

English: Unlocked Literal Bible for Revelation

Formatted for Translators

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Bible Text: The English Unlocked Literal Bible (ULB)

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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Introduction to Revelation

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Revelation

1. Opening (1:1-20)
2. Letters to the seven churches (2:1-3:22)
3. Vision of God in heaven, and a vision of the Lamb (4:1-5:14)
4. The seven seals (6:1-8:1)
5. The seven trumpets (8:2-13:18)
6. Worshipers of the Lamb, the martyrs, and the harvest of wrath (14:1-20)
7. The seven bowls (15:1-18:24)
8. Worship in heaven (19:1-10)
9. The Lamb's judgment, the destruction of the beast, the thousand years, the destruction of Satan, and the final judgment (19:11-20:15)
10. The new creation and the new Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)
11. Jesus's promise to return, the witness from the angels, John's closing words, Christ's message to his church, and the invitation and the warning (22:6-21)

Who wrote the Book of Revelation?

The author identified himself as John. This was probably the Apostle John. He wrote the Book of Revelation while on the island of Patmos. The Romans exiled John there for teaching people about Jesus.

What is the Book of Revelation about?

John wrote the Book of Revelation to encourage believers to remain faithful even when they are suffering. John described visions he had of Satan and his followers fighting against and killing believers. In the visions God causes many terrible things to happen on the earth to punish wicked people. In the end, Jesus defeats Satan and his followers. Then Jesus comforts those who were faithful. And the believers will live forever with God in the new heavens and earth.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by one of its traditional titles, "Revelation," "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," "The Revelation to Saint John," or "The Apocalypse of John." Or they may choose a possibly clearer title, such as "The Things that Jesus Christ Showed to John."

What type of writing is the Book of Revelation?

John used a special style of writing to describe his visions. John described what he saw by using many symbols. This style of writing is called symbolic prophecy or apocalyptic literature.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Are the events of Revelation past or future?

Since early Christian times, scholars have interpreted Revelation differently. Some scholars think John described events that happened during his time. Some scholars think John described events happening from his time until the return of Jesus. Other scholars think John described events that will happen in a short period of time just before Christ returns.

Translators will not need to decide how to interpret the book before they translate it. Translators should leave the prophecies in the tenses that are used in the ULB.

Are there any other books in the Bible like Revelation?

No other book of the Bible is like the Book of Revelation. But passages in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and especially Daniel are similar in content and style to Revelation. It may be beneficial to translate Revelation at the same time as Daniel since they have some imagery and style in common.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Does one need to understand the Book of Revelation to translate it?

One does not need to understand all of the symbols in the Book of Revelation to translate it properly. Translators should not give possible meanings for the symbols or numbers in their translation.

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in Revelation in the ULB?

The scriptures use these words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating Revelation into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

- The meaning in two passages indicates moral holiness. Here, the ULB uses "holy." (See: 14:12; 22:11)
- Usually the meaning in Revelation indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 5:8; 8:3, 4; 11:18; 13:7; 16:6; 17:6; 18:20, 24; 19:8; 20:9)
- Sometimes the meaning implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "sanctify," "set apart," "dedicated to," or "reserved for."

The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

Periods of time

John referred to various periods of time in Revelation. For example, there are many references to forty-two months, seven years, and three and a half days. Some scholars think these time periods are symbolic. Other scholars think these are actual time periods. The translator should treat these time periods as referencing actual periods of time. It is then up to the interpreter to determine their significance or what they may represent.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Revelation?

For the following verses, some modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If translations of the Bible exist in the general region, translators should consider using the readings found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

- "'I am the alpha and the omega,' says the Lord God, 'the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty'" (1:8). Some versions add the phrase "the Beginning and the End."
- "the elders prostrated themselves and worshiped" (5:14). Some older translations read, "the twenty-four elders prostrated themselves and worshiped the one who lives forever and ever."
- "so that a third of it [the earth] was burned up" (8:7). Some older versions do not include this phrase.
- "the one who is and who was" (11:17). Some versions add the phrase "and who is to come."
- "they are blameless" (14:5). Some versions add the phrase "before the throne of God" (14:5).
- "the one who is and who was, the Holy One" (16:5). Some older translations read, "O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be."
- "The nations will walk by the light of that city" (21:24). Some older translations read, "The nations that are saved will walk by the light of that city."

