

English: Condensed Translation Notes for Matthew

Formatted for Translators

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Chapter 1

Matthew 1:1

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ

"This is the list of the ancestors of Jesus Christ"

Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham

"Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was a descendant of Abraham"

son of David

Sometimes the phrase "son of David" is used as a title, but here it seems to be used only to identify Jesus's ancestry.

Matthew 1:2

Abraham was the father of Isaac

"Abraham became the father of Isaac" or "Abraham had a son Isaac" or "Abraham had a son named Isaac." There are different ways you could translate this. Whichever way you translate it here, it would be best to translate it the same way throughout the list of Jesus's ancestors.

Isaac the father ... Jacob the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Isaac was the father ... Jacob was the father"

Matthew 1:3

Perez the father ... Hezron the father

"Perez was the father ... Hezron was the father"

Matthew 1:4

Amminadab the father ... Nahshon the father

"Amminadab was the father ... Nahshon was the father"

Matthew 1:5

Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab

"Salmon and Rahab were the parents of Boaz"

Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth

"Boaz and Ruth were the parents of Obed"

Matthew 1:6

David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah

"David was the father of Solomon, and Solomon's mother was Uriah's wife" or "David and the wife of Uriah were the parents of Solomon"

the wife of Uriah

"the widow of Uriah." Solomon was born after Uriah died.

Matthew 1:7

Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa

"Rehoboam was the father of Abijah, and Abijah was the father of Asa"

Matthew 1:8

Joram

This man was called both Joram and Jehoram in the Old Testament.

Matthew 1:10

Amon

Sometimes this is translated "Amos."

Matthew 1:11

Josiah was an ancestor of Jechoniah

"Josiah was a grandfather of Jechoniah"

at the time of the deportation to Babylon

"when they were forced to move to Babylon" or "when the Babylonians conquered them and made them go live in Babylon."

Babylon

Here this means the country of Babylon, not just the city of Babylon.

Matthew 1:16

Mary, by whom Jesus was born

"Mary, who gave birth to Jesus"

who is called Christ

"whom people call Christ"

Matthew 1:18

His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph

"his mother, Mary, was promised in marriage to Joseph" or "His mother, Mary, was going to marry Joseph"

His mother, Mary, was engaged

Jesus was not already born when Mary was engaged to Joseph. Alternate translation: "Mary, who would be the mother of Jesus, was engaged"

before they came together

"before they got married." This may refer to Mary and Joseph sleeping together. Alternate translation: "before they had slept together"

she was found to be pregnant

"they realized that she was pregnant"

pregnant by the Holy Spirit

The power of the Holy Spirit had enabled Mary to have a baby before she had slept with a man.

Matthew 1:19

Joseph, her husband

"Joseph, who was supposed to marry Mary"

to divorce her quietly

"to quietly cancel their plans to get married"

Matthew 1:20

appeared to him in a dream

"came to him while Joseph was dreaming"

son of David

Here "son" means "descendant."

the one who is conceived in her is conceived by the Holy Spirit

"the Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant with this child"

Matthew 1:21

you will call his name Jesus

"you must name him Jesus" or "you must give him the name Jesus."

for he will save

You may add a footnote that says, "The name 'Jesus' means 'the Lord saves.'"

Matthew 1:22

all this happened

The angel is no longer speaking. Matthew is now explaining the importance of what the angel said.

what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet

"what the Lord told the prophet to write long ago"

the prophet

"the prophet Isaiah"

Matthew 1:23

Behold ... Immanuel

Here Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah.

Behold, the virgin will become pregnant

"Look, the virgin will become pregnant" or "Pay attention. The virgin will conceive"

Immanuel"—which being translated is "God with us."

"Immanuel." This name means 'God with us.'"

Matthew 1:24

he took her as his wife

"he married Mary"

Matthew 1:25

he did not know her

"he did not have sexual relations with her"

to a son

"to a male baby" or "to her son." Make sure it is clear that Joseph is not portrayed as the actual father.

Chapter 2

Matthew 2:1

Bethlehem of Judea

"the town of Bethlehem in the province of Judea"

in the days of Herod the king

"when Herod the Great was king there"

learned men from the east

"knowledgable men from the east"

Matthew 2:2

Where is he who was born King of the Jews?

The men knew from studying the stars that the one who would become king had been born. They were trying to learn where he was. Alternate translation: "A baby who will become the king of the Jews has been born. Where is he?"

his star

"the star that tells about him" or "the star that is associated with his birth"

in the east

Possible meanings are 1) "as it came up in the east" or 2) "while we were in the east"

worship

Possible meanings are 1) they intended to worship the baby as divine, or 2) they wanted to honor him as a human king. If your language has a word that includes both meanings, you should consider using it here.

Matthew 2:3

he was troubled

"he was worried."

all Jerusalem

"many of the people in Jerusalem were also troubled"

Matthew 2:5

In Bethlehem of Judea

"In the town of Bethlehem in the province of Judea"

this is what was written by the prophet

"this is what the prophet wrote"

Matthew 2:6

General Information:

The chief priests and scribes of the people quote the prophet Micah to show that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

you, Bethlehem, ... are not the least among the rulers of Judah

"you, people of Bethlehem, ... your town is among the most important towns in Judah"

who will shepherd my people Israel

"who will lead my people Israel as a shepherd leads his sheep"

Matthew 2:7

men to ask them exactly what time the star had appeared.

"called the men, and he asked them, 'When exactly did this star appear?'"

Matthew 2:8

bring me a report

"report back to me" or "let me know"

Matthew 2:9

went before them

"guided them" or "led them"

stood still over

"stopped over"

where the young child was

"the place where the young child was staying"

Matthew 2:11

They fell down and worshiped him

"They knelt down and put their faces close to the ground." They did this to honor Jesus.

their treasures

Here "treasures" refers to the boxes or bags they used to carry their treasures. "the containers that held their treasures"

Matthew 2:12

in a dream not to return to Herod, so

"in a dream saying, 'Do not go back to King Herod.' So"

Matthew 2:13

appeared to Joseph in a dream

"came to Joseph while he was dreaming"

until I tell you

"until I tell you it is safe to come back"

Matthew 2:15

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Hosea to show that the Christ would spend time in Egypt.

He remained

"They remained"

until the death of Herod

"what the Lord had said through the prophet; he said" or "what the Lord had told the prophet to say; he said"

Out of Egypt I have called my Son

"I have called my Son out of Egypt"

Matthew 2:16

he had been mocked by the learned men

"the learned men had tricked him"

He sent and killed all the male children

"He sent soldiers to kill all the baby boys"

according to the time that he had determined exactly from the learned men

based on what he discovered from the learned men about exactly when the star had appeared

Matthew 2:17

Then was fulfilled

"This fulfilled" or "Herod's actions fulfilled"

what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet

"what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophet Jeremiah"

Matthew 2:18

A voice was heard

"People heard a voice" or "There was a loud sound"

Rachel weeping for her children

Rachel lived many years before this time. This prophecy shows Rachel, who has died, weeping for her descendants.

she refused to be comforted

"no one could comfort her" or "she did not let anyone comfort her"

because they were no more

"because they were dead"

Matthew 2:19

behold

This word marks the beginning of another event in the larger story.

Matthew 2:20

those who sought the child's life

"those who were looking for the child in order to kill him"

Matthew 2:22

But when he heard

"But when Joseph heard"

Archelaus

This is the name of Herod's son.

Matthew 2:23

what had been spoken through the prophets

"what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophets"

he would be called a Nazarene

"people would say that the Christ is a Nazarene"

Chapter 3

Matthew 3:1

In those days

"In those times" or "Some years later"

Matthew 3:2

the kingdom of heaven is near

"our God in heaven will soon show himself to be king"

Matthew 3:3

For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying

"For John is the one Isaiah the prophet spoke about when he said"

The voice of one calling out in the wilderness

"The voice of one calling out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone calling out in the wilderness"

Make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight

"Make the road ready for the Lord, prepare for him to come."

Matthew 3:4

wore clothing of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist

This clothing symbolizes that John is a prophet like the prophets from long ago, especially the prophet Elijah.

Matthew 3:5

Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region

"Then very many people from Jerusalem, Judea, and that region"

Matthew 3:6

They

This refers to the people coming from Jerusalem, Judea, and the region around the Jordan River.

They were baptized by him ... River, confessing their sins

"John baptized them ... River after they confessed their sins"

Matthew 3:7

You offspring of vipers, who

"You evil poisonous snakes! Who" or "You are evil like poisonous snakes! Who"

who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming?

John rebukes the Pharisees and Sadducees. Alternate translation: "you cannot flee from God's coming punishment like this." or "do not think that you can flee from God's wrath just because I baptize you."

flee from the wrath that is coming

"run away from the punishment that is coming" or "escape because God is about to punish you"

Matthew 3:8

Bear fruit worthy of repentance

"Let your actions show that you have truly repented"

Matthew 3:9

We have Abraham for our father

"Abraham is our ancestor" or "We are descendants of Abraham." The Jewish leaders thought that God would not punish them since they were descendants of Abraham.

God is able to raise up children for Abraham even out of these stones

"God can make even these stones become children of Abraham"

Matthew 3:10

Already the ax has been placed against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire

"God has his axe and he is ready to cut down and burn any tree that does not produce good fruit" or "As a

person gets his axe ready to cut down and burn a tree that does not produce good fruit, God is ready to punish you for your sin"

Matthew 3:11

for repentance

"to show that you have repented"

he who comes after me

John was speaking about the Christ, although he probably did not know who that was.

is mightier than I

"is more important than I am"

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

This means John's baptism only symbolically cleanses people of their sins. The baptism by Holy Spirit and fire will truly cleanse people of their sins. If possible, use the word "baptize" in your translation to keep the comparison to John's baptism.

Matthew 3:12

His winnowing fork is in his hand

"He is like a man whose winnowing fork is in his hand"

winnowing fork

This is a tool for tossing wheat up into the air to separate the wheat grain from the chaff. The heavier grain falls back down and the unwanted chaff is blown away by the wind.

his threshing floor

"his floor" or "the ground where he separates the grain from the chaff"

fire that can never be put out

"fire that no one can put out" or "fire that will never burn out"

Matthew 3:13

to be baptized by John

"so John could baptize him"

Matthew 3:14

I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?

"I need you to baptize me, yet you want me to baptize you."

Matthew 3:15

John permitted him

"John allowed Jesus to be baptized" or "John agreed to baptize Jesus"

Matthew 3:16

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

the heavens were opened to him

"Jesus saw the sky open" or "God opened the heavens to Jesus"

coming down like a dove

Possible meanings are 1) the Spirit was in the form of a dove or 2) the Spirit came down gently, the way a dove would.

Matthew 3:17

a voice came out of the heavens saying

"A speaker said from heaven" or "God said from heaven"

Son

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Chapter 4

Matthew 4:1

Jesus was led up by the Spirit

"the Spirit led Jesus"

to be tempted by the devil

"so the devil could tempt Jesus"

Matthew 4:2

he had fasted ... he was hungry

These refer to Jesus.

forty days and forty nights

"40 days"

Matthew 4:3

The tempter

These words refer to the same being as "the devil" (as in verse 1).

If you are the Son of God, command

"You are the Son of God, so you can command"

Alternate translation: "Prove that you are the Son of God by commanding"

the Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

command these stones to become bread.

"say to these stones, 'Become bread.'"

bread

"food"

Matthew 4:4

It is written

"The scriptures say" or "God said in the scriptures"

Man does not live on bread alone

This implies that there is something more important to life than food.

but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God

"but by every word that God speaks" or "but by listening to everything that God says"

Matthew 4:6

the Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

throw yourself down

"let yourself fall to the ground" or "jump down"

'He will command his angels to take care of you,' and

""God will say to his angels, 'Take care of him,'" and" or
""God will command his angels to take care of you,' and"

They will carry you

"The angels will hold you"

Matthew 4:7

You must not test

"One should not test" or "No person should test"

Matthew 4:8

Again, the devil

"Next, the devil"

Matthew 4:9

He said to him

"The devil said to Jesus"

All these things I will give you

"I will give you all these things."

fall down

"put your face near the ground." This was a common action to show that a person was worshipping.

Matthew 4:10

For it is written

"For Moses also wrote in the scriptures"

Matthew 4:11

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the important new information that follows.

Matthew 4:12

John had been handed over

"the king had handed John over to the prison" or "the king had arrested John"

Matthew 4:13

in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali

"Zebulun" and "Naphtali" are the names of the tribes that lived in these territories many years earlier before foreigners took control of the land of Israel.

Matthew 4:14

what was said

"what God said"

Matthew 4:15

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's ministry in Galilee was a fulfillment of prophecy.

toward the sea

This is the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 4:16

The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light

Here "darkness" means not knowing the truth about God. And "light" is God's true message

The people who sat

"In the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali ... where many Gentiles live, the people who sat"

to those who sat in the region and shadow of death, upon them has a light arisen

Here "those who sat in the region and shadow of death" represents those who did not know God. These people were in danger of dying and being separated from God forever.

Matthew 4:17

the kingdom of heaven is near

"our God in heaven will soon show himself to be king"

Matthew 4:18

casting a net into the sea

"throwing a net into the water to catch fish"

Matthew 4:19

Come, follow me

"Be my disciples"

I will make you fishers of men

"I will teach you to gather men to me like you used to gather fish"

Matthew 4:21

He called them

"Jesus called John and James." This phrase also means that Jesus invited them to follow him, live with him, and become his disciples.

Matthew 4:22

they immediately left

"at that moment they left"

left the boat ... and followed him

It should be clear that they immediately put their nets down and left that place with Jesus. If your language requires you to tell whether they were leaving for the rest of the day or for a long time or for the rest of their lives, you should probably translate as they were leaving for the rest of their lives.

Matthew 4:23

teaching in their synagogues

"teaching in the synagogues of the Galileans" or
"teaching in the synagogues of those people"

preaching the gospel of the kingdom

"preaching the good news that God will show himself
as king"

every kind of disease and sickness

The words "disease" and "sickness" are closely related
but should be translated as two different words if

possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be sick.
"Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that
results from having a disease.

Matthew 4:24

those who were possessed by demons

"those whom demons controlled"

the epileptics

The word "epileptic" refers to people who have epilepsy
and so sometimes become unconscious and move
uncontrollably.

Matthew 4:25

the Decapolis

This name means "the Ten Towns." This is the name of
a region to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee.

Chapter 5

Matthew 5:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story in which Jesus begins to teach his disciples. This part continues through the end of chapter 7 and is frequently called the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:2

He opened his mouth

"Jesus began to speak"

Matthew 5:3

the poor in spirit

"those who know they need God"

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

"for God in heaven will be their king"

Matthew 5:4

those who mourn

Possible reasons they are sad are 1) the sinfulness of the world or 2) their own sins or 3) the death of someone. Do not specify the reason for mourning unless your language requires it.

they will be comforted

"God will comfort them"

Matthew 5:5

the meek

"the gentle" or "those who do not rely on their own power"

they will inherit the earth

"God will give them the entire earth"

Matthew 5:6

those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

"those who desire to live right as much as they desire food and drink"

they will be filled

"God will fill them" or "God will satisfy them"

Matthew 5:8

the pure in heart

"those who only want to serve God"

they will see God

"God will allow them to live with him"

Matthew 5:9

the peacemakers

These are the people who help others to have peace with one another.

for they will be called sons of God

"for God will call them his children" or "they will be children of God"

sons of God

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human son or child.

Matthew 5:10

those who have been persecuted

"those people whom others treat unfairly"

for righteousness' sake

"because they do what God wants them to do" or "because they do what God wants them to do"

theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation.

Matthew 5:11

for my sake

"because you follow me" or because you believe in me"

Matthew 5:13

You are the salt of the earth

"You are like salt for the people of the world" or 2) just as salt preserves food, disciples of Jesus keep people from becoming totally corrupt."

if the salt has lost its taste

Possible meanings are 1) "if the salt has lost its power to do things that salt does" or 2) "if the salt has lost its flavor."

how can it be made salty again?

"it cannot become useful again."

except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet

"except for people to throw it out into the road and walk on it"

Matthew 5:14

You are the light of the world

"You are like a light for the people of the world"

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden

"no one can hide the lights that shine from a city on a hill" or "Everyone sees the lights of a city on a hill"

Matthew 5:15

put it under a basket

"place the lamp under a basket." This is saying it is foolish to create light only to hide it so people do not see the light of the lamp.

Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before people

"Let your lives be like a light that shines before people"

your Father who is in heaven

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 5:17

the prophets

"what the prophets wrote"

I have come ... to fulfill them

"I have come ... to do the things that are in the law and the writings of the prophets

Matthew 5:18

truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

until heaven and earth pass away

"as long as the universe lasts"

until all things have been accomplished

"until all things have happened" or "until God causes all things to happen"

all things

"everything in the law" or "all that is written in the law"

Matthew 5:19

whoever breaks

"whoever disobeys" or "whoever ignores"

the least one of these commandments and teaches

"any of these commandments, even the least important one, and teaches"

whoever ... teaches others to do so will be called

"if anyone ... teaches others to do so, God will call that person"

least in the kingdom of heaven

"the least important in the heavenly kingdom" or "the least important under the rule of our God in heaven"

keeps them and teaches them

"obeys all these commandments and teaches others to do the same"

Matthew 5:21

it was said to them in ancient times

"God said to those who lived long ago" or "Moses said to your ancestors long ago"

will be subject to judgment

Possible meanings are 1) "will have to go to the judge" or 2) "will be in danger of punishment."

Matthew 5:22

But I say to you

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is important. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis.

brother

This probably refers to a fellow believer.

worthless person ... fool

Both of these insults represent a person who does not think correctly. "Worthless person" is close to "brainless," where "fool" adds the idea of disobedience to God.

council

This was likely a local council, not the main religious council in Jerusalem.

Matthew 5:23

offering your gift

"giving your gift" or "bringing your gift to God"

at the altar

"at God's altar"

and there remember

"and while you are standing at the altar you remember"

your brother has anything against you

"another person is angry with you because of something you did"

Matthew 5:24

First be reconciled with your brother

"First make peace with the person"

Matthew 5:25

your adversary

This is a person who takes someone to court to accuse him of doing something wrong.

may hand you over to the judge

"will let the judge deal with you"

the officer

a person who has authority to carry out the decisions of a judge

you may be thrown into prison

"the officer might put you in prison"

Matthew 5:26

from there

"from the prison"

Matthew 5:27

that it was said

"that God said" or "that Moses said." See how you translated a similar phrase in Matthew 5:21.

Matthew 5:28

But I say to you

See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

everyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart

This teaches that a man who lusts after a woman is as guilty of adultery as a man who actually commits the act of adultery.

to lust after her

“and lusts after her” or “and desires to sleep with her”

in his heart

“in his mind” or “in his thoughts”

Matthew 5:29

If your right eye causes you to stumble

“if looking at something with your right eye tempts you to sin” or “if you are tempted to sin with your right eye”

your right eye

The Jews thought of the right hand as more important than the left hand, so the phrase “right eye” represents the more important eye. You may need to translate “right” as “better” or “stronger.”

pluck it out

“pluck out your eye” or “destroy it”

one of your members should perish

“one part of your body should perish” or “you should lose one part of your body”

than that your whole body should be thrown into hell

“than for God to throw your whole body into hell”

Matthew 5:30

If your right hand causes you to stumble

"If what you can do with your right hand causes you to sin" or "if you are tempted to sin with your right hand"

right hand

This means the important hand, as opposed to the left hand. You may need to translate "right" as "better" or "stronger."

cut it off

"cut off your hand"

Matthew 5:31

sends his wife away

"divorces his wife."

let him give

"he must give"

Matthew 5:32

makes her an adulteress

It is the man who divorces the woman improperly who "causes her to commit adultery." In many cultures it would be normal for her to remarry, but if the divorce is improper, such a remarriage is adultery.

marries her after she has been divorced

"marries her after her husband has divorced her" or "marries the divorced woman"

Matthew 5:33

Again, you have heard

"Also, you have heard" or "Here is another example. You have heard"

Do not swear a false oath, but carry out your oaths to the Lord.

