / horoscopes / \$6,000*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. COMMUNICATION:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "communication". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. SHORTER & SHRTR:** In pairs / groups, talk about texts that would be more convenient if they were written in text language (newspapers, exam papers, railway timetables, restaurant menus, legal contracts, instructions, road signs...).

**6. SMS (Short Message Service) OPINIONS:** Do you agree with these opinions on language and SMS / text language? Talk about them with your partner(s).

- I don't like my language changing.
- Shorter text language is more convenient.
- Text message is too difficult for most people.
- Holy books are too important to be translated into text (SMS) language.
- I'm worried my children will not be able to spell correctly.
- SMS simply allows people to be lazy.
- I love all this new, shortened language.
- I don't want to learn English text language.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. We can now read the Bible in an English that uses shorter words.   | T / F |
| b. SMS text is the world's most modern form of communication.         | T / F |
| c. Nowadays, Bibles are only available with black covers.             | T / F |
| d. One person converted all 31,173 verses of the Bible in four weeks. | T / F |
| e. Bible readers love the new shortened text Bible.                   | T / F |
| f. Many young people think the Bible's language is old and boring.    | T / F |
| g. The new text message Bible will be free with daily horoscopes.     | T / F |
| h. The entire Bible would cost \$US6,000 to send by text.             | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a. created       | up-to-date          |
| b. form          | inexpensive         |
| c. mobile phones | uninteresting       |
| d. modern        | cellular telephones |
| e. translate     | obsessed            |
| f. shortened     | made                |
| g. boring        | abbreviated         |
| h. addicted      | convert             |
| i. cheap         | entire              |
| j. whole         | format              |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. created a new version        | and boring                 |
| b. holy                         | all 31,173 verses          |
| c. the world's most modern form | book                       |
| d. open it up for people        | is very popular            |
| e. four weeks to translate      | \$US6,000 to send by text  |
| f. the shortened                | of all ages                |
| g. it lacks the quality and     | of the Bible               |
| h. the language is old          | Bible                      |
| i. the new service              | of communication           |
| j. The whole Bible would cost   | charm of the original book |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### Bible translated for mobile phones

**BNE:** The Australian Bible Society has just \_\_\_\_\_ a new version of the Bible. People can now read the \_\_\_\_\_ book in SMS message form. This is the text language \_\_\_\_\_ in millions of e-mail messages sent from mobile phones. It is the world's most \_\_\_\_\_ form of communication. Bible Society spokesman Michael Chant said: "The \_\_\_\_\_ days when the Bible was only available [with a] black cover with a \_\_\_\_\_ on it are gone....We want to \_\_\_\_\_ it up for people of all ages, backgrounds and interests." It took one person four weeks to translate all 31,173 \_\_\_\_\_ of the Bible.

Traditional Bible readers are a little shocked at the \_\_\_\_\_ Bible. Many people believe it \_\_\_\_\_ the quality and charm of the \_\_\_\_\_ book. However, many younger people do not read the Bible because they think the language is old and \_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Chant said the text \_\_\_\_\_ would open the Bible up to the young, who are almost \_\_\_\_\_ to their mobile phones. He added: "The idea is that the Bible can be...up-to-date, just like...reading a \_\_\_\_\_." Although the new service is very popular, it is not \_\_\_\_\_. The whole Bible would cost \$US6,000 to send by text.

*open*  
*modern*  
*holy*  
*old*  
*verses*  
*created*  
*cross*  
*used*  
*cheap*  
*addicted*  
*original*  
*version*  
*shortened*  
*horoscope*  
*lacks*  
*boring*

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'black' and 'cover'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "TEXT MESSAGE" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about the way mobile phones are changing language.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

just	shocked
SMS	charm
millions	boring
modern	addicted
cross	horoscope
one person	\$US6,000

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do you send e-mail messages using a mobile phone?
- d. Is modern technology changing your language?
- e. Are young people in your country having more problems with spelling?
- f. Do you read a holy book?
- g. What are the advantages of the new SMS Bible?
- h. Would you prefer reading a traditional book?
- i. Do you think new technology is changing the world too quickly?
- j. Do you think text messaging will mean people will become poor at English (or your language)?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think receiving a verse of a holy book on your mobile phone in shortened form is a good idea?
- d. Do you think the new SMS Bible service will be popular?
- e. Do you think there should be more ways to encourage young people to read holy books?
- f. What are the advantages of text messaging?
- g. What do you think religious leaders will say about holy books in text language?
- h. Would you download verses from a holy book on your mobile?
- i. Which would you prefer to download, a verse from a holy book or your horoscope?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

**MORE TEXT:** In pairs / groups, talk about the advantages and disadvantages of having the following kinds of text written only in text language:

TEXT	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Newspapers		
Exam papers		
Railway timetables		
Restaurant menus		
Medicine instructions		
Legal contracts		
Road signs		
Other		

Change partners and tell each other about what you talked about earlier.

Should the world have more text language?



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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Traditional Bible readers are a little shocked at the \_\_\_\_\_ Bible. Many people believe it lacks the quality and \_\_\_\_\_ of the original book. However, many younger people do not read the Bible because they think the language is old and \_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Chant said the text version would open the Bible up to the young, who are almost \_\_\_\_\_ to their mobile phones. He added: "The idea is that the Bible can be...up-to-date, just like...reading a \_\_\_\_\_." Although the new service is very popular, it is not cheap. The \_\_\_\_\_ Bible would cost \$US6,000 to send by text.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on the new SMS Bible. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. TXT MSGNG:** Find some examples of text messaging in English and write them down. Try to write a whole letter using text language. Show your messages to your classmates in your next lesson. Can they understand your message?

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to the Language Society about text language. Tell him / her whether you think it is a good or bad idea and why. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TXT MSG:

a - 2    b - 4    c - 6    d - 3    e - 1    f - 8    g - 10    h - 9    I - 5    j - 7

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. T    b. T    c. F    d. T    e. F    f. T    g. F    h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. created	made
b. form	format
c. mobile phones	cellular telephones
d. modern	up-to-date
e. translate	convert
f. shortened	abbreviated
g. boring	uninteresting
h. addicted	obsessed
i. cheap	inexpensive
j. whole	entire

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. created a new version	of the Bible
b. holy	book
c. the world's most modern form	of communication
d. open it up for people	of all ages
e. four weeks to translate	all 31,173 verses
f. the shortened	Bible
g. it lacks the quality and	charm of the original book
h. the language is old	and boring
i. the new service	is very popular
j. The whole Bible would cost	\$US6,000 to send by text

### GAP FILL:

#### Bible translated for mobile phones

**BNE:** The Australian Bible Society has just **created** a new version of the Bible. People can now read the **holy** book in SMS message form. This is the text language **used** in millions of e-mail messages sent from mobile phones. It is the world's most **modern** form of communication. Bible Society spokesman Michael Chant said: "The **old** days when the Bible was only available [with a] black cover with a **cross** on it are gone....We want to **open** it up for people of all ages, backgrounds and interests." It took one person four weeks to translate all 31,173 **verses** of the Bible.

Traditional Bible readers are a little shocked at the **shortened** Bible. Many people believe it **lacks** the quality and charm of the **original** book. However, many younger people do not read the Bible because they think the language is old and **boring**. Mr. Chant said the text **version** would open the Bible up to the young, who are almost **addicted** to their mobile phones. He added: "The idea is that the Bible can be...up-to-date, just like...reading a **horoscope**." Although the new service is very popular, it is not **cheap**. The whole Bible would cost \$US6,000 to send by text.