- "Blessed are those who wash their robes" (22:14). Some older translations read "Blessed are those who do his commandments."
- "God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city" (22:19). Some older translations read, "God will take away his share in the book of life and in the holy city."

Revelation

¹ This is the revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,² who testified about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, all the things that he saw.³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud this prophecy and those who listen to the words of this prophecy and who obey what is written in it, because the time is near.

⁴ John, to the seven churches in Asia: May grace be to you and peace from the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood—⁶ he has made us a kingdom, priests for his God and Father—to him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look, he is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
including those who pierced him.
All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him.
Yes, Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." ¹

⁹ I, John—your brother and the one who shares with you in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Jesus—was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus.¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.¹¹ It said, "Write what you see in a book, and send it to the seven churches—to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

¹² I turned around to see whose voice was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw seven golden lampstands.¹³ In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a son of man, wearing a long robe that reached down to his feet and a golden sash around his chest.

¹⁴ His head and hair were as white as wool—as white as snow—and his eyes were like a flame of fire.¹⁵ His feet were like polished bronze, like bronze that had been refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many rushing waters.¹⁶ He had seven stars in his right hand, and a sword with two sharp edges was coming out of his mouth. His face was shining like the sun at its strongest.

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last¹⁸ and the one who lives. I was dead, but look, I live forever and ever! And I have the keys of death and of Hades.

¹⁹ Therefore write down what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place after this.²⁰ As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

¹ Some important and ancient Greek copies read, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord God .

Revelation 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter explains how the Book of Revelation records the vision John received on the island of Patmos.

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 7.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven churches

John wrote this book to seven actual churches in Asia Minor, which is now the country of Turkey.

White

The Bible often speaks of something that belongs to a person as being "white." This is metaphor and metonym for that person living rightly and pleasing God. (See: and and righteous)

"the one who is, and who was, and who is to come"

God exists now. He has always existed. He will always exist. Your language may have a different way of saying this.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Blood

Blood is a metonym for death. Jesus "has released us from our sins by his blood." John means that Jesus saved us from our sins by dying for us.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"He is coming with the clouds"

Jesus went into the clouds when he went up to heaven after God raised him from the dead. When Jesus returns, he will also be "with the clouds." It is not clear whether he will be sitting or riding on clouds or coming in the clouds or "with the clouds" in some other way. Your translation should express this in a way that is natural in your language.

"One like a son of man"

This refers to Jesus. You should translate the words "son of man" using the same words as you did in the Gospels for when Jesus called himself the "Son of Man."

"The angels of the seven churches"

The word "angels" here can also mean "messengers." This might refer to heavenly beings, or to the messengers or leaders of these seven churches. John uses the same word "angel" (singular) in verse 1 and in many other places throughout the book. Your translation should also use the same word.

Links:

- [Revelation 1:1 Notes](#)
 - [Revelation intro](#)
-

Revelation 1:1

General Information:

This is an introduction to the book of Revelation. It explains that it is a revelation from Jesus Christ and it gives a blessing to those who read it.

his servants

This refers to people who believe in Christ.

what must soon take place

"the events that must happen soon"

made it known

"communicated it"

to his servant John

John wrote this book and was referring to himself here.
Alternate translation: "to me, John, his servant"

Revelation 1:2

who testified about ... all the things that he saw

The word "who" refers to John. This tells what John did after he learned about the revelation. Alternate translation: "And John testified about ... all the things that he saw"

the word of God

"the message that God spoke"

the testimony of Jesus Christ

These words could refer to 1) the testimony that John has given about Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "he has also given testimony about Jesus Christ" Or 2) the testimony that Jesus Christ has given about himself.

Revelation 1:3

the one who reads aloud

This does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone who reads it aloud. Alternate translation: "anyone who reads aloud"

obey what is written in it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "obey what John has written in it" or "obey what they read in it"

the time is near

"the things that must happen will soon happen"

Revelation 1:4

General Information:

This is the beginning of John's letter. Here he names himself as the writer and greets the people he is writing to.

