

# Mars·Hill Update

MINISTRY THROUGH MEDIA

August 2008

## Inside this Issue . . .

The Power  
of Partnering 1

The HOPE in  
Papua New Guinea 2

The Uruguayan Sign  
Language HOPE 2

The HOPE in  
Sub-Saharan Africa 2

The Khmer HOPE 2

Spreading the Word  
to People Who Don't  
Read a Word 3

The HOPE ESL  
Software Curriculum  
is Released 4

The HOPE Internet  
Ministry - Streaming  
the Gospel 4

НАДІЯ  
The  
HOPE  
الرَّجَاءُ  
The Story of God's  
Promise for All People

## The Power of Partnering

### Making Him Known Through His Message and His Method

In 2004 Mars Hill published a newsletter explaining the strategy we believed God would have us pursue to facilitate the worldwide dissemination of The HOPE.

We began that newsletter by quoting the Greek mathematician, Archimedes, who said, "Give me a lever long enough, a fulcrum strong enough, and a place to stand, and I will move the earth." Of course, Archimedes was referring to a physical law which explains how a small force can move a great weight by means of a lever. We used his quote to introduce our vision for maximizing the potential of The HOPE by leveraging the modest capacity of Mars Hill through partnerships with other ministries in the Body of Christ worldwide.

At that time we had only three partnerships in place. One was creating an Internet ministry with The HOPE; the other two were working on translations.

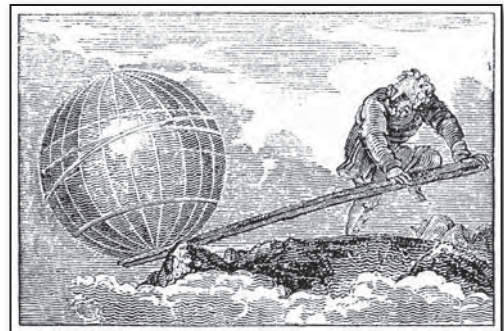
Now, four years later, we have over 50 partnerships worldwide, and the results have been amazing . . .

- 24 translations produced and currently distributed by ministries around the world
- 20 translations in process
- Multiple websites streaming video of The HOPE in various

languages with about 1,500 visitors daily and decisions for Christ on a regular basis

- Several study guides and derivative projects including an interactive software curriculum for teaching English as a second language using The HOPE

This has all happened with a full-time staff of four, a handful of part-timers, a committed board, a small but faithful community of supporters and intercessors . . . and the worldwide Body of Christ.



Engraving from an 1824 Mechanics Magazine illustrating the law of the lever

If Mars Hill had taken a more conventional or traditional approach to the challenge before us four years ago, we would have likely set out to significantly increase the size of our organization (and our budget) so that we could have taken on most of the task ourselves. However, it is doubtful that we would have made as much progress (*continued on p.3*)

# The HOPE Translation Update

The following translations were all completed since the 2007 Mars Hill mid-year update was published.

## The HOPE in Papua New Guinea

About 100 miles north of Australia, Papua New Guinea (PNG) occupies the eastern half of the Island of New Guinea and numerous smaller islands. With a land mass about the size of Sweden, PNG has more languages than any other country; over 820 indigenous languages making up twelve percent of the world's total. The HOPE is now in two of those languages. Kamano-Kafe is spoken by about 80,000 people and Urim is spoken by about 5,000 people.



The Urim People represented by the red dot and the Kamano-Kafe by the yellow

Both of these versions of The HOPE resulted from a partnership with the Vernacular Media Specialists (VMS), a division of JAARS which is the technical arm of Wycliffe Bible Translators. Both Mars Hill and VMS are hoping that this partnership will yield many translations of The HOPE for indigenous language groups such as those in PNG. Being that most of the more than 6,000 unreached and least reached people groups on the Joshua Project list are indigenous



A VMS translator and her PNG team.

language groups, we believe this partnership is strategic in context of the Great Commission. It is an honor for us to partner with VMS in the cause of Christ.

## The Uruguayan Sign Language HOPE

Last year, the IMB Media Center for the Americas came to us with the idea of producing a sign language version of The HOPE for deaf people in Uruguay. We were amazed to learn about the need, not only in Uruguay, but around the world. According to the Ethnologue, there are today over 100 sign languages in the world used by more than 300 million deaf people.



Uruguayan Storyteller signing in front of the women at the tomb, "Just as He promised, Jesus has risen from the dead!"