"Do not swear that you will do something and then not do it. Instead do whatever you have sworn to the Lord that you will do"

Matthew 5:34

General Information:

In Matthew 5:34-37, some people were teaching that if a person swears by God that he will do something, then he must do it, but if he swears by something else, then it is less offensive if he does not do what he swore to do. Jesus says that swearing by heaven or earth or Jerusalem is just as serious as swearing by God because those things all belong to God.

swear not at all

"do not swear at all" or "do not swear by anything"

neither by heaven

"Do not swear by heaven"

it is the throne of God

"it is from here that God rules"

Matthew 5:35

nor by the earth ... nor by Jerusalem

"do not swear by the earth ... and do not swear by Jerusalem." Jesus continues to name things that people should not swear by.

it is the footstool for his feet

"it is like a footstool where a king rests his feet"

for it is the city of the great King

"for it is the city that belongs to God, the great King"

Matthew 5:36

Neither swear by your head

"And do not swear by your head." See how you translated "swear" in Matthew 5:34.

Matthew 5:37

let your speech be 'Yes, yes,' or 'No, no.'

"if you mean 'yes,' say 'yes,' and if you mean 'no,' say 'no.'"

Matthew 5:38

that it was said

See how you translated this in Matthew 5:27

eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth

The law of Moses allowed a person to harm a person in the same way he had harmed him, but he could not harm him more than that..

Matthew 5:39

one who is evil

"an evil person" or "someone who harms you"

strikes

hits with the back of an open hand

turn to him the other also

"let him hit your other cheek also"

Matthew 5:40

tunic ... cloak

The "tunic" was worn close to the body, like a heavy shirt or a sweater. The "cloak," the more valuable of the two, was worn over the "tunic" for warmth and also used as a blanket for warmth at night.

let that person also have your cloak

"give that person your cloak, too"

Matthew 5:41

Whoever compels you to go one mile

"If someone forces you to walk one mile with him"

one mile

This is one thousand paces, the distance a Roman soldier could legally force someone to carry something for him. If "mile" is confusing, it can be translated as "one kilometer."

go with him two

"go with him twice as far" or "go with him two miles"

Matthew 5:42

do not turn away from

"do not refuse to lend to."

Matthew 5:43

General Information:

God taught in the law that people must love their neighbors. Some people said that God taught that people should hate their enemies.

your neighbor

"your countrymen" or "those who belong to your people group"

Matthew 5:44

I say to you ... your enemies ... pray ... persecute you

All instances of "you" and "your," as well as the command to pray, are plural.

Matthew 5:45

you may be sons of your Father

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to human sons or children.

Matthew 5:46

what reward do you get?

"you will get no reward."

Do not even the tax collectors do the same thing?

"Even the tax collectors do the same thing."

Matthew 5:47

what do you do more than others?

"you do nothing more than others."

greet

This is a general term for showing a desire for the well-being of the hearer.

Do not even the Gentiles do the same thing?

"Even the Gentiles do the same thing."

Matthew 5:48

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Chapter 6

Matthew 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3.

Watch out

"Be careful" or "Beware"

before people to be seen by them

"in front of people just so that they can see you and think well of you"

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 6:2

So when you give alms

"So when you give to poor people"

do not sound a trumpet before yourself

"do not draw attention to yourself like someone who plays a loud trumpet in a crowd"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 6:3

do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing

"do it so secretly that even your left hand does not know that your right hand is giving alms"

Matthew 6:4

your alms may be given in secret

"you can give to the poor without other people knowing"

Matthew 6:5

so that they may be seen by people

"so that people will see them and give them honor"

Matthew 6:6

enter your inner chamber. Shut the door

"go into room alone. Close the door" or "go where you can be alone"

Father, who is in secret

"Father, who is with you in private" or 2) no one can see God. Alternate translation: "Father, who is invisible"

#your Father who sees in secret

"your Father will see what you do in private and"

Matthew 6:7

do not make useless repetitions

"do not keep repeating meaningless words"

they will be heard

"their false gods will hear them"

Matthew 6:9

Our Father in heaven

This is the beginning of the prayer and how Jesus teaches the people to address God.

may your name be honored as holy

Here "your name" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "may people honor you as holy" or "may people honor you because you are holy"

Matthew 6:10

May your kingdom come

"May you rule over everyone and everything completely"

May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

"May everything on earth happen in accordance with your will, just as everything in heaven does"

Matthew 6:11

daily bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general.

Matthew 6:12

debts

A debt is what one person owes another.

our debtors

A debtor is a person who owes a debt to another person.

Matthew 6:13

Do not bring us into temptation

"Do not let anything tempt us" or "Do not let anything make us want to sin"

Matthew 6:14

their trespasses

"when they trespass against you" or "when they do you wrong"

Matthew 6:15

their trespasses ... your trespasses

"them when they trespass against you ... you when you trespass against God" or "them when they do things that harm you ... you when you do things that make your Father angry"

Matthew 6:16

they disfigure their faces

"they make their faces look dirty" or "they put ashes on their faces"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 6:17

anoint your head

Jesus means that people should look the same whether they are fasting or not.

Matthew 6:18

who sees in secret

"who sees what you do in private."

Matthew 6:19

treasures

"riches" or "valuable things"

where moth and rust destroy

"where moths and rust ruin things"

moth

a small, flying insect that destroys cloth

Matthew 6:20

store up for yourselves treasures in heaven

This means to do good things on earth so God will reward you in heaven.

Matthew 6:21

there will your heart be also

Here "heart" means a person's thoughts and desires.

Matthew 6:22

The eye is the lamp of the body

"A person's eyes are like a lamp for his body"

if your eye is good

"if your eye is noble" or "if your eyes see clearly."

your whole body is filled with light

Possible meanings are 1) "you are full of righteousness" or 2) "you understand what is truly good"

Matthew 6:23

if your eye is bad, your whole body is full of darkness

Possible meanings are 1) "if your eye does not see clearly, it fills your body with darkness" or 2) "if your eye is bad, it shows that your body is full of darkness."

your whole body is full of darkness

Possible meanings are "you are full of evil" or 2) "you will understand nothing about what is right."

how great is that darkness!

"then that darkness is extremely dark"

Matthew 6:24

You cannot serve God and wealth

"You cannot love God and money at the same time"

Matthew 6:25

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

"life is more than what you eat, and your body is more than what you wear." or "there are things in life that are more important than food, and there are things concerning the body that are more important than clothes."

Matthew 6:26

gather into barns

"store food in barns"

Are you not more valuable than they are?

"Obviously you are more valuable than birds."

Matthew 6:27

Which one of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his lifespan?

This question can be translated as a statement.

Alternate translation: "None of you can add a cubit to your lifespan by worrying." or "Worrying will not help any of you make your life even one hour longer."

one cubit

A cubit, a measure of a little less than half a meter, is used here to refer to a short period of time. Alternate translation: "one hour" or "one minute"

Matthew 6:28

Why are you anxious about clothing?

This question can be translated as a statement.

Alternate translation: "There is no reason to be worried about clothing."

lilies

A lily is a kind of wild flower.

they do not spin cloth

"they do not spin thread for cloth" or "they do not make cloth"

Matthew 6:29

even Solomon ... was not clothed like one of these

Jesus speaks about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies were plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.

was not clothed like one of these

"did not wear clothes that are as beautiful as these lilies"

Matthew 6:30

so clothes the grass in the fields

"makes such beautiful flowers to be like clothing for the grass in the field"

is thrown into the oven

"someone throws it into a fire" or "someone burns it"

how much more will he clothe you ... faith?

"he will certainly clothe you ... faith."

you of little faith

"you who have such little faith." Jesus addresses the people this way because their anxiety about food and clothing shows they have little faith in God.

Matthew 6:31

What clothes will we wear

"What possessions will we have"

Matthew 6:32

For the Gentiles search for these things

"For the Gentiles are concerned about what they will eat, drink, and wear"

your heavenly Father knows that you need them

Jesus is implying that God will make sure their basic needs are met.

Matthew 6:33

seek first his kingdom and his righteousness

"concern yourselves first with serving God, who is your king, and doing what is right"

all these things will be given to you

"God will provide all these things for you"

Matthew 6:34

tomorrow will be anxious for itself

"tomorrow there will be other things to be anxious about"

Each day has enough evil of its own

"Each day has enough trouble of its own"

Chapter 7

Matthew 7:1

Do not judge

"Do not condemn others"

you will not be judged

"God will not judge you" or "God will not condemn you"

Matthew 7:2

with the judgment you judge, you will be judged

"God will judge you in the same way you judge others"

measure

Possible meanings are 1) this is the amount of punishment given or 2) this is the standard used for judgment.

it will be measured out to you

"God will measure it out to you"

Matthew 7:3

Why do you look ... brother's eye, but you do not take notice of the log that is in your own eye?

"You look ... brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye." or "Do not look ... brother's eye and ignore the log that is in your own eye."

the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye

This refers to the less important faults of a fellow believer.

tiny piece of straw

"speck" or "splinter" or "bit of dust." Use a word for the smallest thing that commonly falls into a person's eyes.

brother

All occurrences of "brother" in 7:3-5 refer to a fellow believer, not to a literal brother or a neighbor.

the log that is in your own eye

This refers to a person's serious faults. Jesus is saying that a person should pay attention to his own serious faults before he deals with another person's less important faults.

log

the largest part of a tree that someone has cut down

Matthew 7:4

How can you say ... your own eye?

"You should not say ... your own eye."

Matthew 7:6

dogs ... pigs

Jews considered these animals dirty, and God told the Jews not to eat them. Jesus used these words to refer to wicked people who do not value holy things. It would be best to translate these words literally.

pearls

These are similar to round, valuable stones or beads. Jesus used this word to refer to the knowledge of God or precious things in general.

they may trample

"the pigs may trample"

then turn and tear

"the dogs will then turn and tear"

Matthew 7:7

Ask ... Seek ... Knock

These are word pictures of praying to God. The verb form shows that we are to keep praying until he answers.

Ask

"Ask for what you need" or "Ask God for what you need"

it will be given to you

"you will receive it" or "he will give it to you"

Seek

"Look for what you need"

Knock

"Call at the door"

it will be opened to you

"the door will be opened for you" or "God will open it for you"

Matthew 7:9

Or which one of you ... a stone?

"There is not one person among you ... a stone."

a loaf of bread

"some food"

stone

This word should be translated literally.

Matthew 7:10

Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

"And there is not one person among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake."

fish ... snake

These words should be translated literally.

Matthew 7:11

how much more will your Father in heaven give ... him?

"then your Father in heaven will most certainly give ... him."

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 7:12

for this is the law and the prophets

"for this is what Moses and the prophets teach in the scriptures"

Matthew 7:13

Enter through the narrow gate ... many people who go through it

This is an image of people traveling on a road and going through a gate into a kingdom. One kingdom is easy to enter; the other is hard to enter.

Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction

"The gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction" or "The wide gate and the broad road lead to destruction"

to destruction

"to the place where people are destroyed"

Matthew 7:14

the gate is narrow and the way is difficult that leads to life

"the narrow gate and the difficult path lead to life"

to life

"to the place where people live"

Matthew 7:15

Beware of

"Be on guard against"

who come to you in sheep's clothing but are truly ravenous wolves

"who look like sheep but are really ravenous wolves" or "who appear to be harmless like sheep, but are really like ravenous wolves"

ravenous wolves

wolves that are extremely hungry and that consume or destroy everything they touch

Matthew 7:16

By their fruits you will know them

"Just as you know a tree by its fruit, you will know false prophets by how they act" or "You will know them by the results of their teaching"

Do people gather ... thistles?

"People do not gather ... thistles."

Matthew 7:17

every good tree produces good fruit

Jesus refers to good prophets who produce good works or words.

the bad tree produces bad fruit

Jesus refers to bad prophets who produce evil works.

Matthew 7:19

is chopped down and thrown into the fire

"people chop down and throw into the fire" or "people chop down and burn"

Matthew 7:20

you will recognize them by their fruits

"You will know what they are really like by their fruits"

Matthew 7:21

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter

"Some who say to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will not enter"

will enter into the kingdom of heaven

"will live with God in heaven when he shows himself to be king"

only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven

"only those who do what my Father in heaven wants will enter"

Matthew 7:22

in that day

"on judgment day"

did we not prophesy ... drive out demons ... do many miracles?

"we prophesied ... we drove out demons ... we did many miracles."

in your name

Possible meanings are 1) "by your authority" or "by your power" or 2) "because we were doing what you wanted us to do" or 3) "because we asked you for the power to do it"

Matthew 7:23

I never knew you

"You are not my follower" or "I have nothing to do with you"

Matthew 7:24

Therefore

"For that reason"

my words

"What I Say"

rock

This is the bedrock below the topsoil and clay, not a large stone or boulder above the ground.

Matthew 7:25

it was founded on the rock

"its foundation was on the rock" or he built it on the firm rock"

Matthew 7:26

like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand

Jesus compares those who do not obey his words to foolish house-builders. Only a fool would build a house on a sandy place where rain, floods, and wind can sweep the sand away.

Matthew 7:27

fell

collapsed

its destruction was complete

:It was completely destroyed"

Matthew 7:28

It came about that when

"When" or "After"

were astonished by his teaching

"were amazed by the way he taught"

Matthew 7:29

as one who had authority

"with authority"

Chapter 8

Matthew 8:2

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

a leper

"a man who had leprosy" or "a man who had a skin disease"

bowed before him

This is a sign of humble respect before Jesus.

if you are willing

"if you want to"

you can make me clean

"you can heal me" or "please heal me"

Matthew 8:3

he was cleansed of his leprosy

"At that moment the leprosy left him" or "the leprosy ended" or "he became well"

Matthew 8:4

say nothing to any man

"do not say anything to anyone" or "do not tell anyone I healed you"

show yourself to the priest

Jewish law required that the person show his healed skin to the priest, who would then allow him or her to return to the community, to be with other people.

offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them

The law of Moses required that someone healed of leprosy give a thanksgiving offering to the priest. When the priest accepted the gift, people would know that the man had been healed.

to them

This can possibly refer to 1) the priests or 2) all the people or 3) the critics of Jesus. If possible, use a pronoun that could refer to any of these groups.

Matthew 8:5

When he was coming into Capernaum

"When Jesus was coming into Capernaum"

Matthew 8:6

paralyzed

unable to move because of disease or stroke

Matthew 8:7

I will come and heal him

"I will come to your house and make your servant well"

Matthew 8:8

under my roof

"into my house"

say the word

"give the command"

will be healed

"will become well"

Matthew 8:9

I also am a man under authority, and I have soldiers under me

"I also have to obey my leaders, and I have soldiers who have to obey me"

Matthew 8:10

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

I have not found anyone with such faith in Israel

Jesus's hearers would have thought that the Jews in Israel, who claim to be children of God, would have greater faith than anyone. Jesus is saying they are wrong and that the centurion's faith was greater.

Matthew 8:11

you

Here "you" is plural and refers to "those who were following him" in Matthew 8:10.

from the east and the west

"from everywhere" or "from far away in every direction"

recline at the table

"sit at the feast"

in the kingdom of heaven

"when our God in heaven shows that he is king"

Matthew 8:12

sons of the kingdom will be cast out

"God will throw the sons of the kingdom out"

the sons of the kingdom

"the citizens of the kingdom" or "those who should have allowed God to rule over them"

the outer darkness

"the distant dark place"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"weeping and showing their extreme suffering"

Matthew 8:13

so may it be done for you

"so may it happen to you" or "so I will do it for you"

the servant was healed

"the servant became well"

at that very hour

"at the exact time Jesus said he would heal the servant"

Matthew 8:14

Peter's mother-in-law

"the mother of Peter's wife"

Matthew 8:15

the fever left her

"the fever ended"

Matthew 8:16

many who were possessed by demons

"many people whom demons possessed" or "many people whom demons controlled"

He drove out the spirits with a word

"By speaking, he made the spirits go away" or "He commanded the spirits to leave and they left"

Matthew 8:17

This was to fulfill

"Jesus did this to fulfill"

what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet

"what Isaiah the prophet had spoken"

He took our illnesses and bore our diseases

"Truly he took our illnesses"

Matthew 8:18

Now

This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Matthew starts to tell a new part of the story.

he gave instructions

"he told his disciples"

Matthew 8:19

Then

This means after Jesus "gave instructions" but before he could get into the boat.

Matthew 8:20

Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests

This means even wild animals have somewhere to rest.

Foxes

Foxes are animals like dogs. make holes in the ground to live in.

the Son of Man

"I, the Son of man" or "the man from heaven" or "the One who became a human"

nowhere to lay his head

"no place of his own to sleep"

Matthew 8:21

allow me first to go and bury my father

It is unclear whether the man's father has died and he will bury him immediately, or if the man wants to wait until his father dies so he can bury him before he follows Jesus.

Matthew 8:22

leave the dead to bury their own dead

"let spiritually dead people bury their own people who have died." The main point is that a disciple must not let anything delay him from following Jesus.

Matthew 8:24

Behold

"Suddenly" or "Without warning"

there arose a great storm on the sea

"a powerful storm arose on the sea"

so that the boat was covered with the waves

"so that the waves covered the boat"

Matthew 8:25

woke him up, saying, "Save us

Possible meanings are 1) they first woke Jesus and then they said, "Save us" or 2) as they were waking Jesus up, they were saying "Save us."

we are perishing

"we are going to die" or "we are about to die"

Matthew 8:26

Why are you afraid ... faith?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be afraid ... faith!" or "There is nothing for you to be afraid of ... faith!"

you of little faith

"you who have such little faith." Jesus addresses his disciples this way because their anxiety about the storm shows they have little faith in him to control it. See how you translated this in (Matthew 6:30).

Matthew 8:27

What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

"This man is unlike any other person! Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Matthew 8:28

to the other side

"to the other side of the Sea of Galilee"

the Gadarenes

This name refers to the people who lived in the town of Gadara.

They ... were very violent, so that no traveler could pass that way

The demons that were controlling these two men were so dangerous that no one could go through that area.

Matthew 8:29

Behold

This word introduces something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

What do we have to do with you, Son of God?

"You have nothing to do with us, Son of God!" or "You have no right to bother us, Son of God!"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus, which describes his relationship to God.

Have you come here to torment us before the set time?

"You have no right to punishment us before the time for that!"

Matthew 8:30

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells background information about a herd of pigs that had been there before Jesus arrived.

Matthew 8:31

If you cast us out

"Because you are going to cast us out"

Matthew 8:32

The demons came out and went into the pigs

"The demons left the men and entered the pigs"

behold

This alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

rushed down the steep hill

"ran quickly down the steep slope"

they died in the water

"they fell into the water and drowned"

Matthew 8:33

tending the pigs

"taking care of the pigs"

Matthew 8:34

Behold

This word introduces another surprising event.

all the city

The word "city" here refers to the people of the city. The word "all" is probably an exaggeration to emphasize that very many people came out. Not necessarily every person came out.

Their Region

"their area"

Chapter 9

Matthew 9:1

into his own city

"to the town where he lived." This refers to Capernaum.

Matthew 9:2

they brought

"some men from the city brought"

Son

The man was not Jesus's real son. Jesus was speaking to him politely. If this is confusing, it can also be translated "My friend" or "Young man" or even omitted.

Your sins have been forgiven

"I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:3

said among themselves

Possible meanings are 1) each one was thinking to himself, or 2) they were speaking among themselves.

blaspheming

The scribes thought that Jesus was insulting God because he claimed to do something that only God can do.

Matthew 9:4

knew their thoughts

Jesus knew what they were thinking

Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?

"You are thinking evil in your hearts." or "You should not think evil thoughts."

evil

This is moral evil or wickedness, not simply error in fact.

Matthew 9:5

For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

"For it is easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up and walk.'"

Your sins are forgiven

"I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:6

go to your house

Jesus is not forbidding the man to go elsewhere. He is giving the man the opportunity to go home.

Matthew 9:8

they were afraid

Possible meanings are 1) they were afraid, or 2) they were in awe. "Awe" is a feeling of wonder a person has when they see or experience something great or powerful.

who had given

"because he had given"

such authority

This refers to the authority to declare sins forgiven.