May grace be to you and peace

"May you receive grace and peace" or "May you experience grace and peace." This is a wish or blessing.

from the one who is

"from God, who is"

who is to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

seven spirits

The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God.

Revelation 1:5

and from Jesus Christ

This continues the blessing from [Revelation 1:4](#). Alternate translation: "and may grace be to you and peace also from Jesus Christ" or "and may Jesus Christ treat you kindly and enable you to live peacefully and securely"

the firstborn from the dead

"the first person to be raised from death, never to die again"

from the dead

The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again. Alternate translation: "from among all those who have died"

has freed us from our sins

"has released us from our sins"

Revelation 1:6

has made us a kingdom, priests

"has set us apart and begun to rule over us and he has made us priests"

his God and Father

This is one person. Alternate translation: "God, his Father"

Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

to him be the glory and the power

This is a wish or prayer. Possible meanings are 1) "May people honor his glory and power" or 2) "May he have glory and power." John prays that Jesus Christ will be honored and will be able to rule completely over everyone and everything.

the power

This probably refers to his authority as king.

Revelation 1:7

General Information:

Here John quotes from Daniel and Zechariah.

every eye

Since people see with the eyes, the word "eye" is used to refer to people. Alternate translation: "every person" or "everyone"

including those who pierced him

"even those who pierced him will see him"

pierced him

Jesus's hands and feet were pierced when he was nailed to the cross. Here it refers to people killing him. Alternate translation: "killed him"

pierced

made a hole in

Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is ... the Almighty."

This can be restated so that the quotation is not split. Alternate translation: "The Lord God says, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the one who is ... the Almighty.'" or "'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the one who is ... the Almighty,' says the Lord God."

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If the meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first and last letters of your alphabet. Alternate translation: "the A and the Z" or "the first and the last"

who is to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 1:9

General Information:

John explains how his vision began and the instructions the Spirit gave him.

your ... you

These refer to the believers in the seven churches.

I, John—your brother and the one who shares with you in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Jesus—was

This can be stated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "I, John, am your brother who shares with you in God's kingdom and also suffers and patiently endures trials along with you because we belong to Jesus. I was"

because of the word of God

"because I told others the word of God"

the word of God

"the message that God spoke." Translate as in Revelation 1:2.

the testimony about Jesus

"the testimony that God has given about Jesus." Translate as in Revelation 1:2.

Revelation 1:10

I was in the Spirit

John speaks of being influenced by God's Spirit as if he were in the Spirit. Alternate translation: "I was influenced by the Spirit" or "The Spirit influenced me"

the Lord's day

the day of worship for believers in Christ

loud voice like a trumpet

The voice was so loud it sounded like a trumpet.

trumpet

This refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

Revelation 1:11

Smyrna ... Pergamum ... Thyatira ... Sardis ... Philadelphia ... Laodicea

These are names of cities in the region of western Asia that today is modern Turkey.

Revelation 1:12

Connecting Statement:

John begins to explain what he saw in his vision.

whose voice

This refers to the person speaking. Alternate translation: "who"

Revelation 1:13

son of man

This expression describes a human figure, someone who looks human.

a golden sash

a piece of cloth worn around the chest. It may have had golden threads in it.

Revelation 1:14

His head and hair were as white as wool—as white as snow

Wool and snow are examples of things that are very white. The repetition of "as white as" emphasizes that they were very white.

wool

This is the hair of a sheep or goat. It was known to be very white.

his eyes were like a flame of fire

His eyes are described as being full of light like fire flames. Alternate translation: "his eyes were glowing like a flame of fire"

Revelation 1:15

His feet were like polished bronze

Bronze is polished to make it shine and reflect light. Alternate translation: "His feet were very shiny like polished bronze"

like polished bronze, like bronze that had been refined in a furnace

The bronze would be refined first and then polished. Alternate translation: "like bronze that has been purified in a hot furnace and polished"

furnace

a strong container for holding a very hot fire. People would put metal in it, and the hot fire would burn away any impurities that were in the metal.

the sound of many rushing waters

This is very loud, like the sound of a large, fast flowing river, of a large waterfall, or of loud waves in the sea.

