

# GOD SPEAKS CHILCOTIN

by Alta Tanis

First Nations people from three Chilcotin reserves crowded our living room. It was quiet, and dark eyes were thoughtful as they concentrated on William Meyer's soft voice.

William, a Chilcotin himself, was reading from the just-finished Chilcotin-language translation of Genesis. Verse by verse, they listened and discussed the Genesis stories, giving particular attention to the best word choices.

Examples of Chilcotin words:  
**SU' CH' AN** means "the very beginning or Genesis"  
**Gudi nits' l'in Be destl'es** means "God's Book or writings or Bible"

It is rewarding to see these Chilcotin believers helping with

the process. Some are new believers who are growing as they study the Bible with us, and they are excited about God's Word.

A Wycliffe Translators representative came from Quebec to help in the process of checking the Genesis translation, the last step before sending it to the printers. All week, Chilcotin speakers from Stone, Nemiah Valley and Redstone reserves listened, checking and approving the translation.



InterAct church planter, Alta Tanis [left], and Chilcotin women meet together for Bible study.

Chilcotin is believed to be one of the world's 10 most difficult languages. An unwritten language until recently, Bible translation into Chilcotin is a slow process.

Many Chilcotin elders speak little English, and will readily listen to an audio translation.

Native Chilcotin speakers are teaching in reserve schools as well, in an effort to preserve the language.

William has worked many hours on translation, longing to have God's Word in the language of his heart.

Translation of the book of Genesis into Chilcotin will speak to the hearts of all the people of this First Nation in British Columbia.