Matthew 9:9

passed by

"was leaving" or "was going"

Matthew ... him ... He

Church tradition says that this Matthew is the author of this Gospel, but the text gives no reason to change the pronouns from "him" and "He" to "me" and "I."

He said to him

"Jesus said to Matthew"

He got up and followed him

"Matthew got up and followed Jesus." This means Matthew became Jesus's disciple.

Matthew 9:10

the house

This is probably Matthew's house, but it could also be Jesus's house. Specify only if needed to avoid confusion.

behold

Here this word introduces a surprising event. Your language may have a way of doing this

sinners

people who did not obey the law of Moses but committed what others thought were very bad sins

Matthew 9:11

When the Pharisees saw it

"When the Pharisees saw that Jesus was eating with the tax collectors and sinful people"

Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?

"Your teacher should not eat with tax collectors and sinner." The Pharisees were criticizing what Jesus was doing.

Matthew 9:12

When Jesus heard this

"When Jesus heard what the Pharisees said about him"

People who are strong in body do not need a physician, only those who are sick do

"People who are healthy do not need a doctor; only people who are sick need a doctor." Jesus means that just as sick people need a doctor, sinners need him.

Matthew 9:13

You should go and learn what this means

Jesus is about to quote the scriptures. Alternate translation: "You should learn what God meant when he said this"

For I came

Here "I" refers to Jesus.

the righteous

"those who think they are righteous"

but sinners

"but I came to call sinners to repent"

Matthew 9:14

do not fast

"do not stop eating at certain times" or "continue to eat regularly"

Matthew 9:15

Can the sons of the wedding hall mourn while the bridegroom is still with them?

"The sons of the wedding hall never mourn while the bridegroom is still with them."

sons of the wedding hall

"bridegroom's attendants"

the days will come when

"the time will come when" or "someday"

the bridegroom will be taken away from them

"the bridegroom will not be able to be with them any longer" or "someone will take the bridegroom away from them"

Matthew 9:16

No man puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment

"No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment" or "People do not sew a piece of new cloth as a patch old clothing"

the patch will tear away from the garment

If someone were to wash the garment, the patch of new cloth would shrink, but the old garment would not shrink. This would tear the patch off the garment and leave a bigger hole.

Matthew 9:17

Neither do people put

"Neither does anyone pur" or "People never put"

new wine

"unfermented wine" or "grape juice" or "unfermented fruit juice"

old wineskins

This refers to wineskins that have stretched and dried out because they were already used for fermenting wine.

wineskins

"wine bags" or "skin bags." These were bags made out of animal skins.

the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed

"and this will ruin the wineskins and spill the wine"

the skins will burst

When the new wine ferments and expands, old wineskins tear open because they can no longer stretch out.

fresh wineskins

"new wineskins" or "new wine bags." This refers to wineskins that no one has used.

both will be preserved

"this will keep safe both the wineskins and the wine"

Matthew 9:18

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

bowed down to him

This is a way someone would show respect in Jewish culture.

Matthew 9:19

his disciples

"Jesus's disciples"

Matthew 9:20

Behold

The word "Behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

who suffered from a discharge of blood

"who had been bleeding" or "who frequently had a flow of blood." She was probably bleeding from her womb even when it was not the normal time for it. Some cultures may have a polite way of referring to this condition.

his garment

"his robe" or "what he was wearing"

Matthew 9:21

For she had said to herself, "If only I touch his clothes, I will be made well."

She said this to herself before she touched Jesus's garment. This tells why she touched Jesus's garment.

Matthew 9:22

Daughter

The woman was not Jesus's real daughter. Jesus was speaking to her politely. If this is confusing, it can also be translated "Young woman" or even omitted.

your faith has made you well

"because you believed in me, I will heal you" or "because you believed, you will become well"

the woman was healed from that hour

"the woman became well at that moment"

Matthew 9:23

Connecting Statement:

This returns to the account of Jesus bringing the daughter of the Jewish official back to life.

the flute players and the crowd making a commotion

This was a common way to mourn for someone who has died.

and the crowd making a commotion

"and the crowd making a lot of noise" or "and the noisy crowd"

Matthew 9:24

Go away

Jesus said this to the crowd.

the girl is not dead, but she is asleep

It was common in Jesus's day to refer to a dead person as one who "sleeps." But here the dead girl will get up, as though she had only been sleeping.

Matthew 9:25

When the crowd had been put outside

"After Jesus had sent the crowd outside" or "After the family had sent the people outside"

Matthew 9:26

The news about this spread into all that region

"The people of that whole region heard about it" or "The people who saw that the girl was alive started telling everyone in the whole area about it"

Matthew 9:27

passed by

"was leaving" or "was going"

followed him

This means they were walking behind Jesus, not necessarily that they had become his disciples.

Son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son. Here "Son of David" is a title for the Messiah. Alternate Translation: "Descendant of David"

Matthew 9:28

When Jesus had come into the house

This could be either Jesus's own house or the house in Matthew 9:10.

Yes, Lord

"Yes, Lord, we believe you can heal us"

Matthew 9:29

Let it be done to you according to your faith

"I will do as you have believed" or "Because you believe, it will happen"

Matthew 9:30

their eyes were opened

"God healed their eyes" or "the two blind men were able to see"

See that no one knows about this

"Be sure no one finds out about this" or "Do not tell anyone that I healed you"

Matthew 9:31

spread the news

"told many people throughout that region what had happened to them"

Matthew 9:32

a mute man ... was brought to Jesus

"someone brought a mute man ... to Jesus"

a mute man

a man who was not able to talk

possessed by a demon

"whom a demon had possessed" or "whom a demon was controlling"

Matthew 9:33

When the demon had been driven out

"After Jesus had forced the demon out" or "After Jesus made the demon to leave"

the mute man spoke

"the man who had been mute spoke"

This has never been seen

"No one has ever seen anything like this before"

Matthew 9:34

he drives

The pronoun "he" refers to Jesus.

Matthew 9:35

cities ... villages

"large villages ... small villages" or "large towns ... small towns"

the gospel of the kingdom

"the good news that God will show himself as king"

all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness

"every disease and every sickness." The words "disease" and "sickness" are closely related but should be translated as two different words if possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be sick. "Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that results from having a disease.

Matthew 9:36

They were like sheep without a shepherd

"The people did not have a leader"

Matthew 9:37

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few

Jesus said this to teach that there are a lot of people who are ready to believe God but only a few people to teach them about God.

The harvest is plentiful

"There is plenty of ripe food for someone to collect"

laborers

"workers"

Matthew 9:38

pray to the Lord of the harvest

"pray to God, because he is in charge of the harvest"

Chapter 10

Matthew 10:1

gave them authority ... sickness

Be sure that the text clearly communicates that this authority was 1) to drive out unclean spirits and 2) to heal disease and sickness.

to drive them out

"to make the unclean spirits leave"

Matthew 10:2

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells the names of the twelve apostles.

twelve apostles

This is the same group as the "twelve disciples" in Matthew 10:1.

first

This is first in order, not in rank. Peter was probably the first to become one of Jesus' disciples.

Matthew 10:3

Matthew the tax collector

"Matthew, who was a tax collector"

Matthew 10:4

the Zealot

"the patriot" or "the nationalist" or 2) "the Zealot" is a description that shows that he was zealous for God to be honored.

who would betray him

"who would betray Jesus"

Matthew 10:5

General Information:

Although verse 5 begins by saying that he sent out the twelve, Jesus gave these instructions before he sent them out.

These twelve Jesus sent out

"Jesus sent out these twelve men" or "It was these twelve men whom Jesus sent out"

sent out

Jesus sent them out for a particular purpose.

He instructed them

"He told them what they needed to do" or "He commanded them"

Matthew 10:6

lost sheep of the house of Israel

"the people of Israel. They are like lost sheep"

house of Israel

"people of Israel" or "descendants of Israel"

Matthew 10:7

The kingdom of heaven is near

"Our God in heaven will soon show himself to be king"

Matthew 10:8

raise the dead

"cause the dead to live again"

Freely you have received, freely give

"Freely you have received these things, freely give them to others" or "You received these things without paying, so give them to others without making them pay"

Matthew 10:9

gold, silver, or copper

These are metals out of which coins were made.
Alternate translation: "money"

belts

"purses" or "pouches"

Matthew 10:10

traveling bag

This could either be any bag used to carry things on a journey, or a bag used by someone to collect food or money.

an extra tunic

Use the same word you used for "tunic" in Matthew 5:40.

his food

"what he needs"

Matthew 10:11

Whatever city or village you enter

"Whenever you enter a city or village" or "When you go into any city or village"

worthy

A "worthy" person is a person who is willing to welcome the disciples.

stay there until you leave

"live in that person's house until you leave the town or village"

Matthew 10:12

As you enter into the house, greet it

"As you enter the house, greet the people who live in it"

Matthew 10:13

If the house is worthy

"If the people in that house receive you well" or "If the people who live in that house treat you well"

let your peace come upon it

"let them receive your peace" or "let them receive the peace that you greeted them with"

if it is not worthy

"if they do not receive you well" or "if they do not treat you well"

let your peace return to you

"take back your greeting of peace"

Matthew 10:14

As for those who do not receive you or listen

"If no people in that house or city will receive you or listen"

listen to your words

"listen to your message" or "listen to what you have to say"

shake off the dust from your feet

"shake the dust off your feet as you leave." This is a sign that God has rejected the people of that house or city.

Matthew 10:15

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

it will be more bearable

"the suffering will be less"

the land of Sodom and Gomorrah

"the people who lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

that city

"the people of the city that does not receive you"

Matthew 10:16

See, I send

"Look, I send" or "Listen, I send" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you. I send"

I send you out

Jesus is sending them out for a particular purpose.

as sheep in the midst of wolves

"as sheep among people who are like dangerous wolves" or "as sheep among people who act the way dangerous animals act"

be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves

"act with understanding and caution, as well as with innocence and virtue"

Matthew 10:17

will deliver you up to

"will put you under the control of"

councils

local religious leaders or elders who together keep peace in the community

whip you

"beat you with a whip"

Matthew 10:18

you will be brought

"they will bring you" or "they will drag you"

for my sake

"because you belong to me" or "because you follow me"

Matthew 10:19

When they deliver you up

"When people take you to the councils."

do not be anxious

"do not worry"

how or what you will speak

"how you are to speak or what you are to say." The two ideas may be combined: "what you are to say"

for what to say will be given to you

"for you will be told what to say" or "for the Holy Spirit will tell you what to say"

Matthew 10:20

the Spirit of your Father

If necessary, this can be translated as "the Spirit of God your heavenly Father" or a footnote can be added to make it clear that this refers to God the Holy Spirit and not to the spirit of an earthly father.

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

in you

"through you"

Matthew 10:21

Brother will deliver up brother to death

"One brother will deliver up his brother to death" or "Brothers will hand their brothers over to authorities, who will execute them." Jesus speaks of something that will happen many times.

a father his child

"fathers will deliver up their children to death"

rise up against

"rebel against" or "turn against"

cause them to be put to death

"have them put to death" or "have the authorities execute them"

Matthew 10:22

You will be hated by everyone

"Everyone will hate you" or "All people will hate you"

because of my name

"because of me" or "because you trust in me"

whoever endures

"whoever stays faithful"

to the end

It is not clear whether the "end" means when a person dies, when the persecution ends, or the end of the age when God shows himself to be king. The main point is that they endure as long as necessary.

that person will be saved

"God will save that person"

Matthew 10:23

in this city

"in one city"

flee to the next

"flee to the next city"

before the Son of Man has

"before I, the Son of Man, have"

Matthew 10:24

A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant above his master

Jesus is using a proverb to teach his disciples a general truth. Jesus is emphasizing that the disciples should not expect people to treat them any better than the people treat Jesus.

A disciple is not greater than his teacher

"A disciple is always less important than his teacher" or "A teacher is always more important than his disciple"

nor a servant above his master

"and a servant is always less important than his master" or "and a master is always more important than his servant"

Matthew 10:25

It is enough for the disciple that he should be like his teacher

"The disciple should be satisfied to become like his teacher"

the servant like his master

"the servant should be satisfied to become only as important as his master"

If they have called the master ... how much worse ... they call ... the members of his household

Again Jesus is emphasizing that since people have mistreated him, his disciples should expect people to treat them the same or worse.

how much worse will be the names they call the members of his household

"the names that they call the members of his household will certainly be much worse" or "they will certainly call the members of his household much worse names"

If they have called

"Since people have called"

Beelzebul

This name here refers to Satan. It can either be 1) transcribed as "Beelzebul" or 2) translated as "Satan."

Matthew 10:26

do not fear them

"do not be afraid of those people" or "do not be afraid of people who might treat you badly"

there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known

"everything that is concealed will be revealed, and everything that is hidden will be made known."

Matthew 10:27

What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight

"What I tell you at night, say in the daytime"

what you hear softly in your ear

"what I whisper to you" or "what I say to you privately"

proclaim upon the housetops

"speak loudly in a public place"

Matthew 10:28

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul

"Do not be afraid of people. They can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul"

kill the body

This means to cause physical death. If these words are awkward, they can be translated as "kill you" or "kill people."

fear him who is able to destroy

"fear God, because he is able to destroy"

body

the part of a person that can be touched, as opposed to the soul or spirit

soul

the part of a person that cannot be touched and that lives on after the physical body dies

fear him who is able

"fear God because he is able"

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?

This question can be translated as a statement. "Two sparrows are sold for only a small coin." or "Sparrows have so little value that you can buy two of them for only one small coin."

sparrows

These are very small birds. Alternate translation: "small birds"

a small coin

This is often translated as the least valuable coin in your country. Alternate translation: "a penny" or "very little money"

not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge

"your Father knows when every one of them falls to the ground"

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 10:30

even the hairs of your head are all numbered

"God knows even how many hairs are on your head"

numbered

"counted"

Matthew 10:31

You are more valuable than many sparrows

"God values you more than many sparrows"

Matthew 10:32

everyone who confesses me ... I will also confess before my Father

"whoever confesses me ... I will also confess before my Father" or "if anyone confesses me ... I will also confess him before my Father"

confesses me before men

"tells others that he is my disciple" or "acknowledges before other people that he is loyal to me"

I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven

"I will also acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven that that person belongs to me"

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 10:33

he who denies me ... I will also deny before my Father

"whoever denies me ... I will also deny before my Father" or "if anyone denies me ... I will also deny him before my Father"

denies me before men

"denies to other people that he is loyal to me" or "refuses to acknowledge to others that he is my disciple"

I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven

"I will deny before my Father who is in heaven that this person belongs to me"

Matthew 10:34

upon the earth

"to the people of the earth" or "to people"

a sword

This refers to division, fighting, and killing among people.

Matthew 10:35

to set ... against

"to cause ... to fight against"

a man against his father

"a son against his father"

Matthew 10:36

A man's enemies

"A person's enemies"

those of his own household

"members of his own family"

Matthew 10:37

He who loves ... is not worthy

"Those who love ... are not worthy" or "If you love ... you are not worthy"

loves

"cares for" or "is devoted to" or "is fond of"

is not worthy of me

"does not deserve to belong to me" or "is not worthy to be my disciple"

Matthew 10:38

pick up his cross and follow after me

"obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"

Matthew 10:39

He who finds his life will lose it. But he who loses ... will find it

"Those who find their lives will lose them. But those who lose their lives ... will find them" or "If you find your life you will lose it. But if you lose your life ... you will find it"

finds his life

"tries to keep his life will lose it" or "tries to save his life will not have true life"

who loses his life for my sake

"who denies himself for my sake"

will find it

"will find true life"

Matthew 10:40

He who welcomes you

"Whoever welcomes you" or "Anyone who welcomes you"

He who welcomes you welcomes me

"When someone welcomes you, it is like he is welcoming me" or "If someone welcomes you, it is as if he were welcoming me"

him who sent me

God the Father who sent me"

Matthew 10:41

in the name of a prophet

"because that person is a prophet" or "because he knows that person is a prophet"

a prophet's reward

These phrases refer to the rewards that God gives to prophets and righteous men, not to rewards that prophets or righteous men give to other people.

in the name of a righteous man

"because that righteous man is a righteous man" or "because he knows that person is righteous."

a righteous man's reward

This refers to the reward God gives to a righteous person.

Matthew 10:42

one of these little ones

"one of these lowly ones" or "the least important of these." This refers to Jesus's disciples.

in the name of a disciple

"because that person is a disciple" or "because he knows that that person is a disciple."

he will ... his reward

Here "he" and "his" refer to the one who is giving.

he will in no way lose his reward

"he will certainly receive his reward"

Chapter 11

Matthew 11:1

It came about that when

"Then when" or "After"

had finished instructing

"had finished teaching" or "had finished commanding."

in their cities

"in the cities of the Jews"

Matthew 11:2

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

when John heard in the prison about

"Now John had been put in prison. When he heard about" or "When John, who was in prison, heard about"

he sent a message by his disciples

John the Baptist sent his own disciples with a message to Jesus.

Matthew 11:3

said to him

"said to Jesus"

Are you the one who is coming

"Are you the one whom we are expecting to come." This is another way to refer to the Messiah or Christ.

should we look for another

"should we be expecting someone else"

Matthew 11:4

report to John

"tell John"

Matthew 11:5

lepers are being cleansed

"people who have leprosy are becoming well"

the dead are being raised back to life

"people who have died live again"

the gospel is being preached to the poor

"poor people are hearing the gospel"

the poor

"poor people"

Matthew 11:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus talks to the crowds about John the Baptist. He uses questions to cause the people to think about what kind of person John the Baptist is. These questions can be translated as sentences.

What did you go out in the desert to see—a reed ... wind?

"Surely you did not go out to the desert to see a reed ... wind!"

a reed being shaken by the wind

"a man who easily changes his mind and is like a reed being shaken by the wind"

being shaken by the wind

"swaying in the wind" or "blowing in the wind"

Matthew 11:8

But what did you go out to see—a man ... clothing?

"And surely you did not go out to the desert to see a man ... clothing!"

dressed in soft clothing

"wearing expensive clothing." Rich people wore this kind of clothing.

Matthew 11:9

But what did you go out to see—a prophet?

"Surely you went out to the desert to see a prophet!"

and much more than a prophet

"and he is much more than a prophet"

much more than

much more important than

Matthew 11:10

This is he of whom it was written

"He is the one about whom a prophet wrote long ago" or "This is what a prophet wrote long ago about John the Baptist"

I am sending my messenger

The pronouns "I" and "my" refer to God. The prophet was quoting what God said.

before your face

"in front of you" or "to go ahead of you"

prepare your way before you

This means the messenger will prepare the people to receive the Messiah's message.

Matthew 11:11

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

among those born of women, there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist

"no one born of women has been a greater prophet than John the Baptist"

among those born of women

"out of all people who have ever lived"

the least important person in the kingdom of heaven

"the least important person under the rule of our God in heaven"

is greater than he is

"is more important than John is"

Matthew 11:12

From the days of John the Baptist

"From the time John began preaching his message"

the kingdom of heaven suffers violence

This could mean 1) "enemies violently attack the kingdom of heaven" or 2) "the kingdom of heaven has been coming forcefully."

and men of violence take it by force

This could mean 1) "and violent people forcefully take it" or 2) "and forceful people grab onto it."

Matthew 11:13

all the prophets and the law have been prophesying until John

"these are the things that the prophets and Moses have prophesied through the scriptures until the time of John the Baptist"

Matthew 11:14

he is Elijah who was to come

"John is the one a prophet spoke about when he said that Elijah would come"

Matthew 11:15

He who has ears to hear, let him hear

"The one who is willing to listen, let him listen" or "Let the one who is willing to listen to me understand and obey what I say"

He who has ... let him hear

"You who have ears ... listen"

Matthew 11:16

To what should I compare this generation?