Revelation 1:16

a sword ... was coming out of his mouth

The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion.

a sword with two sharp edges

This refers to a double-edged sword, which is sharpened on both sides to cut both directions.

Revelation 1:17

fell at his feet like a dead man

John lay down facing the ground. He was probably very frightened and was showing Jesus great respect.

He placed his right hand on me

"He touched me with his right hand"

I am the first and the last

This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus.

Revelation 1:18

I have the keys of death and of Hades

Having the power over something is spoken of as having the keys to it. The implied information is that he

can give life to those who have died and let them out of Hades. Alternate translation: "I have the power over death and over Hades" or "I have the power to give life to people who have died and to let them out of Hades"

Revelation 1:19

Connecting Statement:

The Son of Man continues to speak.

Revelation 1:20

stars

These stars are symbols that represent the seven angels of the seven churches.

lampstands

The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:12.

the angels of the seven churches

Possible meanings are that these "angels" are 1) heavenly angels who protect the seven churches or 2) human messengers to the seven churches, either messengers who went from John to the churches or the leaders of those churches.

seven churches

This refers to seven churches that actually existed in Asia Minor at that time. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:11.

2 ¹"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

"The words of the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands,

²"I know your deeds, your hard labor, and your patient endurance, and that you cannot tolerate those who are evil, but you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and you have found them to be false.

³You are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name, and you have not grown weary.⁴But I have against you the fact that you have left behind your first love.⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first. Unless you repent, I will come to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place.

⁶But you have this: You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.⁷Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

⁸"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

"The words of the one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead and who became alive again:

⁹"I know your sufferings and your poverty, but you are rich. I know the slander of those who say they are Jews, but they are not. They are a synagogue of Satan.

¹⁰Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Look! The devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you will be tested, and you will suffer for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.¹¹Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death."

¹²"To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

"The words of the one who has the sword with two sharp edges:

¹³"I know where you live, there where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold on tightly to my name. I know that you did not deny your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, there where Satan lives.

¹⁴But I have a few things against you: You have there some who hold tightly to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and be sexually immoral.¹⁵In the same way, you even have some who hold tightly to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

¹⁶Repent, therefore! If you do not, I will quickly come to you, and I will wage war against them with the sword in my mouth.¹⁷Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone with a new name written on the stone, a name which no one knows but the one who receives it."

¹⁸"To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

"These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze:

¹⁹"I know your deeds: your love and faith and service and your patient endurance. I know that what you have done recently is more than you did at first.

²⁰But I have this against you: You tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.²¹I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her immorality.

²²Look! I will throw her onto a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great suffering, unless they repent of her deeds.²³I will strike her children dead, and all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out thoughts and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

²⁴But to the rest of you in Thyatira, to everyone who does not hold this teaching and does not know what some call the deep things of Satan—to you I say, 'I do not put any other burden on you.'²⁵In any case, you must hold on tightly until I come.

²⁶The one who conquers and does my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.

²⁷ 'He will rule them with an iron rod,

like clay jars he will break them into pieces.'

²⁸Just as I have received from my Father, I will also give him the morning star.²⁹Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.'"

Revelation 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 2 and 3 together are usually called the "seven letters to the seven churches." You may wish to set each letter apart. The reader can then easily see that they are separate letters.

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words of verse 27.

Special concepts in this chapter

Poverty and wealth

The Christians in Smyrna were poor because they did not have much money. But they were rich spiritually because God would reward them for their suffering. (See: spirit)

"The devil is about to"

Some authorities were about to take some of the Christians in Smyrna and throw them into prison and even kill some of them

Balaam, Balak, and Jezebel

Balaam, Balak, and Jezebel were people who lived long before Jesus was born. They all tried to harm the Israelites either by cursing them or by making them want to stop obeying God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches"

The writer knew that almost all of his readers had physical ears. The ear here is a metonym for hearing what God says and desiring to obey him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The angel of the church"

The word "angel" here can also mean "messenger." This might refer to the messenger or leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in [Revelation 1:20](#).