Completed in April 2008, one of the missionaries involved in this project said that this is more than a video, it is like a Bible for the 33,500 deaf people in Uruguay. We now intend to share this story and cast a vision for other deaf ministries to adapt The HOPE. For a glimpse into Uruguayan deaf ministry, visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjSYD9bosQc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjSYD9bosQc).

## The HOPE in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is the area of the African continent which lies south of the Sahara. It contrasts physically and culturally with North Africa which is part of the Arab world.



The HOPE is now available in two of the most common languages of Sub-Saharan Africa, Swahili and English. The English version uses African storytellers speaking with an African accent. Both versions were produced in partnership with Gospel Communications. They will be shown regularly on television, and used by missionaries and mobile video teams in villages across Sub-Saharan Africa.

## The Khmer HOPE

Khmer is the main language of Cambodia. It is spoken by about 12 million people, 95% of whom are Buddhists. The missionary who



Cambodian Storyteller in traditional dress

sponsored this version of The HOPE said that Cambodians will often "add Jesus into the mix

with their other gods to cover their bases." But he believed that "The HOPE will help show them that there is only one God, and that He alone created every thing from the beginning."



(... continued from p.1) as we have through partnering.

There are groups today who evaluate ministries in order to help potential donors make wise decisions. Most of these groups grade the health of a ministry by evaluating IRS returns and financial statements. Simply stated, these groups are looking for a certain mix of organizational and budgetary growth in order to certify that a ministry is healthy.

Partnering creates what you might call a virtual organization. You can't see it on a financial statement, but it is nonetheless real . . . and so are the results. The Mars Hill staff and budget has not really increased much since 2004, yet through partnering the ministry of Mars Hill has grown incredibly.

When organizations partner in a strategic alliance, they utilize each other's core competencies and resources to achieve a common goal. For the sake of efficiency and effectiveness, partnering just makes good sense. But when it comes to completing the Great Commission, partnering is not just a good strategy, it is God's strategy.

In His upper room prayer Jesus prayed twice (John 17:20-23) that His followers would be one in order that the world may believe and know that God the Father sent Jesus. This is one of the strongest statements Jesus made on the manner in which His followers should fulfill their mission in this world. But

why is our oneness necessary for the world to know that God sent Jesus?

Consider that Jesus was sent, not only to be our Savior, but also the "Head of His Body, the Church" (Col. 1:18). A functional body is evidence that there is a head over that body. When the Body of Christ functions as it should the Headship of Christ is made known.

When people learn about all that God is doing with The HOPE through partnerships around the world, they are usually amazed. They often ask, "How did you bring all that together?" The answer is easy. We didn't. God did it. He raised up and established the ministries with whom we are

partnering before we even knew they existed. He gave them the passion for the people they are working to reach, and the vision to adapt The HOPE for that purpose. Of the 24 translations completed and the 20 in process, we have initiated only two.

The worldwide ministry of The HOPE is truly an example of Christ coordinating and working through His Body to accomplish His purpose in the world. He is being made known; not only through the message we are proclaiming, but also in the method by which we are proclaiming it.

For a list of translations visit [www.mars-hill.org/media/the\\_hope\\_main/chart.html](http://www.mars-hill.org/media/the_hope_main/chart.html)

## How Do We Spread the Word to People Who Don't Read a Word?

The population of our world is now over 6.5 billion. When God looks at humanity, He sees not only individuals, but also people groups; or what the Bible refers to as nations. Researchers tell us there are more than 16,000 people groups in the world today, and that 6,750 of these people groups have yet to receive the Gospel. That's about 2.7 billion people in groups that are considered unreached. But the Bible teaches that Christ will not return until every nation, or people group, has been reached (Matt. 24:14).

There are 6,912 living languages in the world today. The whole Bible is available in 438 languages; the New Testament is in 1,168 languages. If the Bible could be made available in every language, 60-70% of the people in the world would not or could not use it to learn about God. These people are oral communicators. Approximately one billion are illiterate, the remainder are functionally illiterate. Some do not even have a written language.



Children in Ghana watching The HOPE

If the completion of the Great Commission and the return of Christ are dependent upon Bible translation and literacy, then His return is not imminent. If we are going to spread the Word throughout the earth to people who don't read a word, then we must use something that works in oral cultures. There is a great move among missionaries worldwide to use methods such as the oral telling of Bible stories, and tools such as media. This is where The HOPE has a role to play, and this is why we do what we do.