This is what this generation is like.”

this generation

"the people living now" or "these people" or "you people of this generation"

marketplaces

large, open-air areas where people buy and sell items

Matthew 11:17

We played a flute for you, and you did not dance

"We played the flute for you, but you did not dance to the happy music"

We mourned, and you did not weep

"We mourned, but you did not cry with us"

Matthew 11:18

not eating bread or drinking wine

This could mean 1) that John did not eat expensive food or 2) that John fasted often. John also did not drink wine.

they say, 'He has a demon.'

"they say that he has a demon."

they say

“people say”

Matthew 11:19

The Son of Man came

"I, the Son of Man, came"

came eating and drinking

This is the opposite of John's behavior. This means Jesus celebrated and enjoyed good food and drink like other people did.

they say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners!'

“he eats too much and drinks too much wine”

he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard

"he is a greedy eater and a drunk" or "he continually eats too much food and drinks too much alcohol"

But wisdom is justified by her deeds

Jesus said this because the people who rejected both him and John were not being wise. Jesus and John the Baptist are the wise ones, and the results of their deeds prove it.

wisdom is justified by her deeds

“a person’s wisdom is proved by what he does” or “the results of a wise person’s deeds prove that he is wise”

Matthew 11:20

denounce the cities

"began to rebuke the people of the cities" or "accuse the people of the cities of doing wrong"

in which most of his miracles were done

"in which he did most of his miracles"

miracles

"mighty works" or "works of power"

Matthew 11:21

Woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you"

Chorazin ... Bethsaida ... Tyre ... Sidon

These are the names of cities.

Chorazin ... Bethsaida

"people of Chorazin ... people of Bethsaida"

If the miracles ... in sackcloth and ashes

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past, but it did not.

If the miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you

"If someone had done the miracles among the people of Tyre and Sidon that I have done among you"

Matthew 11:22

it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you

"God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely at the day of judgment than the people of Tyre and Sidon"

Matthew 11:23

Capernaum ... Sodom

The names of these cities refer to the people living in Capernaum and in Sodom.

do you think you will be exalted to heaven?

"you will not be raised up to heaven!" or "God will not bring you up to heaven like you think he will!"

you will be brought down to Hades

"you will go down to Hades" or "God will send you down to Hades"

For if in Sodom ... it would still have remained until today

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past, but it did not.

if in Sodom there had been done the miracles that were done in you

Matthew 11:24

it will be easier for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you

"God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely in the day of judgment than the people of Sodom"

Matthew 11:25

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Lord of heaven and earth

"Lord who rules over heaven and earth" or "Lord of everyone everywhere"

you concealed these things from ... and revealed them to

"you hid these truths from ... and revealed them to" or "you have not made these things known to ... and you made them known to"

the wise and understanding

"people who think they are wise and understanding"

to little children

"to people who are like little children." Jesus is emphasizing that many of those who believe him either are not well educated or do not think of themselves as wise.

Matthew 11:26

for this was pleasing in your sight

"for it pleased you to do this" or "for you considered it good to do this"

Matthew 11:27

All things have been entrusted to me from my Father

"My Father has entrusted all things to me" or "My Father has given everything over to me." This could mean that 1) God the Father has revealed everything about himself and his kingdom to Jesus or 2) God has given all authority to Jesus.

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

no one knows the Son except the Father

I will give you rest

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. It is best to translate "Father" and "Son" with the same words that your language uses to refer to a human father and a human son. The word "knows" here means more than just being acquainted with someone. It means knowing someone intimately because of having a special relationship with him.

"I will allow you to rest from your labor and burden"

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke on you

"wear the yoke that I put on you" or

the Son

I am meek and lowly in heart

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

"I am gentle and humble"

you will find rest for your souls

no one knows the Father except the Son and ... him

"you will find rest for yourselves" or "you will be able to rest"

"only the Son and ... him know the Father"

Matthew 11:30

Matthew 11:28

Take my yoke on you

all you

"wear the yoke that I put on you" or

All occurrences of "you" are plural.

I am meek and lowly in heart

who labor and are heavy burdened

"I am gentle and humble"

"who are tired and carry a heavy burden" or "who are tired from trying to keep all the laws and feel like they are carrying a heavy burden"

you will find rest for your souls

"you will find rest for yourselves" or "you will be able to rest"

Chapter 12

Matthew 12:1

grainfields

This is a place to plant grain. If there is no word for grains, then you can use “fields of the plant they made bread from.”

heads of grain

The heads of grain are the topmost part of the wheat plant. It holds the mature grain or seeds of the plant.

Matthew 12:2

do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath

Picking grain in others' fields and eating it was not considered stealing. The question was whether one could do this otherwise lawful activity on the Sabbath.

the Pharisees

"Look, your disciples." The Pharisees use this word to draw attention to what the disciples are doing.

Matthew 12:3

to them

"to the Pharisees"

Have you never read ... with him?

“Surely you have read about ... with him.”

Matthew 12:4

the house of God

"the tabernacle" or "the place for worshiping God"

bread of the presence

"bread that the priest placed before God" or "sacred bread"

those who were with him

"the men who were with David"

but lawful only for the priests

"but, according to the law, only the priests could eat it"

Matthew 12:5

Have you not read in the law that ... but are guiltless?

“Surely you have read in the law of Moses that ... but are guiltless.” or “You should know that the law teaches that ... but are guiltless.”

profane the Sabbath

"do on the Sabbath what the law forbids them to do on that day"

are guiltless

"God will not punish them" or "God does not consider them guilty"

Matthew 12:6

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

one greater than the temple

"someone who is more important than the temple." Jesus was referring to himself as the one greater.

Matthew 12:7

If you had known what this meant, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless

“If you had understood what God meant when he said ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless’ or “You would not have condemned people who are not guilty if you had understood the meaning of “I desire mercy and not sacrifice”

I desire mercy and not sacrifice

In the law of Moses, God did command the Israelites to offer sacrifices. This means God considers mercy more important than the sacrifices.

the guiltless

"those who are not guilty"

Matthew 12:8

the Son of Man is

"I, the Son of Man, am"

is Lord of the Sabbath

"rules over the Sabbath" or "makes the laws about what people can do on the Sabbath"

Matthew 12:9

Then Jesus left from there

"Jesus left the grainfields" or "Then Jesus left"

their synagogue

"the synagogue that they attended"

Matthew 12:10

Behold

The word "Behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

a man who had a withered hand

"a man who had a paralyzed hand" or "a man with a crippled hand"

The Pharisees asked Jesus, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" so that they might accuse him of sinning.

"The Pharisees wanted to accuse Jesus of sinning, so they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'"

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath

"According to the law of Moses, may a person heal another person on the Sabbath"

Matthew 12:11

What man would there be among you, who, if he had just one sheep ... would not take hold of it and raise it out?

"Every one of you, if you only had one sheep ... would grab the sheep and pull it out of the pit."

Matthew 12:12

How much more valuable, then, is a man than a sheep!

"Obviously, a man is much more valuable than a sheep!" or "Just think about how much more important a man is than a sheep"

it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath

"those who do good on the Sabbath are obeying the law"

Matthew 12:13

Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."

"Then Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand." "Then Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand."

Stretch out your hand

"Hold out your hand" or "Extend your hand"

He stretched

"The man stretched"

it was restored to health

"it was healthy again" or "it became well again"

Matthew 12:14

plotted against him

"planned to harm Jesus"

were seeking how they might destroy him

"were discussing how they might kill Jesus"

Matthew 12:15

Jesus, knowing this, withdrew from there

"Jesus knew what the Pharisees were planning, so he left that place"

Matthew 12:16

not to make him known to others

"not to tell anyone else about him"

Matthew 12:17

that it might be fulfilled, what had been said through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

“This was to fulfill what had been said through Isaiah the prophet:” or “This was so that what God had said through the prophet Isaiah might happen:”

Matthew 12:18

Connecting Statement:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus’s ministry fulfilled scripture. Isaiah wrote what God said, so all the occurrences of “I” and “my” refer to God.

my beloved one, in whom my soul is well pleased

“he is my beloved one, and I am very pleased with him”

he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles

“he will announce to the nations that God will do for them what is right”

Matthew 12:19

neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets

“nor shout in public places” or “and people will not hear him speaking loudly in the streets”

Matthew 12:20

He will not break any bruised reed; he will not quench any smoking flax

"He will be kind to people who are like a bruised reed, and he will be gentle to those who are like a smoking flax"

bruised reed

"damaged plant"

he will not quench any smoking flax

"he will not put out any smoking wick" or "he will not stop any smoking lamp wick from burning." A smoking flax is a lamp wick after the flame has gone out and when it is only smoking.

until he leads justice to victory

"until he makes justice have victory" or "until he makes everything right"

Matthew 12:21

in his name the Gentiles will have hope

“the Gentiles will trust in his name” or “the Gentiles will confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises”

in his name

"in him"

Matthew 12:22

Then someone blind and mute, possessed by a demon, was brought to Jesus

“Then people brought to Jesus a man who was blind and mute because a demon was controlling him”

Matthew 12:23

All the crowds were amazed

"All the people who had seen Jesus heal the man were greatly surprised"

the Son of David

This is a title for the Christ or Messiah. See how you translated “Son of David” in Matthew 9:27

Matthew 12:24

This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul ... demons

“This man is able to force demons to leave only because he is a servant of Beelzebul ... demons”

This man

The Pharisees avoid calling Jesus by name to show they reject him.

the prince of the demons

"the chief of the demons"

Matthew 12:25

Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand

These two statements emphasize that it would not make sense for Beelzebul to use his power to fight other demons.

Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate

"A kingdom will not last if its people fight among themselves"

Matthew 12:26

If Satan drives out Satan

"If Satan forces his own demons to leave"

How then will his kingdom stand?

"His kingdom would not be able to stand!" or "His kingdom would not last!"

Matthew 12:27

And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul

"And if you say that I drive out demons by Beelzebul"

Beelzebul

This name refers to the same person as "Satan" (verse 26).

by whom do your sons drive them out?

"then your followers also drive out demons by Beelzebul." or "then you would have to say that your followers drive out demons by the power of Beelzebul."

For this reason they will be your judges

"Because your followers cast out demons by the power of God, they prove that you are wrong about me."

Matthew 12:28

But if I

"But because I"

then the kingdom of God has come upon you

"this means God is establishing his rule among you"

come upon you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

Matthew 12:29

How can anyone enter ... without tying up the strong man first?

"No one can enter ... without tying up the strong man first." or "If a person wants to enter ... he must first tie up the strong man."

Then he will steal

"The he can steal" or "Then he will be able to steal"

Matthew 12:30

who is not with me

"who does not support me" or "who does not work with me"

is against me

"opposes me" or "works against me"

the one who does not gather with me scatters

"whoever does not gather my sheep with me scatters them" or "whoever does not work with me works against what I am doing"

Matthew 12:31

every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men

"God will forgive every sin that people commit and every evil thing they say" or "God will forgive every person who sins or says evil things"

blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven

"God will not forgive the person who speaks evil things about the Holy Spirit"

Matthew 12:32

Whoever speaks any word against the Son of Man

"If a person says anything bad about the Son of Man"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

that will be forgiven him

"God will forgive a person for that"

that will not be forgiven him

"God will not forgive that person"

neither in this world, nor in that which is to come

"in this life or in the next life" or "now or ever"

Matthew 12:33

Make a tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad

Possible meanings are 1) "If you make a tree good, its fruit will be good, and if you make the tree bad, its fruit will be bad" or 2) "If a tree is good, it will have good fruit, and if a tree is bad, it will have bad fruit." This was a proverb. People were to apply its truth to how they can know whether a person is good or bad.

good ... bad

"healthy ... diseased"

a tree is recognized by its fruit

"people recognize a tree by its fruit" or "people know whether a tree is good or bad by looking at its fruit"

Matthew 12:34

You offspring of vipers

Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are poisonous snakes that are dangerous and represent evil. See how you translated a similar phrase in Matthew 3:7.

how can you say good things?

"you cannot say good things." or "you can only say evil things."

out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks

"what a person says with his mouth reveals what is in his mind"

Matthew 12:35

The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil

"A good man will speak good things because good things are in his heart, and an evil man will speak evil things because evil things are in this heart"

Matthew 12:36

people will give an account for every idle word they will have said

"people will have to tell God why they said every useless thing they have said"

Matthew 12:37

by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned

"your words will justify you, and your words will condemn you" or "because of what you say, God will either justify you or condemn you"

Matthew 12:38

we want to see a sign from you

"we want you to show us a sign" or "we want to see you do a miraculous sign"

Matthew 12:39

An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign ... given to it

"You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you"

adulterous generation

"unfaithful generation" or "godless generation"

no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah

"The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"

the sign of Jonah

"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah"

Matthew 12:40

three days and three nights

"three days and nights"

the Son of Man

"I, the Son of Man"

in the heart of the earth

"in the earth" or "in a grave"

Matthew 12:41

The men of Nineveh

"The citizens of Nineveh"

at the judgment

"on judgment day" or "when God judges people"

this generation of people

This refers to the Jews who were alive when Jesus was preaching.

and will condemn it

"and will accuse this generation of people"

and see

"and look." This emphasizes what Jesus says next.

someone greater than Jonah is here

"someone more important than Jonah is here"

Matthew 12:42

Queen of the South

This refers to the Queen of Sheba. Sheba was a land south of Israel.

will rise up at the judgment

"will stand up at the judgment"

this generation

This refers to the Jews living during the time Jesus was preaching.

She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon

"For she came from very far away to listen to Solomon's wise teaching." This statement explains why the Queen of the South will condemn the people of Jesus's generation.

someone greater

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 12:43

waterless places

"dry places" or "places where no people live"

does not find it

Here "it" refers to rest.

Matthew 12:44

to my house from which I came

The house is the person in whom the unclean spirit was living earlier

it finds the house empty

"it finds the house unoccupied" or "it sees that no one is living in the house"

it had been swept clean and put in order.

"someone had swept the house clean and has put everything in the house where it belongs"

Matthew 12:45

It will be just like that with this evil generation

This means that if the people of Jesus's generation do not believe him and become his disciples, they will be in a worse situation than they were before he came.

Matthew 12:46

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new people in the story.

his mother

This is Mary, Jesus's human mother.

his brothers

These are probably other children born to Mary, but it is possible that the word "brothers" here refers to Jesus's cousins.

seeking to speak

"wanting to speak to Jesus"

Matthew 12:47

Someone said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers stand outside, seeking to speak to you."

"Someone told Jesus that his mother and brothers were outside and wanted to speak to him."

Matthew 12:48

who told him

"who told him that his mother and brothers wanted to speak to him"

Who is my mother and who are my brothers?

"I will tell you who are really my mother and brothers."

Matthew 12:49

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Matthew 12:50

whoever does the will of God

"anyone who does what God wants"

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Chapter 13

Matthew 13:1

sat beside the sea

In that culture, teachers sat down to teach.

Matthew 13:2

a boat

This was probably an open, wooden fishing boat with a sail.

Matthew 13:3

Jesus said many things to them in parables

"Jesus told them many things in parables"

Behold

"Look" or "Listen." or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

a farmer went out to sow seed

"a farmer went out to scatter seeds in a field"

Matthew 13:4

As he sowed

"As the farmer scattered the seed"

beside the road

This refers to a "path" next to the field. The ground there would have been hard from people walking on it.

Matthew 13:5

Immediately they sprang up

"The seeds quickly sprouted and grew"

Matthew 13:6

they were scorched

"the sun scorched the plants, and they became too hot"

they withered away

"the plants became dry and died"

Matthew 13:7

fell among the thorn plants

"fell where plants with thorns grew"

choked them

"choked the new sprouts." Use your word for the way weeds prevent other plants from growing well.

Matthew 13:8

produced a crop

"grew more seeds" or "gave fruit"

some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty

"some seeds produced 100 times as much crop, some seeds produced 60 times as much crop, and some seeds produced 30 times as much crop"

Matthew 13:9

He who has ears, let him hear

"Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"

Matthew 13:11

You have been given the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given

"God has given you the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but God has not given it to these people" or "God has made you able to understand mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but he has not enabled these people to understand"

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven

"the secrets about our God in heaven and his rule"

Matthew 13:12

has will be given more

"has understanding, God will give him more understanding"

whoever does not have

"whoever does not have understanding" or "whoever does not receive what I teach"

even what he has will be taken away from him

"God will take away even what he has"

Matthew 13:13

to them ... they

All occurrences of "them" and "they" refer to the people in the crowd.

Though they are seeing, they do not see; and though they are hearing, they do not hear, or understand.

Jesus teaches the disciples that the crowd refuses to understand God's truth.

Though they are seeing, they do not see

Though they are able to see, they do not really see"

though they are hearing they do not hear

"Though they are able to hear, they do not listen well"

Matthew 13:14

Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand

"You will hear what God says through the prophets, but you will not understand its true meaning"

seeing, you will see, but you will never know

"you will see what God does through the prophets, but you will not understand it"

Matthew 13:15

For the heart of this people ... I would heal them

This describes the people's spiritual condition. It means the people are stubborn and refuse to receive and understand God's truth. If they would, then they would

repent and God would forgive them and welcome them back as his people.

the heart of this people has become dull

"these people's minds are slow to learn" or "these people can no longer learn"

with their ears they hardly hear

"they refuse to use their ears to listen"

they have shut their eyes

"they refuse to use their eyes to see"

understand with their heart

"understand with their minds"

turn again

"turn back to me" or "repent"

I would heal them

"have me receive them again"

Matthew 13:16

But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear

Jesus is emphasizing that they have pleased God because they have believed what Jesus has said and done.

But blessed are your eyes, for they see

"You are blessed because your eyes are able to see"

your ears, for they hear

"and blessed are your ears, for they hear" "you are blessed because your ears are able to hear"

Matthew 13:17

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

you

All occurrences of this word are plural and refer to the disciples.

the things that you see

"the things you have seen me do"

the things that you hear

"the things you have heard me say"

Matthew 13:19

the word of the kingdom

"the message about God's rule as king"

the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart

"The evil one causes him to forget the message that he has heard just as a bird snatches away seed from the ground"

the evil one

This refers to Satan.

snatches away

Try to use a word that means to grab something away from someone who is the rightful owner.

what has been sown in his heart

"the message that God sowed in his heart" or "the message that he heard"

in his heart

Here "heart" refers to the mind of the hearer.

This is the seed that was sown beside the road

"This is the meaning of the seed that was sown beside the road" or "The road where seed was sown represents this person"

Matthew 13:20

What was sown on rocky ground

"The seed that fell on rocky ground"

What was sown on rocky ground is

"The rocky ground where seed was sown represents" or "The rocky ground where seed fell represents"

the person who hears the word

In the parable, the seed represents the word.

the word

"the message" or "God's teaching"

receives it with joy

"joyfully believes it"

Matthew 13:21

yet he has no root in himself and he endures for a while

but like a plant that does not grow deep roots, he only endures for a little while"

he quickly falls away

"immediately he falls away" or "he quickly stops believing the message"

Matthew 13:22

What was sown

"The seed that was sown" or "The seed that fell"

What was sown among the thorn plants

"The ground with the thorn plants where seed was sown"

the word

"the message" or "God's teaching"

the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word

"as weeds prevent good plants from growing, the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches keep this person from listening to God's word"

cares of the world

"the things in this world that people worry about"

the deceitfulness of riches

"the love of money"

he becomes unfruitful

"he becomes unproductive" or "he does not do what God wants"

Matthew 13:23

The seed that was sown on the good soil

"The good soil where seeds were sown"

He bears fruit and produces a crop

"Like a healthy plant that bears a crop of fruit, he is productive"

a crop, yielding in one case a hundred, in another sixty, and in another thirty times as much as was planted

"a crop, producing 100 times as much as the farmer planted, 60 times as much as the farmer planted, or 30 times as much as the farmer planted"

Matthew 13:24

Jesus presented another parable

"Jesus told them another parable"

The kingdom of heaven is like a man

The translation should not equate the kingdom of heaven to a man, but rather the kingdom of heaven is like the situation described in the parable.