"The words of the one who"

The verses with these words can be difficult to translate. They do not make complete sentences. You may need to add "These are" to the beginning of these verses. Also, Jesus used these words to speak of himself as if he were speaking of another person. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking of other people. Jesus began speaking in [Revelation 1:17](#). He continues to speak through the end of Chapter 3.

Links:

- [Revelation 2:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 2:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Ephesus.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

stars

These stars are symbols. They represent the seven angels of the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:16]

lampstands

The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:12]

Revelation 2:2

I know ... your hard labor, and your patient endurance

"Labor" and "endurance" are abstract nouns and can be translated with verbs "work" and "endure." Alternate translation: "I know ... that you work very hard and that you endure patiently"

but are not

"but are not apostles"

you have found them to be false

"you have recognized that those people are false apostles"

Revelation 2:3

for my name

"Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "because of me" or

"because you believe in my name" or "because you believe in me"

you have not grown weary

Being discouraged is spoken of as being tired. Alternate translation: "you have not become discouraged" or "you have not quit"

Revelation 2:4

I have against you the fact that

"I disapprove of you because" or "I am angry with you because"

you have left behind your first love

To stop doing something is spoken of as leaving it behind. Love is spoken of as if it is an object that can be left behind. Alternate translation: "you have stopped loving me as you did at the beginning"

Revelation 2:5

from where you have fallen

No longer loving as much as they used to is spoken of as haven fallen. Alternate translation: "how much you have changed" or "how much you used to love me"

Unless you repent

"If you do not repent"

remove your lampstand

The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated "lampstand" in [Revelation 1:12]

Revelation 2:6

Nicolaitans

people who followed the teachings of a man named Nicolaus

Revelation 2:7

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen to" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "If you are willing to listen, listen to" or "If you are willing to understand, then understand and obey"

the one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. Alternate translation: "anyone who resists evil" or "those who do not agree to do evil"

the paradise of God

"God's garden." This is a symbol for heaven.

Revelation 2:8

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Smyrna.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Smyrna

This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

the first and the last

This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:17]

Revelation 2:9

I know your sufferings and your poverty

"Sufferings" and "poverty" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "I know how you have suffered and how poor you are"

I know the slander of those who say they are Jews

"Slander" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I know how people have slandered you—those who say they are Jews" or "I know how people have said terrible things about you—those who say they are Jews"

but they are not

"but they are not real Jews"

a synagogue of Satan

People who gather to obey or honor Satan are spoken of as if they were a synagogue, a place of worship and teaching for the Jews.

Revelation 2:10

The devil is about to throw some of you into prison

The words "The devil" here are a metonym for the people who obey the devil. Alternate translation: "The devil will soon cause others to put some of you in prison"

Be faithful until death

"Be faithful to me even if they kill you." The use of the word "until" does not mean that you should stop being faithful at death.

the crown

"the winner's crown." This was a wreath, originally of olive branches or laurel leaves, that was put on the head of a victorious athlete.

the crown of life

Possible meanings are 1) "a crown that shows that I have given you eternal life" or 2) "true life as a prize like a winner's crown"

Revelation 2:11

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

will not be hurt by the second death

"will not experience the second death" or "will not die a second time"

Revelation 2:12

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Pergamum.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Pergamum

This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

the sword with two sharp edges

This refers to a double-edged sword, which is sharpened on both sides to cut both directions. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:16

Revelation 2:13

Satan's throne

Possible meanings are 1) Satan's power and evil influence on people, or 2) the place where Satan rules.

you hold on tightly to my name

"Name" here is a metonym for the person. Firmly believing is spoken of as holding on tightly. Alternate translation: "you firmly believe in me"

you did not deny your faith in me

"Faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "you continued to tell people that you believe in me"

Antipas

This is the name of a man.

Revelation 2:14

But I have a few things against you

"I disapprove of you because of a few things you have done" or "I am angry with you because of a few things you did." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 2:4.

who hold tightly to the teaching of Balaam, who

Possible meanings are 1) "who teach what Balaam taught; he" or 2) "who do what Balaam taught; he."

