



a commitment to teach the Goths.

In our day we pray that the lost may come to obey the gospel, but how willing are we to help them come to the truth? Our computer age has made the transfer of written material a matter of ease, but how are we using this resource to help the lost? Now the Bi-

ble has been translated in most of the known languages of the world, but what do we do individually to help those who do not have access to the Word of God? As a war now rages against an enemy that has forbidden the teaching of the Bible; as we are all interested in the punishment of those who have done evil, who will prepare to share the truth with these people when the political environment changes? In our own neighborhoods, what are we doing to help those ignorant of the truth to have access to it? May we all do what we can each day to be ready to help those who desperately need to learn the truth. May we heed Peter's charge—**“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”** (1 Peter 3:15, NKJV).



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Faithful Sayings Issue 14.26 June 24, 2012

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

14.26

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

June 24
2012



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

“Little Wolf” and the Gothic Bible

By Kyle Pope

North of the Roman Empire in the first centuries after Christ, Germanic tribes threatened the stable civilization that had been established by the *Pax Romana*—the Latin term meaning “Roman Peace,” which referred to the forced control Rome exerted over its subjects. In 264 AD the Visigoths (western Germanic tribes), swept southward into Cappadocia and Galatia in modern day Turkey and carried captives back to Dacia, north of the Danube. Among those taken were the ancestors of a man named Ulfilas, (pronounced *vulf-fi-las*), a name meaning “little wolf.” Born among the Goths around 311



Page from a 7th Century
Manuscript of the Gothic Bible

AD, Ulfilas' family had believed in Jesus Christ for three generations. Possessing the ability to speak Greek, Latin and Gothic, in 336 Ulfilas came to Constantinople as an interpreter for the Gothic court. Ulfilas remained in Constantinople for five years where he served as "lector" (i.e. one who read Bible lessons publicly). In 341



Olsen Park church of Christ

Ulfilas was appointed bishop of the Goths by the church hierarchy in Constantinople. Returning to Dacia, Ulfilas preached among the Goths for seven years, until persecution from the Gothic leader Athanaric became so severe that Ulfilas appealed to the Roman emperor to allow him and a large group of converts to settle south of the Danube in the Roman territory of Moesia. There he preached until his death in 383 while on a trip to Constantinople.

Ulfilas was a product of his times, operating within the unscriptural church organization and hierarchy that had developed in those years. In later years, he also came to advocate what would be called *Semi-Arianism*. Arius was a teacher who taught that Jesus was a created Being who did not share the "substance" of God the Father. *Semi-Arians* did not speak of Jesus as a "creature" but rejected His unity with God the Father (Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.33). This view is similar to the Jehovah's Witnesses of today. Ulfilas rejected the clear biblical doctrine that Jesus is one with God the Father (Colossians 2:9). As a result of his teachings, the Goths for the next two centuries embraced Arian concepts regarding the nature of Christ.

In spite of these errors there are a few things that Ulfilas accomplished which we must admire (cf. Phil-

ippians 1:18). First, when Ulfilas began his work among the Goths he faced a people with no written language suitable for translation of any major document. To overcome this obstacle, Ulfilas created an alphabet for the language, taught it to the people and translated almost all of the Bible into Gothic. The only portions which he did not complete were the books of Kings and Chronicles which he feared might incite the warlike character of the Goths (Philostorgius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.5). The fragments of this translation which have survived are of great value to modern biblical study. They provide an early witness to the text of the New Testament and the earliest surviving record of any Germanic language. This is significant for those of us who speak English because English is a Germanic language. Similarities between English and Gothic can help to clarify meaning. For example, Ulfilas translated the word for baptism with the Gothic word *daupeins* a relative of our word "dip" (Joseph Wright, *Grammar of the Gothic Language*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 313). There can be no question that Ulfilas understood that baptism was immersion.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
𐌰	𐌱	𐌲	𐌳	𐌴	𐌵	𐌶	𐌷	𐌸
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
𐌹	𐌺	𐌻	𐌼	𐌽	𐌾	𐌿	𐍀	𐍁
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
𐍂	𐍃	𐍄	𐍅	𐍆	𐍇	𐍈	𐍉	

Gothic Alphabet Invented by Ulfilas

Further, we must admire the dedication and love he demonstrated for those who lived in the darkness of spiritual ignorance. Ulfilas returned to an enemy people who had carried his own family off as captives and dedicated his life to the effort to convert them. He undertook the monumental task of biblical translation so that these barbarians could have the Word of God in their own tongue. Even under grave persecution, Ulfilas maintained