The kingdom of heaven is like

"When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

Matthew 13:25

weeds

"bad seed" or "weed seeds"

Matthew 13:26

When the blades sprouted

"When the wheat seeds sprouted" or "When the plants came up"

Matthew 13:27

the landowner

This is the same person who sowed good seed in his field.

did you not sow good seed in your field?

"you sowed good seed in your field!"

did you not sow

"did we not sow"

Matthew 13:28

So do you want us

The word "us" refers to the servants.

Matthew 13:30

I will say to the reapers, "First pull out the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

"I will tell the reapers to first gather up the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, and then gather the wheat into my barn."

barn

a farm building that can be used for storing grain

Matthew 13:31

The kingdom of heaven is like

"When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

mustard seed

a very small seed that grows into a large plant

Matthew 13:32

This seed is indeed the smallest of all seeds

Mustard seeds were the smallest seeds known to the original hearers.

Matthew 13:33

The kingdom of heaven is like yeast

The spread of the kingdom is like the spreading of the yeast.

The kingdom of heaven is like

"When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

three measures of flour

If your culture does not have something to measure large amounts, you could simple say "a large amount of flour."

until all the dough had risen

Women would mix flour, water, and yeast together to make dough, and the yeast would make the dough rise.

Matthew 13:34

All these things

his refers to what Jesus taught beginning in Matthew 13:1

he said nothing to them without a parable

"everything he taught them he said in parables"

Matthew 13:35

what had been said through the prophet might be fulfilled, when he said

"what God told one of the prophets to write long ago might come true"

when he said

"when the prophet said"

I will open my mouth

"I will speak"

things that were hidden

"things that God has kept hidden"

from the foundation of the world

"since the beginning of the world" or "since God created the world"

Matthew 13:37

He who sows the good seed

"The one who sows the good seed" or "The sower of the good seed"

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself.

Matthew 13:38

the sons of the kingdom

"the people who belong to the kingdom" or "the people who submit to God's rule"

of the kingdom

"of God"

the sons of the evil one

"the people who belong to the evil one"

Matthew 13:40

Therefore, as the weeds are gathered up and consumed by fire

"Therefore, as people gather up weeds and burn them in the fire"

Matthew 13:41

The Son of Man will send out his angels

"I, the Son of Man, will send out my angels"

all stumbling blocks

everything that causes people to sin

those who commit lawlessness

"those who are lawless" or "evil people"

Matthew 13:42

furnace of fire

"fiery furnace"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"weeping and showing that they are suffering very much"

Matthew 13:43

shine like the sun

"be as easy to see as the sun."

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father

He who has ears, let him hear

"Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"

Matthew 13:44

The kingdom of heaven is like

"When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

like a treasure hidden in a field

"a treasure that someone had hidden in a field"

treasure

a very valuable and precious thing or collection of things

hid it

"covered it up"

and buys that field

He buys the field to take possession of the hidden treasure.

Matthew 13:45

like a man who is a merchant looking for valuable pearls

The implied information is that the man was looking for valuable pearls that he could buy.

a merchant

a trader or wholesale dealer who often obtains merchandise from distant places

valuable pearls

"fine pearls" or "beautiful pearls"

Matthew 13:47

the kingdom of heaven is like a net

Jesus was teaching that the kingdom draws all kinds of people like a net catches all kinds of fish.

the kingdom of heaven is like

"When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

like a net that was cast into the sea

"like a net that some fishermen cast into the sea"

Matthew 13:48

drew it up on the beach

"pulled the net up onto the beach" or "pulled the net ashore"

the good ones

"the good fish."

the bad ones

"the bad fish."

threw away

"did not keep"

Matthew 13:49

will come

"will come out" or "will go out" or "will come from heaven"

the wicked from among the righteous

"the wicked people from the righteous people"

Matthew 13:50

They will throw them

"The angels will throw the wicked people"

furnace of fire

"fiery furnace"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"weeping and expressing their extreme suffering"

Matthew 13:51

Have you understood all these things?" The disciples said to him, "Yes."

"Jesus asked them if they had understood all this, and they said that they did understand."

Matthew 13:52

has become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven

"has learned the truth about our God in heaven, who is king" or "has submitted himself to God's rule"

is like a man who is the owner of a house, who draws out old and new things from his treasure

Jesus compares scribes, who know very well the scriptures that Moses and the prophets wrote, and who also now accept Jesus's teachings, to a house owner who uses both old and new treasures.

treasure

A treasure is a very valuable and precious thing or a collection of things. Here it may refer to the place where these things are stored, the "treasury" or "storeroom."

Matthew 13:53

Then it came about that when

"Then when" or "After"

Matthew 13:54

his own region

"his hometown." This refers to the town of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up.

Where does this man get his wisdom and these miraculous powers from?

"How can an ordinary man like this be so wise and do such great miracles?" or "It is strange that he is able to speak with such wisdom and do these miracles!"

Matthew 13:55

Is not this man the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

"He is just the son of a carpenter. We know his mother Mary, and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas."

the carpenter's son

"the builder's son." A carpenter is someone who makes things with wood or stone.

Matthew 13:56

Are not all his sisters with us?

"And all his sisters are with us, too."

Where did he get all these things?

"He must have gotten these things from somewhere!" or "We do not know where he got his wisdom and power!"

all these things

This refers to Jesus's wisdom and ability to do miracles.

Matthew 13:57

They were offended by him

"The people of Jesus's hometown took offense at him" or "The people rejected Jesus"

A prophet is not without honor

"A prophet receives honor everywhere" or "People everywhere honor a prophet")

his own country

"his own region" or "his own hometown"

in his own family

"in his own home"

Matthew 13:58

He did not do many miracles there

"Jesus did not do many miracles in his own hometown"

Chapter 14

Matthew 14:1

About that time

"In those days" or "While Jesus was ministering in Galilee"

heard the news about Jesus

"heard reports about Jesus" or "heard about the fame of Jesus"

Matthew 14:2

He said

"Herod said"

has risen from the dead

The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from the dead speaks of coming alive again.

Therefore these powers are at work in him

Some Jews at that time believed if a person came back from the dead he would have powers to do mighty things.

Matthew 14:3

Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison

"Herod ordered his soldiers to arrest and bind John the Baptist and put him in prison"

Philip's wife

Philip was Herod's brother. Herod had taken Philip's wife to be his own wife.

Matthew 14:4

For John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her as your wife."

"For John had said to Herod that it was not lawful for Herod to have Herodias as his wife."

It is not lawful

Philip was still alive when Herod married Herodias.

Matthew 14:5

would have killed him

"wanted to kill John"

he feared

"Herod feared"

they regarded him

"they regarded John"

Matthew 14:6

in the midst

"in the midst of the guests attending the birthday celebration"

Matthew 14:8

After being instructed by her mother

"After her mother instructed her"

she said

"the daughter of Herodias said to Herod"

platter

a very large plate

Matthew 14:9

The king was grieved by her request

"The king was grieved because she had asked him to kill John"

he ordered that it should be done

"he ordered his men to do what she said"

Matthew 14:11

his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl

"someone brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl"

Matthew 14:12

his disciples

John's disciples"

the corpse

"the dead body"

they went and told Jesus

"the disciples of John went and told Jesus what had happened to John the Baptist"

Matthew 14:13

heard this

"heard what happened to John" or "heard the news about John"

When the crowds heard of it

"When the crowds heard where Jesus had gone" or "When the crowds heard that he had left"

on foot

This means that the people in the crowd were walking.

Matthew 14:15

the disciples came to him

"Jesus's disciples came to him"

the hour has already passed

"the day is already over."

Matthew 14:16

But Jesus said to them

"But Jesus said to his disciples"

Matthew 14:17

five loaves of bread

Loaves of bread are lumps of dough that have been shaped and baked.

Matthew 14:19

He took

"He held in his hands." He did not steal them.

broke the loaves

"tore the loaves"

Matthew 14:20

and were filled

"until they were full" or "until they were no longer hungry"

they took up

"the disciples gathered up" or "some people gathered up"

Matthew 14:24

being tossed about by the waves

"and the disciples could not control the boat because of the large waves"

Matthew 14:25

In the fourth watch of the night

"Just before dawn"

walking on the sea

"walking on top of the water"

Matthew 14:26

ghost

a spirit that has left the body of a person who has died

Matthew 14:30

when Peter saw the strong wind

"when Peter saw that the wind was tossing the waves back and forth" or "when he realized how strong the wind was"

Matthew 14:31

You of little faith, why

"You have so little faith! Why"

why did you doubt?

"you should not have doubted that I could keep you from sinking."

Matthew 14:33

Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Matthew 14:34

When they had crossed over

"When Jesus and his disciples had crossed over the lake"

Gennesaret

This is a small town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 14:36

his garment

"his robe" or "what he was wearing"

were healed

"became well"

Chapter 15

Matthew 15:2

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders?

"Your disciples do not respect the rules that our ancestors have given us."

traditions of the elders

This is not the same as the law of Moses. This refers to later teachings and interpretations of the law given by religious leaders after Moses.

they do not wash their hands

"they do not wash their hands properly"

when they eat bread

"before they eat"

Matthew 15:3

Then why do you violate the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions?

"And I see that you refuse to obey God's commands just so that you can follow what your ancestors taught you!"

Matthew 15:4

He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely die

"The people should execute anyone who speaks evil of his father or mother"

Matthew 15:5

But you say

Here "you" refers to the Pharisees and scribes.

Matthew 15:6

that person does not need to honor his father

The religious leaders taught that a person does not need to show respect to his parents by taking care of them.

you have made void the word of God

"you have treated the word of God as if it were invalid" or "you have ignored God's commands"

for the sake of your traditions

"because you want to follow your traditions"

Matthew 15:7

Well did Isaiah prophesy about you

"Isaiah told the truth in this prophecy about you"

when he said

"when he said what God told him"

Matthew 15:8

This people honors me with their lips

"These people say all the right things to me"

but their heart is far from me

"but they do not really love me"

Matthew 15:9

They worship me in vain

"Their worship means nothing to me" or "They only pretend to worship me"

the commandments of people

"the rules that people make up"

Matthew 15:11

enters into the mouth ... comes out of the mouth

"Things that go into the mouth do not defile a person"

Matthew 15:12

the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement

"this statement made the Pharisees angry" or "the Pharisees became angry when you said that"

Matthew 15:13

Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up

Jesus is teaching that the Pharisees do not actually belong to God, so God will remove them.

my heavenly Father

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. It is best to translate "Father" and "Son" with the same words that your language uses to refer to a human father and a human son.

will be rooted up

"my Father will uproot" or "he will take out of the ground" or "he will remove"

Matthew 15:14

Let them alone

The word "them" refers to the Pharisees.

blind guides ... both will fall into a pit

"they are like blind guides." The Pharisees do not understand God's commands or how to please him.

Matthew 15:16

Are you also still without understanding?

"I am disappointed that you, my disciples, still do not understand what I teach!"

Matthew 15:17

Do you not understand ... into the latrine?

"Surely you understand ... into the latrine."

passes into the stomach

"goes into the stomach"

latrine

This a polite term for the place where people bury body waste.

Matthew 15:18

things that come out of the mouth

"words that a person says"

from the heart

"from inside the person" or "from a person's mind"

Matthew 15:19

murder

the act of killing innocent people

Matthew 15:20

to eat with unwashed hands

"eating without first washing one's hands"

Matthew 15:21

Jesus went away

"Jesus and his disciples went away"

Matthew 15:22

a Canaanite woman came out from that region

"a woman who was from that region and who belonged to the group of people called Canaanites came."

Have mercy on me

"Have mercy and heal my daughter"

Son of David

"Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the woman may have been calling Jesus by this title.

My daughter is severely demon-possessed

"A demon is controlling my daughter terribly" or "A demon is tormenting my daughter severely"

Matthew 15:23

answered her not a word

"said nothing to her"

Matthew 15:24

I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep ... Israel

"I was sent only to the lost sheep ... Israel"

to the lost sheep of the house of Israel

"the people of Israel. They are like lost sheep." See how you translated this in Matthew 10:6.

Matthew 15:25

she came

"the Canaanite woman came"

bowed down before him

This shows that the woman humbled herself before Jesus.

Matthew 15:26

It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs

The basic meaning is that it is not right to take what is supposed to belong to Jews and give it to non-Jews.

the children's bread

"the children's food"

the little dogs

The Jews considered dogs to be unclean animals. Here they are used as an image for non-Jews.

Matthew 15:27

even the little dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables

The woman means non-Jews should be able to have a small amount of the good things Jews are throwing away.

little dogs

Use words here for dogs of any size that people keep as pets.

Matthew 15:28

let it be done

"I will do"

Her daughter was healed

"Jesus healed her daughter" or "Her daughter became well"

from that hour

"at exactly the same time" or "immediately"

Matthew 15:30

lame, blind, mute, and crippled people

"those who could not walk, those who could not see, those who could not talk, and those whose arms or legs did not function"

They presented them at Jesus' feet

"The crowds placed the sick people on the ground in front of Jesus"

Matthew 15:31

the crippled made well

"the crippled persons ... the lame persons ... the blind persons become well"

Matthew 15:33

Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy so large a crowd?

"There is nowhere nearby that we can get enough bread for such a large crowd."

Matthew 15:34

Seven, and a few small fish

"We have seven loaves of bread, and we also have a few small fish"

Matthew 15:36

he broke the loaves

"he tore the loaves"

Matthew 15:37

they gathered

"the disciples gathered" or "some people gathered"

Matthew 15:39

Magadan

This region is sometimes called "Magdala."

Chapter 16

Matthew 16:1

tested him

"challenged him" or "wanted to trap him"

Matthew 16:2

When it is evening

"If the sky is red in the evening" or "If the sky is red when the sun is setting"

fair weather

This means clear, calm, and pleasant weather.

for the sky is red

As the sun is setting, Jews knew that if the color of the sky changes to red, it is a sign the next day will be clear and calm.

Matthew 16:3

When it is morning

"If the sky is red in the morning" or "If the sky is red when the sun is rising"

foul weather

"cloudy, stormy weather"

You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky

"You know how to look at the sky and understand what kind of weather you will have"

but you cannot interpret the signs of the times

"but you do not know how to look at what is happening right now and understand what it means"

Matthew 16:4

An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign ... given to it

"You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you"

An evil and adulterous generation

"An unfaithful generation" or "A godless generation"

no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah

"The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"

the sign of Jonah

"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah."

Matthew 16:6

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Translate as "yeast" here and do not explain its meaning in your translation. This meaning will be made clear in 16:12.

Matthew 16:8

why do you reason ... taken no bread?

"I am disappointed that you think it was because you forgot to bring bread that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Matthew 16:9

Do you not understand? Do you not remember ... you gathered up?

"Surely you understand and remember ... you gathered up!" or "You should understand. You should remember ... you gathered up."

Matthew 16:10

Or the seven loaves ... you took up?

"Surely you also remember the seven loaves ... you took up!"

Matthew 16:11

How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread?

"You should have understood that I was not really speaking about bread."

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Here “yeast” represents evil ideas and wrong teaching. Translate as “yeast” and do not explain the meaning in your translation.

Matthew 16:13

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself.

Matthew 16:16

the Son of the living God

This is an important title for Jesus that shows his relationship to God.

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act.

Matthew 16:17

flesh and blood have not revealed

"a human did not reveal"

but my Father who is in heaven

"but it was my Father in heaven who revealed this to you"

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate “Father” with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 16:18

you are Peter

The name Peter means "rock."

upon this rock I will build my church

Possible meanings are 1) “this rock” represents Peter, or 2) “this rock” represents the truth that Peter had just said in Matthew 16:16

The gates of Hades will not prevail against it

Possible meanings are 1) “the powers of death will not overcome my church” or 2) “my church will break down the power of death the way an army breaks into a city.”

Matthew 16:19

I will give to you

Here the word “you” refers to Peter.

the keys of the kingdom of heaven

Keys are objects that are used to lock or unlock doors. Here they represent authority.

the kingdom of heaven

This refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation.

Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven

“God in heaven will approve whenever you forbid or allow something on earth”

Matthew 16:21

suffer many things at the hands of the elders ... scribes

"suffer many things because of the elders ... scribes"

scribes, be killed, and be raised back to life on the third day

"scribes. People will then kill him, and on the third day God will make him become alive again"

Matthew 16:22

Peter took him aside

"Peter spoke to Jesus when no one else could hear them"

May this be far from you

"No" or "Never" or "May God forbid this"

Matthew 16:23

Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me

"Get behind me, because you are acting like Satan! You are a stumbling block to me" or "Get behind me, Satan! I call you Satan because you are a stumbling block to me"

Get behind me

"Get away from me"

you do not think about the things of God, but about the things of people

"you do not think about what God thinks is important; instead, you only think about the things that people think are important"

Matthew 16:24

to follow me

"to be my disciple" or "to be one of my disciples"

must deny himself

"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"

take up his cross, and follow me

"and obey me even to the point of suffering and dying" or "and he must obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"

and follow me

"and obey me"

Matthew 16:25

whoever loses his life for my sake

This does not mean the person must necessarily die. It means he will consider obeying Jesus as being more important than his own life. Alternate translation: "whoever gives up his life for my sake"

for my sake

"because he trusts me" or "on my account" or "because of me"

will find it

"will find true life"

Matthew 16:26

For what does it profit a person ... his life?

"It does not profit a person ... his life."

if he gains the whole world

"if he gains everything he desires"

but forfeits his life

"but he loses his life"

What can a person give in exchange for his life?

"There is nothing that a person can give to regain his life."

Matthew 16:27

the Son of Man ... his Father ... Then he

"I, the Son of man ... my Father ... Then I"

will come in the glory of his Father

"will come, having the same glory as my Father"

with his angels

"and the angels will be with him" or "and the angels will be with me"

his Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and the Son of Man, Jesus.

according to his deeds

"according to what that person has done"

Matthew 16:28

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

will not taste death

"will not experience death" or "will not die"

until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom

"until they see the Son of Man coming as King" or "until they see the evidence that the Son of Man is King"

Chapter 17

Matthew 17:2

He was transfigured before them

When they looked at him, his appearance was different from what it had been.

his garments

"what he was wearing"

Matthew 17:5

overshadowed them

"came over them"

there was a voice out of the cloud

"God spoke to them from out of the cloud"

Matthew 17:6

the disciples heard it

"the disciples heard God speak"

Matthew 17:8

they ... saw no one except Jesus only

"they ... saw only Jesus"

Matthew 17:9

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 17:10

Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

The disciples are referring to the belief that Elijah will come back to life and return to the people of Israel before the Messiah comes.

Matthew 17:11

restore all things

"put things in order" or "get the people ready to receive the Messiah"

Matthew 17:12

they ... their

All occurrences of these words may mean either 1) the Jewish leaders or 2) all the Jewish people.

the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands

"they will make the Son of Man suffer"

the Son of Man will

"I, the Son of Man, will"

Matthew 17:15

have mercy on my son

"have mercy on my son and heal him"

is epileptic

"has seizures"

Matthew 17:17

Unbelieving and perverse generation, how

"This generation does not believe in God and loves to do evil rather than good. How"

how long will I have to stay with you? How long must I bear with you?

"I am tired of being with you! I am tired of your unbelief and corruption!"

Matthew 17:18

the boy was healed

"the boy became well"

from that hour

"immediately" or "at that moment"

Matthew 17:19

Why could we not cast it out?

"Why could we not make the demon come out of the boy?"

Matthew 17:20

For I truly say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

if you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed

A mustard seed is very small, but it grows into a large plant. Jesus means it only takes a small amount of faith to do a great miracle.

nothing will be impossible for you

"you will be able to do anything"

Matthew 17:22

The Son of Man will be given over into the hands of people

"Someone will give the Son of man over into the hands of people" or "Someone will take the Son of Man and put him under people's power"

The Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

into the hands of people

"to the control of the people" or "to the people"

Matthew 17:23

him ... he

Jesus is referring to himself

he will be raised up

"God will raise him up" or "God will cause him to become alive again"

deeply grieved

very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies.

Matthew 17:24

When they

"When Jesus and his disciples"

the two-drachma tax

"the temple tax"

Matthew 17:25

What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tolls or taxes? From their sons or from others?