Statistics may be found at :  
[www.joshuaproject.net/index.php](http://www.joshuaproject.net/index.php)  
[www.wycliffe.org/About/Statistics.aspx](http://www.wycliffe.org/About/Statistics.aspx)  
[www.oralbible.com/Booklet\\_Content.php](http://www.oralbible.com/Booklet_Content.php)

### Check It Out

The Mars Hill website has been updated with a new look and content to reflect our current season of ministry with The HOPE. Visit us at [www.mars-hill.org](http://www.mars-hill.org).

# The HOPE ESL Software Curriculum is Released

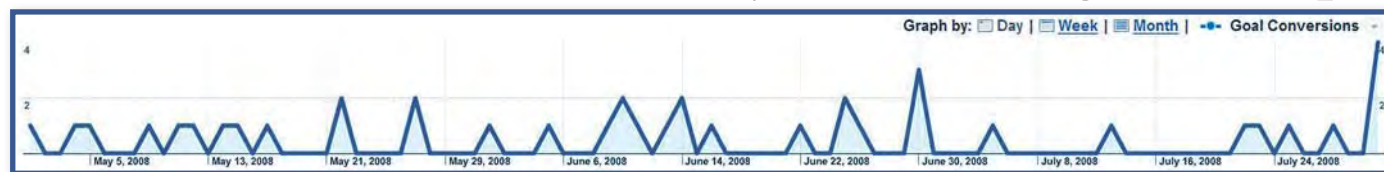


The HOPE ESL is loaded with interactive games. In this one students must match pictures and descriptions.

English is the most popular “second language” in the world, and teaching English as a Second Language is a perfect way to share the Gospel. Released in April, The HOPE ESL Software Curriculum is built entirely around The HOPE.

The response has been wonderful. For example, we recently heard from a missionary couple working at a university in Lima where students must be proficient in English to graduate. After giving HOPE ESL discs to some of the faculty, they received a call from the Director of the Language Center. He plans to make a copy for every student in the language program. This means that as many as 1,000-2,000 students will encounter the Gospel this semester through The HOPE ESL! To order the ESL HOPE visit [www.mars-hill.org/store/the-hope-esl.aspx](http://www.mars-hill.org/store/the-hope-esl.aspx).

## The HOPE Internet Ministry - Streaming the Gospel



From thehopeproject.com website, 3rd quarter 2008. This graph tracks people who indicated a decision for Christ after visiting the site.

About 1,500 people a day from around the world visit one of four websites that stream a video of The HOPE. The result of this activity is that a steady stream of people are encountering God and making decisions for Christ.

In April 2007 we launched thehopeproject.com, our main website for The HOPE. This website has been a perfect example of the kind of partnering described in the cover story of this newsletter. Mars Hill contributed to the effort by providing The HOPE, first in English, then in Spanish. We also created a 180 page Study Guide for use online or for download. Gospel Communications provided the website support and bandwidth. A ministry called NeedHim, with a small army of trained volunteer counselors, has provided personal follow-up for those who have, or who want to, come to Christ. Together we have achieved what we would not have done on our own. And God is glorified in the process as well as the results!

It is significant to note that many visitors from diverse locations are spending long periods of time on

thehopeproject.com website. Many are visiting dozens of Study Guide pages, which indicates they are really digging in and using The HOPE site to learn about God. Many are coming back for multiple visits. In the past month thousands of people have returned multiple times. Over a hundred people returned between 50 - 200 times.

From the first half of '08 we received the following results from just two of The HOPE websites:

Salvation decisions	36
Requests for help to begin a relationship with God	47
Not ready to follow Christ but want to know more	11
Rededications to Christ	70

View The HOPE online at one of the following:

English - [www.thehopeproject.com](http://www.thehopeproject.com)  
 Spanish - [www.proyectorlaesperanza.com](http://www.proyectorlaesperanza.com)  
 Japanese - [www.thehope.jp](http://www.thehope.jp)  
 Azerbaijani - [www.korpu.net/umid.wmv](http://www.korpu.net/umid.wmv)

Member of the  
Evangelical  
Council for  
Financial  
Accountability



Mars • Hill is a non-profit ministry dedicated to using media to draw people to Jesus Christ. For more than 30 years, award-winning Mars • Hill films and videos have been used around the world to introduce thousands of people to Jesus Christ.

4711 Lexington Blvd., Missouri City, Texas, 77459 • (281) 403 - 1463 • [www.mars-hill.org](http://www.mars-hill.org)