""Listen, Simon. When kings collect taxes, they collect it from people who are not members of their own family. Do you agree that this is true?"

their sons

"their own family" or "the people of their own country"

Matthew 17:26

"From others," Peter answered

""Yes, that is true,' Peter said" or "Peter said that he agreed with Jesus"

the sons

"their own family" or "the people of their own country"

Matthew 17:27

But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to stumble, go

"But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to think that we do something that is very bad"

throw in a hook

Fishermen tied hooks to the end of a line, then threw it in the water to catch fish.

its mouth

"the fish's mouth"

a shekel

a silver coin worth four days' wages

for me and you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Peter. Each man had to pay a half shekel tax. So one shekel would be enough for Jesus and Peter to pay their taxes.

Chapter 18

Matthew 18:1

Who is greatest

"Who is the most important" or "Who among us will be the most important"

in the kingdom of heaven

"in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:3

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

unless you turn ... children, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven

"you will enter the kingdom of heaven only if you turn ... children"

enter the kingdom of heaven

"enter God's kingdom" or "belong to our God in heaven when he establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:4

is the greatest

"is the most important" or "will be the most important"

in the kingdom of heaven

"in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:5

in my name

"because of me" or "because he is my disciple"

Whoever ... in my name receives me

"When someone ... in my name, it is like he is welcoming me" or "When someone ... in my name, it is as if he were welcoming me"

Matthew 18:6

millstone

"a heavy stone"

Matthew 18:7

to the world

"to the people of the world"

stumbling blocks ... those stumbling blocks come ... the person through whom those stumbling blocks come

"things that cause people to sin ... things come that cause people to sin ... any person who causes others to sin"

Matthew 18:8

If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you

Jesus exaggerates here to emphasize that people must do anything necessary to remove from their lives what causes them to sin.

causes you to stumble

"causes you to sin"

than to be thrown into the eternal fire having two hands or two feet

"than to have both hands and feet when God throws you into the eternal fire"

Matthew 18:9

into life

"into eternal life"

than to be thrown into the fiery hell having both eyes

"than to have both eyes when God throws you into the fiery hell"

the fiery hell

"hell, which is full of fire" or "the fire of hell"

Matthew 18:10

See that

"Be careful that" or "Be sure that"

you do not despise any of these little ones

"you show respect to these little ones"

that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven

Jesus means that the most important angels speak to God about these little ones.

always look on the face of my Father

"are always close to my Father" or "are always in the presence of my Father"

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

Matthew 18:12

What do you think?

"Think about how people act." or "Think about this."

does he not leave ... astray?

"he will always leave ... astray."

Matthew 18:13

truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 18:14

it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish

"your Father in heaven does not want any of these little ones to die" or "your Father in heaven does not want even one of these little ones to die"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 18:15

your brother

"your fellow believer"

you will have gained your brother

"you will have made your relationship with your brother good again"

Matthew 18:16

so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be confirmed

"so that two or three witnesses may say that what you say about your brother is true"

Matthew 18:17

if he refuses to listen to them

"if your fellow believer refuses to listen to the witnesses who came with you"

to the church

"to the whole community of believers"

let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector

"treat him as you would treat a pagan or tax collector."

Matthew 18:18

I tell you truly

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.))

whatever things you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven

"God in heaven will bind whatever you bind on earth and loose whatever you loose" or "God in heaven will approve whatever you forbid or allow on earth"

Matthew 18:19

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 18:20	released him
two or three	"let him go"
"two or more" or "at least two."	Matthew 18:28
in my name	one hundred denarii
"because of me" or "because they are my disciples"	"one hundred days' wages"
Matthew 18:22	Matthew 18:29
seventy times seven	and pleaded with him
Possible meanings are 1) "70 times 7" or 2) "77 times." If using a number would be confusing, you can translate it as "more times than you can count" or "you must always forgive him."	"and begged him"
Matthew 18:23	Matthew 18:30
to settle accounts with his servants	he went and threw him into prison
"his servants to pay him what they owed him" or "to have his servants tell him what they had done with the goods he had entrusted to them"	"the first servant went and threw his fellow servant into prison"
Matthew 18:24	Matthew 18:31
As he began the settling	told their master
"As he began to settle the accounts"	"told the king"
one servant was brought	deeply grieved
"someone brought one of the king's servants"	very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies.
ten thousand talents	Matthew 18:32
"10,000 very valuable coins" or "10,000 bags of gold" or "a huge amount of money"	you pleaded with me
Matthew 18:25	"you begged me"
his master commanded him to be sold ... and payment to be made	Matthew 18:33
"the king commanded his servants to sell the man ... and to pay the debt with the money from the sale"	Should you not have ... you?
Matthew 18:27	"You should have ... you!"
he was moved with compassion	Matthew 18:34
"he felt compassion for the servant"	His master
	"The king"

handed him over to the torturers

Matthew 18:35

“he ordered his servants to give him over to those who would torture him”

my heavenly Father

that was owed

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

“all that he owed”

from your heart

"sincerely" or "completely"

Chapter 19

Matthew 19:1

It came about that when he had finished these words

"When" or "After" he "had finished teaching these things"

departed from

"walked away from" or "left"

Matthew 19:3

came to him

"came to Jesus"

testing him, saying to him

"and challenged him by asking him" or "and wanted to trap him by asking him"

Matthew 19:4

Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female?

"Surely you have read that in the beginning when God created people he made them male and female."

Matthew 19:5

He who made them also said, 'For this reason ... flesh.'

"And surely you know that God also said that for this reason ... flesh."

For this reason

This is a part of the quotation from Genesis story about Adam and Eve. In that context the reason a man will leave his father and mother is because God created a woman to be the man's companion.

join to his wife

"stay close to his wife" or "live with his wife"

the two will become one flesh

"they will become like one person"

Matthew 19:6

So they are no longer two, but one flesh

"So a husband and wife are no longer like two persons, but they are like one person"

Matthew 19:7

They said to him

"The Pharisees said to Jesus"

command us

"command us Jews"

certificate of divorce

This is a document that legally ends the marriage.

Matthew 19:8

For your hardness of heart

"Because of your stubbornness" or "Because you are stubborn"

your hardness ... allowed you ... your wives

Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees, but Moses gave this command many years earlier to their ancestors. Moses's command applied to all Jewish men in general.

from the beginning

Here "beginning" refers to when God first created man and woman.

Matthew 19:9

marries another

"marries another woman"

Matthew 19:11

to whom it is given

"to whom God gives it" or "whom God enables to follow it"

Matthew 19:12

there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men

"there are men whom other men have made eunuchs"

eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs

Possible meanings are 1) "men who have made themselves eunuchs by removing their private parts" or 2) "men who choose to remain unmarried and sexually pure."

for the sake of the kingdom of heaven

"so they can better serve our God in heaven"

Matthew 19:13

some little children were brought to him

"some people brought little children to Jesus"

Matthew 19:14

for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such ones

"for when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth, he will be king over such as these" or "for God will allow such as these into his kingdom"

belongs to such ones

"belongs to those who are like children." This means those who are humble like children will enter God's kingdom.

Matthew 19:16

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Matthew 19:17

Why do you ask me about what is good?

"You ask me about what is good" or "Think about why you ask me about what is good."

Only one is good

"God alone is completely good"

to enter into life

"to receive eternal life"

Matthew 19:19

love your neighbor as yourself

"love every other person as much as you love yourself"

Matthew 19:21

If you wish

"If you want"

to the poor

"to those who are poor"

you will have treasure in heaven

"God will reward you in heaven"

Matthew 19:23

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

to enter the kingdom of heaven

"to accept our God in heaven as their king" or "to enter God's kingdom"

Matthew 19:24

it is easier ... kingdom of God

Jesus uses an exaggeration to illustrate how very difficult it is for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.

the eye of a needle

the hole near one end of a needle, through which thread is passed

Matthew 19:25

they were very astonished

"the disciples were amazed." because they believed having riches was proof that God approved of someone.

Who then can be saved?

"Then there is no one whom God will save!" or "Then there is no one who will receive eternal life!"

Matthew 19:27

we have left everything

"we have left all our wealth" or "we have given up all our possessions"

What then will we have?

"What good thing will God give us?"

Matthew 19:28

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

in the new age

"at the time when God makes all things new"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

sits on his glorious throne

"sits as king on his glorious throne" or "rules gloriously as king"

sit upon twelve thrones

"sit as kings on 12 thrones"

the twelve tribes of Israel

"the people of the 12 tribes of Israel"

Matthew 19:29

for my name's sake

"because of me" or "because he believes in me"

receive one hundred times as much

"receive from God 100 times as many good things as they gave up"

will inherit eternal life

"God will cause them to live forever."

Matthew 19:30

But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first

"But many who seem to be important now will be the least important, and many who seem to be unimportant now will be very important"

Chapter 20

Matthew 20:1

For the kingdom of heaven is like

This is the beginning of a parable.

Matthew 20:2

After he had agreed

"After the landowner had agreed"

one denarius

"one day's wages"

Matthew 20:3

He went out again

"The landowner went out again"

the third hour

The third hour is around nine in the morning.

standing idle in the marketplace

"standing in the marketplace not doing anything" or
"standing in the marketplace with no work to do"

marketplace

a large, open-air area where people buy and sell food
and other items

Matthew 20:5

Again he went out

"Again the landowner went out"

the sixth hour and again the ninth hour

The sixth hour is around noon. The ninth hour is
around three in the afternoon.

did the same

This means the landowner went to the marketplace
and hired workers.

Matthew 20:6

the eleventh hour

This is about five in the afternoon.

standing idle

"not doing anything" or "not having any work"

Matthew 20:8

beginning from the last to the first

"beginning with the workers who started working last,
then the workers who started working earlier, and
finally the workers who started working first" or "first
paying the workers I hired last, then paying the
workers I hired earlier in the day, and finally paying
the workers I hired first"

Matthew 20:9

who had been hired

"whom the landowner hired"

Matthew 20:10

one denarius

"one day's wages"

Matthew 20:11

When they received

"When the workers who had worked the longest
received"

Matthew 20:12

you have made them equal to us

"you have paid them the same amount of money as you
paid us"

we who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat

"we who have worked the entire day, even during the
hottest part"

Matthew 20:13

one of them

"one of the workers who had worked the longest"

Friend

Use a word that one man would use to address another man whom he is politely rebuking.

Did you not agree with me for one denarius?

"We already agreed that I would give you one denarius."

one denarius

"one day's wages"

Matthew 20:15

Is it not lawful for me to do as I want with what belongs to me?

"It is lawful for me to do what I want with my own possessions."

Is it not lawful for me

"Do I not have the right" or "Is it not proper."

Or are you envious because I am good?

"You should not be envious because I am generous."

Matthew 20:16

So the last will be first, and the first last

"So those who seem to be unimportant now will be the most important, and those who seem to be the most important now will be the least important"

Matthew 20:17

going up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was on top of a hill, so people had to travel up to get there.

Matthew 20:18

See, we are going

Jesus uses the word "See" to tell the disciples they must pay attention to what he is about to tell them.

the Son of Man will be given over

"someone will give the Son of Man over"

Son of Man ... him

Jesus is referring to himself.

They will condemn

The chief priests and scribes will condemn Jesus.

Matthew 20:19

and will deliver him to the Gentiles for them to mock

The chief priests and scribes will deliver Jesus to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles will mock him.

to flog

"to whip him" or "to beat him with whips"

him ... him ... he

Jesus is referring to himself

he will be raised up

"God will raise him up" or "God will make him alive again"

Matthew 20:20

the sons of Zebedee

This refers to James and John.

Matthew 20:21

at your right hand ... at your left hand

These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor.

in your kingdom

"when you are king"

Matthew 20:22

You do not know

Here "you" is plural and refers to the mother and the sons.

Are you able

Here "you" is plural, but Jesus is only talking to the two sons.

drink the cup that I am about to drink

"suffer what I am about to suffer"

They said

"The sons of Zebedee said" or "James and John said"

Matthew 20:23

My cup you will indeed drink

"You will indeed suffer as I will suffer"

right hand ... left hand

These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor.

but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father

"for my Father has prepared those places, and he will give them to whom he chooses"

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 20:24

they were very angry with the two brothers

"the other disciples were very angry with the two brothers because each of them also wanted to sit in a place of honor next to Jesus"

Matthew 20:25

called them

"called the twelve disciples"

the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them

"the Gentile kings forcefully rule over their people"

their important men

"the important men among the Gentiles"

exercise authority over them

"have control over the people"

Matthew 20:27

to be first

"to be important"

Matthew 20:28

the Son of Man ... his life

Jesus is speaking about himself.

did not come to be served

"did not come so that other people would serve him" or "did not come so that other people would serve me"

but to serve

"but to serve other people"

to give his life as a ransom for many

"to give his life as a substitute for many" or "to give his life as a substitute to set many free"

to give his life

"to die"

for many

"for many people"

Matthew 20:30

When they heard

"When the two blind men heard"

Son of David

"Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the men were probably calling Jesus by this title.

Matthew 20:32

called to them

"called to the blind men"

do you wish

"do you want"

Matthew 20:33

that our eyes may be opened

"we want you to open our eyes" or "we want to be able to see"

Matthew 20:34

being moved with compassion

"having compassion" or "feeling compassion for them"

Chapter 21

Matthew 21:1

Bethphage

This is a village near Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:2

a donkey tied up

"a donkey that someone has tied up to a post or a tree"

colt

young male donkey

Matthew 21:4

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus's actions fulfilled scripture.

all this happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet

"this happened so that Jesus would fulfill what God spoke through the prophet Zechariah"

Matthew 21:5

the daughter of Zion

"the people of Zion" or "the people who live in Zion"

Zion

This is another name for Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:7

cloaks

These were outer clothing or long coats.

Matthew 21:8

crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches off the trees and spread them in the road

These are ways to show honor to Jesus as he was entering Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:9

the son of David

"Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the crowd was probably calling Jesus by this title.

in the name of the Lord

"in the power of the Lord" or "as the representative of the Lord"

Hosanna in the highest

"Praise God, who is in the highest heaven" or "Praise be to God"

Matthew 21:10

all the city was stirred

"many people from all over the city were excited"

Matthew 21:12

Jesus entered the temple

Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.

who bought and sold

Merchants were selling animals and other items that travelers bought to offer the proper sacrifices at the temple.

Matthew 21:13

He said to them

"Jesus said to those who were changing money and buying and selling things"

It is written

"The prophets wrote long ago" or "God said long ago"

My house

Here "My" refers to God and "house" refers to the temple.

a house of prayer

"a place where people pray"

a den of robbers

"like a place where robbers hide"

Matthew 21:14

lame

those who have an injured foot or leg that makes walking difficult

Matthew 21:15

Hosanna

This word means "save us" but can also mean "praise God!" See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.

the Son of David

"Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the children were probably calling Jesus by this title. See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.

they became very angry

"they became very angry because people were praising him"

Matthew 21:16

Do you hear what they are saying?

"You should not allow them to say these things about you!"

But have you never read ... praise'?

"Yes, I hear them, but you should remember what you read in the scriptures ... praise."

Out of the mouths of little children and nursing infants you have prepared praise

"You prepared little children and nursing infants to give praise to God"

Matthew 21:18

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus is hungry and that is why he stops at the fig tree.

Matthew 21:19

he ... found nothing on it except leaves

"he ... found only leaves on it"

withered

died and dried up

Matthew 21:20

How did the fig tree immediately wither away?

"We are astonished that the fig tree has dried up so quickly!"

Matthew 21:21

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

if you have faith and do not doubt

"if you truly believe"

you will even say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,'

"you will even be able to tell this mountain to get up and throw itself into the sea,"

it will be done

"it will happen"

Matthew 21:23

had come into the temple

It is implied that Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.

these things

This refers to Jesus teaching and healing in the temple. It probably also refers to Jesus driving out the buyers and sellers the previous day.

Matthew 21:25

from where did it come?

"where did he get the authority to do that?"

If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

"If we say that we believe John received his authority from heaven, then Jesus will ask us why we did not believe John."

From heaven

"from God in heaven"

Why then did you not believe him?

"Then you should have believed John the Baptist"

Matthew 21:26

But if we say, 'From men,'

"But if we say that we believe John received his authority from men,"

we fear the crowd

"we fear what the crowd would think or even do to us"

they all view John as a prophet

"they believe John is a prophet"

Matthew 21:28

But what do you think?

"Tell me what you think about what I am about to tell you."

Matthew 21:31

They said

"The chief priests and elders said"

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to the chief priests and elders"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

the tax collectors and the prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God before you do

"when God establishes his rule on earth, he will agree to bless the tax collectors and prostitutes by ruling over them before he agrees to do that for you"

before you do

Possible meanings are 1) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes sooner than he will accept the Jewish religious leaders, or 2) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes instead of the Jewish religious leaders.

Matthew 21:32

John came to you

"John came to the people of Israel"

in the way of righteousness

"and told you the way God wants you to live"

Matthew 21:33

a hedge

"a wall" or "a fence"

dug a winepress in it

"dug a hole in the vineyard in which to press the grapes"

rented it out to vine growers

The owner still owned the vineyard, but he allowed the vine growers to take care of it. When the grapes became ripe, they were to give some of them to the owner and keep the rest.

Matthew 21:34

to collect his fruit

The landowner expected the vine growers pay him for allowing them to use the vineyard by giving him some of the fruit they had grown.

Matthew 21:35

his servants

"the landowner's servants"

Matthew 21:40

Now

The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but it is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Matthew 21:41

They said to him

"The people said to Jesus."

He will violently destroy those wicked people

"He will bring those wicked people to a miserable end" or "He will make those evil people die in misery"

Matthew 21:42

Did you never read ... eyes'?

"Think about what you have read ... eyes."

The stone which the builders rejected has been made the cornerstone

Jesus is quoting from the Psalms. This is a metaphor that means the religious leaders, like builders, will

reject Jesus, but God will make him the most important in his kingdom, like the cornerstone in a building.

has been made the cornerstone

"has become the cornerstone"

This was from the Lord

"The Lord has caused this great change"

it is marvelous in our eyes

"it is wonderful to see"

Matthew 21:43

I say to you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders who had rejected him.

the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that produces its fruits

"God will take his kingdom away from you and will give it to a nation that produces the kingdom's fruits" or "God will reject you, and he will be king over people from other nations that produce the kingdom's fruits"

that produces its fruits

"that produces good results"

Matthew 21:44

Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces

"This stone will break into pieces anyone who falls on it"

But anyone on whom it falls will be crushed

This means the Christ will have the final judgment and will destroy everyone who rebels against him.

Chapter 22

Matthew 22:1

to them

"to the people"

Matthew 22:3

those who had been invited

"the people the king had invited"

Matthew 22:4

servants, saying, "Tell them who are invited, "See ... feast."

"servants, ordering them to tell those whom he invited, 'See ... feast.'"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

My oxen and fattened cattle have been killed

"My servants have killed and cooked my oxen and my fattened cattle"

Matthew 22:8

those who were invited

"those whom I invited"

Matthew 22:9

the highway crossings

"where the main roads of the city cross." The king is sending the servants to the place where they are most likely to find people.

Matthew 22:10

both bad and good

"both the good people and the bad people"

So the wedding hall was filled with guests

"So the guests filled the wedding hall"

Matthew 22:12

how did you come in here without wedding clothes?

"you are not wearing proper clothes for a wedding. You should not be here."

Matthew 22:13

Bind this man hand and foot

"Tie him up so that he cannot move his hands or feet"

the outer darkness

"the dark place away from God"

weeping and the grinding of teeth

"weeping and expressing their extreme suffering"

Matthew 22:14

For many people are called, but few are chosen

"For God invites many people, but he only chooses a few"

Matthew 22:15

how they might entrap Jesus in his own talk

"how they could cause Jesus to say something wrong so they could arrest him"

Matthew 22:16

Herodians

These were officials and followers of the Jewish king Herod. He was friends with Roman authorities.

you do not show partiality between people

"you do not show special honor to anyone" or "you do not consider anyone more important than anyone else"

Matthew 22:17

to pay taxes to Caesar

"to pay the taxes that Caesar requires"

Matthew 22:18

Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?

"Do not test me, you hypocrites!" or "I know that you hypocrites are only trying to test me!"

Matthew 22:19

denarius

This was a Roman coin worth one day's wages.

Matthew 22:20

to them

Here "them" refers to the Herodians and the disciples of the Pharisees.

Whose image and name are these?

"Tell me whose image and name you see on this coin."

Matthew 22:21

Caesar's

"The coin has Caesar's image and name on it"

things that are Caesar's

"things that belong to Caesar"

things that are God's

"things that belong to God"

Matthew 22:24

Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies ... brother.'

"Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies ...brother."

his brother ... his wife ... his brother

Here "his" refers to the dead man.

Matthew 22:26

the second ... the third ... the seventh

"the next oldest ... the next oldest ... the youngest" or "his oldest younger brother ... that brother's oldest younger brother ... the youngest"

Matthew 22:27

After them all

"After every brother had died"

Matthew 22:28

Now

Here the Sadducees shift from the story about the seven brothers to their actual question.

in the resurrection

"when dead people come back to life"

Matthew 22:29

You are mistaken

"You are mistaken about the resurrection"

the power of God

"what God is able to do"

Matthew 22:30

in the resurrection

"when dead people rise back to life"

they neither marry

"people will not marry"

nor are given in marriage

"nor will people give their children in marriage"

Matthew 22:31

have you not read

"you have read"

what was spoken to you by God

"what God spoke to you"

Matthew 22:32

'I am the God of ... Jacob'

"that he is the God of ... Jacob"

of the dead, but of the living

"of dead people, but he is the God of living people"

Matthew 22:37

with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind

These three phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." Here "heart" and "soul" refer to a person's inner being.

Matthew 22:38

the great and first commandment

Here "great" and "first" mean the same thing. They emphasize that this is the most important commandment.

Matthew 22:39

your neighbor

Here "neighbor" means more than just those who live nearby. Jesus means a person must love all people.

Matthew 22:40

On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets

"Everything that Moses and the prophets wrote in the scriptures is based on these two commandments"

Matthew 22:42

son ... son of David

In both of these "son" means "descendant."

Matthew 22:43

How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord

"Then, tell me why David in the Spirit calls him Lord"

David in the Spirit

"David, whom the Holy Spirit is inspiring." This means the Holy Spirit is influencing what David says.

call him

Here "him" refers to the Christ, who is also the descendant of David.

Matthew 22:44

The Lord said

Here "Lord" refers to God the Father.

to my Lord

Here "Lord" refers to the Christ. Also, "my" refers to David. This means the Christ is superior to David.

Sit at my right hand

"Sit in the place of honor beside me"

until I make your enemies your footstool

"until I conquer your enemies" or "until I make your enemies bow down before you"

Matthew 22:45

If David then calls the Christ

David referred to Jesus as "Lord" because Jesus was not only a descendant of David, but he was also superior to him.

Matthew 22:46

to answer him a word

"to answer him anything" or "to answer him"

Chapter 23

Matthew 23:2

sit in Moses' seat

"have authority as Moses had" or "have authority to say what the law of Moses means"

Matthew 23:3

whatever ... do these things and observe them

"all the things ... do them and observe them"

Matthew 23:4

they bind heavy burdens that are difficult to carry, and then they put them on people's shoulders. But they themselves will not move a finger to carry them

"they make you obey many rules that are difficult to follow. But they do nothing at all to help you follow the rules"

Matthew 23:5

They do all their deeds to be seen by people

"They do all their deeds so that people can see what they do"

For they make their phylacteries wide, and they enlarge the edges of their garments

Both of these are things the Pharisees do to appear as if they honor God more than other people.

phylacteries

small leather boxes containing paper with scripture written on it

they enlarge the edges of their garments

The Pharisees made the tassels on the bottom of their robes especially long to show their devotion to God.

Matthew 23:6

places of honor ... chief seats

Both of these are the places where the most important people sit.

Matthew 23:7

to be called 'Rabbi' by people.

"for people to call them 'Rabbi.'"

Matthew 23:8

But you must not be called

"But you must not let anyone call you"

you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to all of Jesus's followers.

all of you are brothers

Here "brothers" means "fellow believers."

Matthew 23:9

call no man on earth your father

"do not call any man on earth your father" or "do not say that any man on earth is your father"

you have only one Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 23:10

Neither must you be called

"Also, do not let anyone call you"

you have only one teacher, the Christ

"I, the Christ, am your only teacher"

Matthew 23:11

he who is greatest among you

"the person who is most important among you"

among you

Here "you" is plural and refers to Jesus's followers.

Matthew 23:12

will be humbled

"God will humble"

will be exalted

"God will make important" or "God will honor"

Matthew 23:13

But woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.

You shut the kingdom of heaven against people ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so

"You make it impossible for people to enter the kingdom of heaven ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so" or "You prevent people from accepting God, who lives in heaven, as king ... you do not accept him as king ... and you make it impossible for those about to accept him as king to do so"

Matthew 23:15

you go over sea and land

"you travel great distances"

to make one convert

"to make one person accept your religion"

son of hell

"person who belongs in hell" or "person who should go to hell"

Matthew 23:16

by the temple, it is nothing

"by the temple does not have to keep his oath"

is bound to his oath

"must do what he promised to do"

Matthew 23:17

blind fools

The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.

Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy?

"The temple that has dedicated the gold to God is more important than the gold!"

the temple that makes the gold holy

"the temple that makes the gold belong to God alone"

Matthew 23:18

it is nothing

"he does not have to do what he has sworn to do" or "he does not have to keep his oath"

the gift

This is an animal or grain that a person would bring to God by putting it on God's altar.

is bound to his oath

"must do what he promised to do"

Matthew 23:19

Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy?

"The altar that makes the gift holy is greater than the gift!"

the altar that makes the gift holy

"the altar that makes the gift special to God"

Matthew 23:21

the one who lives in it

The one who lives in the temple is God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 23:22

him who sits on it

The one who sits on the throne is God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 23:23

Woe to you ... hypocrites!

"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!"

mint and dill and cumin

These are various leaves and seeds people used to make food taste good.

But these you ought to have done

"You ought to have obeyed these more important laws"

and not to have left the other undone

"and to make sure the other is done" or "and to make sure to do the other"

Matthew 23:24

you who strain out a gnat but swallow a camel

"you are as foolish as a person who strains out a small flying insect that falls into his drink but swallows a camel"

strain out a gnat

This means to pour a liquid through a cloth to remove a gnat from a drink.

Matthew 23:25

Woe to you ... hypocrites!

"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!"

For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence

The scribes and Pharisees appear pure on the outside to others, but on the inside they are wicked.

they are full of robbery and self-indulgence

"they take what belongs to others, and they do almost everything to benefit themselves"

Matthew 23:26

You blind Pharisee

The Pharisees were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.

Clean first the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may become clean also

If they would become pure in their inner being, then the result is that they would be pure on the outside as well.

Matthew 23:27

you are like whitewashed tombs ... unclean

The scribes and Pharisees may appear to be pure on the outside, but they are wicked on the inside.

whitewashed tombs

"tombs that someone has painted white." The Jews would paint tombs white so that people would easily see them and avoid touching them. Touching a tomb would make a person ceremonially unclean.

Matthew 23:29

of the righteous

"of the righteous people"

Matthew 23:30

in the days of our fathers

"during the time of our forefathers"

we would not have been partners with them

"we would not have joined with them"

shedding the blood of

"killing" or "murdering"

Matthew 23:31

sons of those who murdered the prophets

"just like those who murdered the prophets."

Matthew 23:32

You also fill up the measure of your fathers

"You also finish the sins your ancestors began"

Matthew 23:33

You serpents, you offspring of vipers

"You who are as evil and dangerous as poisonous snakes"

offspring of vipers

Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of."

how will you escape the judgment of hell?

"there is no way for you to escape the judgment of hell!"

Matthew 23:34

I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes

"I will send prophets, wise men, and scribes to you"

chase from city to city

"chase from city to city and persecute them" or
"persecute them in city after city"

Matthew 23:35

upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth

"God will punish you for the murders of all the righteous people

Abel ... Zechariah

Abel was the first righteous victim of murder, and Zechariah, who was murdered by Jews in the temple, was probably thought to be the last. These two men represent all the righteous people who have been murdered.

Zechariah

This Zechariah is unknown. He was not the father of John the Baptist.

whom you murdered

Jesus does not mean the people to whom he is speaking actually murdered Zechariah. He means their ancestors did.

Matthew 23:36

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 23:37

Jerusalem, Jerusalem

Jesus speaks to the people of Jerusalem as though they were the city itself.

those who are sent to you

"those whom God sends to you"

your children

"your people" or "your inhabitants"

just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings

This emphasizes Jesus's love for the people and how he wanted to take care of them.

hen

a female chicken. You can translate with any bird that protects her children under her wing.

Matthew 23:38

your house is left to you desolate

"God will leave your house, and it will be empty"

your house

Possible meanings are 1) "the city of Jerusalem" or 2) "the temple."

Matthew 23:39

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord

"He who comes in the power of the Lord is blessed" or
"He who comes as the representative of the Lord will
be blessed"

Chapter 24

Matthew 24:2

Do you not see all these things?

"Let me tell you something about all these buildings."

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

not one stone will be left on another that will not be torn down

"when the enemy soldiers come, they will tear down every stone in these buildings"

Matthew 24:3

What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age

"What will be the sign that you are about to come and that the world is about to end"

Matthew 24:4

Be careful that no one leads you astray

"Be careful that no one deceives you"

Matthew 24:5

many will come in my name

"many will claim to have my authority as Christ"

will lead many astray

"will deceive many people"

Matthew 24:6

See that you are not troubled

"Do not let these things trouble you"

Matthew 24:7

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom

Jesus is emphasizing that people everywhere will fight each other.

Matthew 24:8

the beginning of birth pains

Wars, famines, and earthquakes are just the beginning of the events that will lead to the end of the age.

Matthew 24:9

they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you

"people will give you over to the authorities, who will make you suffer and will kill you."

You will be hated by all the nations

"People from every nation will hate you"

for my name's sake

"because you believe in me"

Matthew 24:11

will rise up

"will come"

and lead many astray

"and deceive many people"

Matthew 24:12

lawlessness will increase

"disobeying the law will increase" or "people will disobey God's law more and more"

the love of many will grow cold

Possible meanings are 1) "many people will no longer love other people" or 2) "many people will no longer love God."

Matthew 24:13

the one who endures to the end will be saved

"God will save the person who endures to the end"

the one who endures

"the person who stays faithful"

the end

"the end of the world" or "the end of the age"

Matthew 24:14

This good news of the kingdom will be preached

"People will tell the good news that God will rule"

all the nations

"all people in all places"

Matthew 24:15

the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet

"the shameful one who defiles the things of God, about whom Daniel the prophet wrote"

let the reader understand

This is not Jesus speaking. Matthew added this to alert the reader that Jesus was using words that they would need to think about and interpret.

Matthew 24:19

in those days

"at that time"

Matthew 24:20

that your flight will not occur

"that you will not have to flee" or "that you will not have to run away"

the winter

"the cold season"

Matthew 24:22

Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved

"If God had not shortened the time of suffering, everyone would have died" or "Because God shortened those days, some people lived"

no flesh

"nobody" or "no one."

those days will be shortened

"God will shorten the time of suffering"

Matthew 24:23

do not believe it

"do not believe the false thing they have said to you"

Matthew 24:24

so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect

"so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect" or "so as to deceive people. If possible, they would even deceive the elect"

Matthew 24:26

if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do

"if someone tells you that the Christ is in the wilderness, do"

Or, 'See, he is in the inner rooms,'

"Or, if someone tells you that the Christ is in the inner room,"

in the inner rooms

"in a secret room" or "in secret places"

Matthew 24:27

as the lightning shines ... so will be the coming

This means that the Son of Man will come very quickly and will be easy to see.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 24:28

Wherever a dead animal is, there the vultures will gather

Possible meanings are 1) when the Son of Man comes, everyone will see him and know that he has come, or 2)

wherever spiritually dead people are, false prophets will be there to tell them lies.

vultures

birds that eat the bodies of dead or dying creatures

Matthew 24:29

immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun

"as soon as the that time of suffering of those days has finished, the sun"

the sun will be darkened

"God will make the sun dark"

the powers of the heavens will be shaken

"God will shake things in the sky and above the sky"

Matthew 24:30

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

all the tribes

"all the people of the tribes" or "all the people"

Matthew 24:31

He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet

"He will have a trumpet sounded and send his angels" or "He will have an angel blow a trumpet, and he will send his angels"

they will gather

"his angels will gather"

his elect

These are the people whom the Son of Man has chosen.

from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other

"from all over the world"

Matthew 24:33

he is near, at the very gates

"I am near and will soon appear"

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

this generation will not pass away

"the people of this generation will not all die"

this generation

Possible interpretations are 1) "all people alive today," referring to the people alive when Jesus was speaking, or 2) "all people alive when these things I have just told you about happen." Try to translate so that both interpretations are possible.

until all of these things will have happened

"until God causes all these things to happen"

Matthew 24:35

Heaven and the earth will pass away

"Even heaven and the earth will pass away"

my words will never pass away

"what I say will always be true"

Matthew 24:36

that day and hour

Here "day" and "hour" refer to the exact time that the Son of Man will return.

nor the Son

"not even the Son"

Son

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 24:37

As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man

"At the time when the Son of Man comes, it will be like the time of Noah."

so will be the coming of the Son of Man

"so will it be when I, the Son of Man, come"

Matthew 24:39

away—so will be the coming of the Son of Man

"away. This is how it will be when the Son of Man comes"

Matthew 24:40

Then

This is when the Son of Man comes.

one will be taken, and one will be left

Possible meanings are 1) the Son of Man will take one away to heaven and will leave the other on earth for punishment or 2) the angels will take one away for punishment and leave the other for blessing.

Matthew 24:42

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true"

be on your guard

"pay attention"

Matthew 24:43

that if the master of the house ... broken into

Jesus uses a parable of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

the thief

Jesus is saying he will come when people are not expecting him, not that he will come to steal.

he would have been on guard

"he would have guarded his house"

would not have allowed his house to be broken into

"would not have allowed anyone to get into his house to steal things"

Matthew 24:44

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 24:45

So who is the faithful and wise servant whom his master ... time?

"So who is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master ... time." or "Be like the faithful and wise servant, whom his master ... time."

Matthew 24:47

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 24:48

says in his heart

"thinks in his mind"

My master has been delayed

"My master is slow to return" or "My master will not return for a long time"

Matthew 24:50

on a day that the servant does not expect and at an hour that he does not know

This emphasize that the master will come when the servant is not expecting him.

Matthew 24:51

cut him in pieces

This means to make the person suffer terribly.

assign him a place with the hypocrites

there will be weeping and grinding of teeth

"put him with the hypocrites" or "send him to the place where hypocrites are sent"

"people will weep and grind their teeth because of their suffering"

Chapter 25

Matthew 25:1

the kingdom of heaven will be like

"when our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

lamps

These could have been 1) lamps or 2) torches made by putting cloth around the end of a stick and wetting the cloth with oil.

Matthew 25:2

Five of them

"Five of the virgins"

Matthew 25:3

did not take any oil with them

"had with them only the oil in their lamps"

Matthew 25:5

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

while the bridegroom was delayed

"while the bridegroom was taking a long time to arrive"

they all got sleepy

"all ten virgins got sleepy"

Matthew 25:6

there was a cry

"someone shouted"

Matthew 25:7

trimmed their lamps

"adjusted their lamps so they would burn brightly"

Matthew 25:8

The foolish said to the wise

"The foolish virgins said to the wise virgins"

our lamps are going out

"the fire in our lamps is about to burn out"

Matthew 25:10

they went away

"the five foolish virgins went away"

to buy

"to buy more oil"

those who were ready

These are the virgins who had extra oil.

the door was shut

"the servants shut the door"

Matthew 25:11

open for us

"open the door for us so we can come inside"

Matthew 25:12

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what the master says next.

I do not know you

"I do not know who you are."

Matthew 25:13

you do not know the day or the hour

"you do not know the exact time when the Son of Man will return"

Matthew 25:14

it is like

The word "it" here refers to the kingdom of heaven

entrusted his possessions to them

"put them in charge of his hat he owned"

Matthew 25:15

five talents

"five bags of gold" or "five bags of gold, each worth 20 years' wages"

to another he gave two ... gave one talent

"to another he gave two talents of gold ... gave one talent of gold" or "to another he gave two bags of gold ... gave one bag of gold"

according to his own ability

"according to each servant's skill in managing wealth"

Matthew 25:16

worked with them

"invested the talents" or "used them in business" or "traded with them"

Matthew 25:17

gained another two

"earned another two talents"

Matthew 25:20

I have gained five talents more

"I have earned five more talents"

Matthew 25:21

Well done

"You have done right." Your culture might have an expression that a master (or someone in authority) would use to show that he approves of what his servant (or someone under him) has done.

Enter into the joy of your master

"Come and be happy with me"

Matthew 25:22

I have gained two more talents

"I have earned two more talents"

Matthew 25:23

Well done

"You have done well" or "You have done right."

Enter into the joy of your master

"Come and be happy with me"

Matthew 25:24

a hard man

Possible meanings are 1) a man who demands much from other people or 2) a man who does not treat others well.

You reap where you did not sow, and you harvest where you did not scatter

The words "reap where you did not sow" and "harvest where you did not scatter" mean the same thing. They refer to a farmer who gathers crops that other people have planted.

scatter

"scatter seed." This refers to sowing seed by gently throwing handfuls of it onto the soil.

Matthew 25:26

You wicked and lazy servant, you knew

"You are a wicked servant who does not want to work. You knew"

Matthew 25:27

received back my own

"received back my own money"

interest

payment from the banker for the temporary use of the master's money

Matthew 25:28

take away the talent

The master is speaking to other servants.

Matthew 25:29

who possesses

"who uses well what he has"

from anyone who does not possess anything

"from anyone does not use well what he has"

will be taken away

"God will take away" or "I will take away"

Matthew 25:30

the outer darkness

"the dark place away from God"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"weeping and expressing their extreme suffering"

Matthew 25:31

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 25:32

Before him will be gathered all the nations

"He will gather all the nations before him"

Before him

"In front of him"

all the nations

"all people from every country"

Matthew 25:33

He will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left

The Son of Man will separate all people. He will put the righteous people at his right side, and he will put the sinners at his left side.

Matthew 25:34

the King ... his right hand

"I, the King, ... my right hand"

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

inherit the kingdom prepared for you

"receive the blessings of God's rule that he has planned to give you"

from the foundation of the world

"since he first created the world"

Matthew 25:37

the righteous

"the righteous people"

Or thirsty

"Or when did we see you thirsty"

Matthew 25:38

Or naked

"Or when did we see you naked"

Matthew 25:40

the King

Jesus is speaking about himself.

say to them

"say to those at his right hand"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This emphasizes what the King says next.

one of the least

"one of the least important"

these brothers of mine

"my brothers and sisters here" or "these who are like my brothers and sisters"

you did it for me

"I consider that you did it for me"

Matthew 25:41

Then he will

Jesus is speaking about himself.

the eternal fire that has been prepared

"the eternal fire that God has prepared"

his angels

the devil's helpers

Matthew 25:43

naked, but you did not clothe me

"I was naked, but you did not give me clothes"

sick and in prison

"I was sick and in prison"

Matthew 25:45

for one of the least of these

"for any of the least important ones of my people"

you did not do for me

"I consider that you did not do it for me" or "I was really the one whom you did not help"

Matthew 25:46

These will go away into eternal punishment

"The King will send these to a place where they will receive punishment that never ends"

but the righteous into eternal life

"but the King will send the righteous to the place where they will live forever with God"

the righteous

"the righteous people"

Chapter 26

Matthew 26:1

It came about that when

"After" or "Then, after." This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next.

Matthew 26:2

the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified

"some men will give the Son of Man to other people who will crucify him"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 26:3

were gathered together

"came together" or "met together"

Matthew 26:5

Not during the festival

"We should not kill Jesus during the festival"

the festival

This is the yearly Passover festival.

Matthew 26:7

he was reclining

"Jesus was lying on his side." You can use your language's word for the position people usually are in when they eat.

alabaster jar

This is a costly container made of soft stone.

ointment

oil that has a pleasing smell

Matthew 26:8

What is the reason for this waste?

"This woman has done a bad thing by wasting this ointment!"

Matthew 26:9

This could have been sold for a large amount and given to the poor

"She could have sold this for a large amount of money and given the money to poor people"

Matthew 26:10

Why are you causing trouble for this woman?

"You should not be causing trouble for this woman!"

Why are you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to the disciples.

Matthew 26:13

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

wherever this good news is preached

"wherever people preach this good news"

what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her

"they will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her" or "people will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her"

Matthew 26:15

thirty pieces of silver

Since these words are the same as those in an Old Testament prophecy, keep this form instead of changing it to modern money.

Matthew 26:17	will go
Now	"will go to his death" or "will die"
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.	just as it is written about him
Matthew 26:18	"just as the prophets wrote about him in the scriptures"
He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'""	that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed
"He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and tell him that the Teacher says to him, 'My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" or "He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and say to him that the Teacher's time is at hand and he will keep the Passover with his disciples at that man's house."	"the man who betrays the Son of Man"
My time	Matthew 26:25
Possible meanings are 1) "The time that I told you about" or 2) "The time God has set for me."	Is it I, Rabbi?
is at hand	"Rabbi, surely I am not the one who will betray you."
Possible meanings are 1) "is near" or 2) "has come."	You have said it yourself
keep the Passover	"You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"
"eat the Passover meal" or "celebrate the Passover by eating the special meal"	Matthew 26:27
Matthew 26:21	a cup
Truly I say to you	Here "cup" refers to the cup and the wine in it.
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.	gave it to them
Matthew 26:22	"gave it to the disciples"
Surely not I, Lord?	Drink it
"Lord, I would never betray you!" or 2) this was a sincere question since Jesus's statement probably troubled and confused them.	"Drink the wine from this cup"
Matthew 26:24	Matthew 26:28
The Son of Man	For this is my blood
Jesus is speaking about himself.	"For this wine is my blood"
	blood of the covenant
	"blood that shows that the covenant is in effect" or "blood that makes the covenant possible"
	is poured out
	"will soon flow out of my body" or "will flow out of my wounds when I die"

Matthew 26:29

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

fruit of the vine

"wine"

in my Father's kingdom

"when my Father establishes his rule on earth"

my Father's

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

Matthew 26:30

hymn

a song of praise to God

Matthew 26:31

fall away

"leave me"

for it is written

"for the prophet Zechariah wrote long ago in the scriptures"

I will strike

Here "I" refers to God. It is implied that God will cause or allow people to harm and kill Jesus.

the shepherd ... sheep of the flock

This refers to Jesus and the disciples.

the sheep of the flock will be scattered

"they will scatter all the sheep of the flock" or "the sheep of the flock will run off in all directions"

Matthew 26:32

after I am raised up

"after God raises me up" or "after God brings me back to life"

Matthew 26:34

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

rooster

a male chicken, a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up

crows

This is the common English word for what a rooster does to make his loud call.

you will deny me three times

"you will say three times that you are not my follower"

Matthew 26:38

My soul is deeply sorrowful

"I am very sad"

even to death

"and I feel as if I could even die"

Matthew 26:39

fell on his face

He purposely lay face down on the ground to pray.

My Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

let this cup pass from me

Jesus speaks of the work that he must do, including dying on the cross, as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink from a cup. The word

"cup" is an important word in the New Testament, so try to use an equivalent for that in your translation.

this cup

Jesus is asking the Father if it is possible for him not to have to experience the death and suffering that Jesus knows will soon happen.

Yet, not as I will, but as you will

"But do not do what I want; instead, do what you want"

Matthew 26:40

What, could you not watch with me for one hour?

"I am disappointed that you could not stay awake with me for one hour!"

Matthew 26:41

you do not enter into temptation

"no one tempts you to sin"

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak

Jesus means that the disciples may have the desire to do what God wants, but as humans they are weak and often fail.

Matthew 26:42

My Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

if this cannot pass away unless I drink it

"if the only way this can pass away is if I drink it." Jesus speaks of the work that he must do as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink.

if this

Here "this" refers to the cup and the contents within it, a metaphor for suffering.

your will be done

"may what you want happen" or "do what you want to do"

Matthew 26:43

their eyes were heavy

"they were very sleepy"

Matthew 26:45

Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?

"I am disappointed that you are still sleeping and resting!"

the hour is at hand

"the time has come"

the Son of Man is being betrayed

"someone is betraying the Son of Man"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

betrayed into the hands of sinners

"betrayed into the power of sinners" or "betrayed so that sinners will have power over him"

Look

"Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Matthew 26:47

clubs

large pieces of hard wood for hitting people

Matthew 26:48

saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him."

"saying that the one he kissed was the one they should seize."

Matthew 26:49

he came up to Jesus

"Judas came up to Jesus"

kissed him

"met him with a kiss." Good friends would kiss each other on the cheek, but a disciple would probably kiss his master on the hand to show respect. No one knows for sure how Judas kissed Jesus.

Matthew 26:50

laid hands on Jesus, and seized him

"grabbed Jesus, and arrested him"

Matthew 26:51

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

Matthew 26:52

who take up the sword

"who pick up a sword to kill others" or "who want to kill other people"

sword will perish by the sword

"sword will die by means of the sword" or "sword—it is with the sword that someone will kill them"

Matthew 26:53

Do you think that I could not call ... angels?

"Surely you know that I could call ... angels."

Do you think

Here "you" is singular and refers to the person with the sword.

my Father

This refers to God the Father. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human father.

more than twelve legions of angels

"more than 12 really large groups of angels"

Matthew 26:54

But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, that this must happen?

"But if I did that, I would not be able to fulfill what God said in the scriptures must happen"

Matthew 26:55

Have you come out with swords and clubs to seize me like a robber?

"You know that I am not a robber, so it is wrong for you to come out to me bringing swords and clubs"

in the temple

It is implied that Jesus was not in the actual temple. He was in the courtyard around the temple.

Matthew 26:56

the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled

"I would fulfill all that the prophets wrote in the scriptures"

abandoned him

"left him." If your language has a word that means they left him when they should have stayed with him, use it here.

Matthew 26:58

Peter followed him

"Peter followed Jesus"

courtyard of the high priest

an open area near the high priest's house

the officers

These were probably the servants of the "scribes and elders"

Matthew 26:59

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

so that they

Here "they" refers to the chief priests and the members of the council.

might put him to death

"might have a reason to execute him"

Matthew 26:60

two came forward

"two men came forward" or "two witnesses came forward"

Matthew 26:61

This man said, 'I am able to destroy ... days.'

"This man said that he is able to destroy ... days."

This man said

"This man Jesus said"

Matthew 26:62

What is it that they are testifying against you?

"What is your response to what the witnesses are testifying against you?"

Matthew 26:63

Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act. See how you translated this in Matthew 16:16.

Matthew 26:64

You have said it yourself

"You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"

But I tell you, from now on you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus is speaking to the high priest and to the other persons there.

from now on you will see the Son of Man

Possible meanings are 1) the phrase "from now on" means they will see the Son of Man in his power at some time in the future or 2) the phrase "from now on" means that from the time of Jesus's trial and onward, Jesus is showing himself to be the Messiah who is powerful and victorious.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

sitting at the right hand of Power

"sitting in the place of honor beside the all-powerful God"

coming on the clouds of heaven

"riding to earth on the clouds of heaven"

Matthew 26:65

the high priest tore his clothes

Tearing clothing was a sign of anger and sadness.

He has spoken blasphemy

The reason the high priest called Jesus's statement blasphemy is probably that he understood Jesus's words in Matthew 26:64 as a claim to be equal with God.

Why do we still need witnesses?

"We do not need to hear from any more witnesses!"

now you have heard

Here "you" is plural and refers to the members of the council.

Matthew 26:67

Then they

Possible meanings are 1) "Then some of the men" or 2) "Then the soldiers."

spit in his face

This was done as an insult.

Matthew 26:68

Prophecy to us

Here "Prophecy to us" means to tell by means of God's power. It does not mean to tell what will happen in the future.

you Christ

Those hitting Jesus do not really think he is the Christ. They call him this to mock him.

Matthew 26:70

I do not know what you are talking about

Peter was able to understand what the servant girl was saying. He used these words to deny that he had been with Jesus.

Matthew 26:71

gateway

opening in the wall around a courtyard

said to those there

"said to the people who were sitting there"

Matthew 26:72

He again denied it with an oath

"He denied it again by swearing"

Matthew 26:73

one of them, for the way you speak gives you away

"one of them. We can tell you are from Galilee because you speak like a Galilean"

Matthew 26:74

to curse

"to call down a curse on himself"

Matthew 26:75

Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said, "Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times."

"Peter remembered that Jesus told him that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Jesus three times."

Chapter 27

Matthew 27:1

plotted against Jesus to put him to death

The Jewish leaders were planning how they could convince the Roman leaders to kill Jesus.

Matthew 27:3

Then when Judas

If your language has a way of showing that a new story is starting, you may want to use that here.

that Jesus had been condemned

"that the Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus"

the thirty pieces of silver

This was the money that the chief priests had given Judas to betray Jesus.

Matthew 27:4

innocent blood

"a person who does not deserve to die"

What is that to us?

"That is not our problem!" or "That is your problem!"

Matthew 27:5

threw down the pieces of silver in the temple

Possible meanings are 1) he threw the pieces of silver while in the temple courtyard, or 2) he was standing in the temple courtyard, and he threw the pieces of silver into the temple.

Matthew 27:6

It is not lawful to put this

"Our laws do not allow us to put this"

put this

"put this silver"

the treasury

This is the place they kept the money they used to provide for things needed for the temple and the priests.

price of blood

"money paid for a man to die"

Matthew 27:7

potter's field

This was a field that was bought to bury strangers who died in Jerusalem.

Matthew 27:8

to this day

This means to the time that Matthew is writing this book.

Matthew 27:9

Then that which had been spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled

"This fulfilled what the prophet Jeremiah spoke"

the price set on him by the sons of Israel

"the price the sons of Israel set on him"

the sons of Israel

"some of the descendants of Israel" or "the leaders of Israel"

Matthew 27:10

directed me

Here "me" refers to Jeremiah.

Matthew 27:11

Now

The word "Now" is used here to mark a return to the main events of the story.

the governor

"Pilate"

You say so

"Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said" or 2) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews.

Matthew 27:12

But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders

"But when the chief priests and elders accused him"

Matthew 27:13

Do you not hear how many things they accuse you of?

"I am surprised that you do not answer these people who accuse you of doing so many bad things!"

Matthew 27:14

did not answer even one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed

Jesus was completely silent.

Matthew 27:15

the festival

This is the Passover celebration.

prisoner chosen by the crowd

"prisoner whom the crowd would choose"

Matthew 27:16

they had a notorious prisoner

"there was a prisoner who was well known for doing something bad"

Matthew 27:17

they were gathered

"the crowd gathered"

Jesus who is called Christ

"whom some people call the Christ"

Matthew 27:18

they had handed Jesus over to him

"the Jewish leaders had brought Jesus to him." They had done this so that Pilate would judge Jesus.

Matthew 27:19

While he was sitting on the judgment seat

"While Pilate was sitting in the place where a judge would sit while making a decision."

sent word

"sent a message"

I have suffered much today

"I have been very upset today"

Matthew 27:20

Now ... destroy Jesus

Here "Now" is used to mark a pause in the story. Matthew tells background information about why the crowd chose Barabbas.

they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus

"they should ask Pilate to release Jesus and tell him to have his soldiers kill Jesus"

Matthew 27:21

asked them

"asked the crowd"

Matthew 27:22

who is called Christ

"whom some people call the Christ"

Matthew 27:23

has he done

"has Jesus done"

they cried out

"the crowd cried out"

Matthew 27:24

he was gaining nothing

"he was doing no good" or "he was unable to convince the people"

washed his hands in front of the crowd

Pilate does this as a sign that he is not responsible for Jesus's death.

the blood

"the death"

You see to it

"This is your responsibility."

Matthew 27:25

May his blood be on us and our children

"Yes! We and our descendants will be responsible for executing him"

Matthew 27:26

Then he set Barabbas free for them

Possible meanings are 1) Pilate set Barabbas free because the crowd had asked him to or 2) Pilate released Barabbas and put him under the control of the crowd.

he scourged Jesus and handed him over to be crucified

"he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and to crucify him"

Matthew 27:28

stripped him

"pulled off his clothes"

scarlet

bright red

Matthew 27:29

a crown of thorns

"a crown from thorny branches" or "a crown from branches with thorns on them"

a staff in his right hand

They gave Jesus a stick to hold to represent a scepter that a king holds. They did this to mock Jesus.

Hail, King of the Jews

They were saying this to mock Jesus. They were calling Jesus "King of the Jews," but they did not really believe he was a king. And yet what they were saying was true.

Hail

"We honor you" or "May you live a long time"

Matthew 27:30

They spat on him

The past tense of the verb "spit" can be either "spit" or "spat."

Matthew 27:32

As they came out

"As they came out of Jerusalem"

they found a man

"the soldiers saw a man"

whom they forced to go with them so that he might carry his cross

"whom the soldiers forced to go with them so that he could carry Jesus's cross"

Matthew 27:33

place called Golgotha

"place that people called Golgotha"

Matthew 27:34

gall

Gall is the bitter yellow liquid that bodies use in digestion. The people were mocking Jesus by mixing it with the wine and so making the wine undrinkable.

Matthew 27:35

his garments

These were the clothes Jesus had been wearing.

Matthew 27:37

the charge against him

"a written explanation of why he was being crucified"

Matthew 27:38

Two robbers were crucified with him

"The soldiers crucified two robbers with Jesus"

Matthew 27:39

shaking their heads

They did this to make fun of Jesus.

Matthew 27:40

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross

"If you are the Son of God, prove it by coming down from the cross"

the Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Matthew 27:42

He saved others, but he cannot save himself

Possible meanings are 1) the Jewish leaders do not believe that Jesus saved others or that he can save himself, or 2) they believe he did save others but are laughing at him because now he cannot save himself.

He is the King of Israel

"He says that he is the King of Israel"

Matthew 27:43

For he even said, 'I am the Son of God.'

"For Jesus even said that he is the Son of God."

Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Matthew 27:44

the robbers who were crucified with him

"the robbers that the soldiers crucified with Jesus"

Matthew 27:45

from the sixth hour ... until the ninth hour

"from about noon ... for three hours" or "from about twelve o'clock midday ... until about three o'clock in the afternoon"

darkness came over the whole land

"it became dark over the whole land"

Matthew 27:46

Jesus cried

"Jesus called out" or "Jesus shouted"

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani

These words are what Jesus cried out in his own language. Translators usually leave these words as they are.

Matthew 27:48

one of them

Possible meanings are 1) one of the soldiers or 2) one of those who stood by and watched.

sponge

This is a sea animal that is harvested and used to take up and hold liquids. These liquids can later be pushed out.

Matthew 27:50

gave up his spirit

"he died, giving his spirit over to God" or "he breathed his last breath"

Matthew 27:51

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

the curtain of the temple was split in two

"the curtain of the temple tore in two" or "God caused the curtain of the temple to tear in two"

Matthew 27:52

The tombs were opened, and the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised

"God opened the tombs and made many godly people who had died become alive again"

Matthew 27:53

They came out ... appeared to many

After the earthquake when Jesus died and the tombs were opened 1) the holy people came back to life, and then, after Jesus came back to life, the holy people entered Jerusalem, where many people saw them, or 2) Jesus came back to life, and then the holy ones came back to life and entered the city, where many people saw them.

Matthew 27:54

those who were watching Jesus

"the other soldiers with him who were guarding Jesus"

Son of God

This refers to Jesus, the Son of God. It is best to translate "Son" with the same word that your language uses to refer to a human son.

Matthew 27:57

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's burial.

Arimathea

This is the name of a city in Israel.

Matthew 27:58

Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him

"Then Pilate ordered the soldiers to give the body of Jesus to Joseph"

Matthew 27:59

linen

a fine, costly cloth

Matthew 27:60

that he had cut into the rock

It is implied that Joseph had workers who cut the tomb into the rock.

Matthew 27:61

opposite the tomb

"across from the tomb"

Matthew 27:62

the Preparation

This is the day that people got everything ready for the Sabbath.

were gathered together with Pilate

"they met with Pilate"

Matthew 27:63

he said, 'After three days will I rise again.'

"when Jesus, the deceiver, was alive he said that after three days he will rise again." or "he said that after three day he would rise again."

Matthew 27:64

command that the tomb be made secure

"command your soldiers to guard the tomb"

his disciples may come and steal him ... say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and

"his disciples may ... tell the people that he has risen from the dead, and"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

and the last deception will be worse than the first

"and if they deceive people by saying that, it will be worse than the way he deceived people before when he said that he was the Christ"

Matthew 27:65

a guard

This consisted of four to sixteen Roman soldiers.

Matthew 27:66

sealing the stone

Possible meanings are 1) they put a cord around the stone and attached it with seals to the rock wall on either side of the entrance to the tomb or 2) they put seals between the stone and the wall.

placing the guard

"telling the soldiers to stand where they could keep people from tampering with the tomb"

Chapter 28

Matthew 28:1

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week

"After the Sabbath, as the sun began to come up Sunday morning"

the other Mary

"the other woman named Mary." This is Mary the mother of James and Joseph

Matthew 28:2

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Your language may have a way of doing this.

there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended ... and rolled away the stone

Possible meanings are 1) the earthquake happened because the angel came down and rolled away the stone or 2) all these events happened at the same time.

earthquake

a sudden and violent shaking of the ground

Matthew 28:3

His appearance was like lightning

"The angel's appearance was bright like lightning"

his clothing as white as snow

"his clothing was very white, like snow"

Matthew 28:4

became like dead men

"fell to the ground and lay there like dead men"

Matthew 28:5

the women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

who has been crucified

"whom the people and the soldiers crucified" or "whom they crucified"

Matthew 28:6

was lying

This means that Jesus's body was lying on the flat surface inside the tomb, not that Jesus was saying things that were not true.

Matthew 28:7

He has risen from the dead

"He has come back to life"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

going ahead of you ... you will see him

Here "you" is plural. It refers to the women and the disciples.

I have told you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the women.

Matthew 28:8

The women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

Matthew 28:9

Greetings

This is an ordinary greeting, much like "Hello" in English.

took hold of his feet

"got down on their knees and held onto his feet"

Matthew 28:10

my brothers

This refers to Jesus's disciples.

Matthew 28:12

discussed the matter with them

"decided on a plan among themselves." The priests and elders decided to give the money to the soldiers.

Matthew 28:13

Say to others, 'The disciples of Jesus came ... while we were sleeping.'

"Tell others that Jesus' disciples came ... while you were sleeping."

Matthew 28:14

If this report reaches the governor

"If the governor hears that you were asleep when Jesus's disciples took his body"

the governor

"Pilate"

we will persuade him and take any worries away from you

"do not worry. We will talk to him so that he does not punish you."

Matthew 28:15

did as they had been instructed

"did what the priests had told them to do"

This report spread widely among the Jews and continues even today

"Many Jews heard this report and continue to tell others about it even today"

Matthew 28:17

they worshiped him, but some doubted

Possible meanings are 1) they all worshiped Jesus even though some of them doubted, or 2) some of them worshiped Jesus, but others did not worship him because they doubted that he had become alive again.

Matthew 28:18

All authority has been given to me

"My Father has given me all authority over everyone and everything in heaven and on earth"

Matthew 28:19

of all the nations

"of the people in every nation"

into the name

"by the authority"

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. It is best to translate "Father" and "Son" with the same words that your language uses to refer to a human father and a human son.

Matthew 28:20

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

even to the end of the age

"until the end of this age" or "until the end of the world"