Balak

This is the name of a king.

who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel

Something that leads people to sin is spoken of as a stone in the road that people stumble on. Alternate translation: "who showed Balak how to cause the people of Israel to sin"

be sexually immoral

"sin sexually" or "commit sexual sin"

Revelation 2:15

Nicolaitans

This was the name for a group of people who followed the teachings of a man named Nicolaus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:6]

Revelation 2:16

Repent, therefore

"So repent"

If you do not, I

The verb can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "If you do not repent, I"

wage war against them

"fight against them"

with the sword in my mouth

This refers to the sword in [Revelation 1:16]

Revelation 2:17

Let the one who has an ear hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

To the one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 2:18

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Thyatira.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Thyatira

This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

who has eyes like a flame of fire

His eyes are describes as being full of light like a flame of fire. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:14]

feet like polished bronze

Bronze is polished to make it shine and reflect light. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:15]

Revelation 2:19

your love and faith and service and your patient endurance

The abstract nouns "love," "faith," "service," and "endurance" can be translated with verbs. Alternate translation: "How you have loved, trusted, served, and endured patiently"

your love and faith and service and your patient endurance

The implied objects of these verbs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "How you have loved me and others, trusted me, served me and others, and endured troubles patiently"

Revelation 2:20

But I have this against you

"But I disapprove of some of the things you are doing" or "But I am angry with you because of something you are doing." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 2:4.

the woman Jezebel, who

Jesus spoke of a certain woman in their church as if she were Queen Jezebel because she did the same kinds of sinful things that Queen Jezebel had done long before that time. Alternate translation: "the woman who is just like Jezebel and"

Revelation 2:21

I gave her time to repent

"I gave her opportunity to repent" or "I waited for her to repent"

Revelation 2:22

I will throw her onto a sickbed ... into great suffering

Her having to lie in bed would be the result of Jesus making her very sick. Alternate translation: "I will make her lie sick in bed ... I will make suffer greatly" or "I will make her very sick ... I will make suffer greatly"

those who commit adultery with her into great suffering

Jesus speaks of causing people to suffer as throwing them into suffering. Alternate translation: "I will make those who commit adultery with her to suffer greatly"

commit adultery

"practice adultery"

unless they repent of her deeds

This implies that they have participated with her in her wicked behavior. By repenting of her deeds, they also repent of participating in her behavior. Alternate translation: "if they do not repent from doing the evil that she does" or "if they do not repent of participating in her deeds"

Revelation 2:23

I will strike her children dead

"I will kill her children"

her children

Jesus spoke of her followers as if they were her children. Alternate translation: "her followers" or "the people who do what she teaches"

thoughts and hearts

The term "heart" a metonym that represents feelings and desires. Alternate translation: "what people think and want"

I will give to each one of you

This is an expression about punishment and reward. Alternate translation: "I will punish or reward each one of you"

Revelation 2:24

everyone who does not hold this teaching

Believing a teaching is spoken of as holding the teaching. Alternate translation: "everyone who does not believe this teaching"

does not hold this teaching

The noun "teaching" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "does not hold to what she teaches" or "does not believe what she teaches"

deep things

Secret things are spoken of as if they were deep. Alternate translation: "secret things"

Revelation 2:25

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 2:26

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

does my works

"does what I command him to do"

Revelation 2:27

He will rule ... break them into pieces

This is a prophecy from the Old Testament about a king of Israel, but Jesus applies it here to those to whom he gives authority over the nations.

He will rule them with an iron rod

Ruling harshly is spoken of as ruling with an iron rod.
Alternate translation: "He will rule them harshly as if striking them with an iron stick"

like clay jars he will break them into pieces

Breaking them to pieces is an image that represents either 1) destroying evildoers or 2) defeating enemies.
Alternate translation: "He will defeat his enemies completely as if breaking clay jars into pieces"

Revelation 2:28

Just as I have received from my Father

Some languages may need to tell what was received. Possible meanings are 1) "Just as I have received authority from my Father" or 2) "Just as I have received the morning star from my Father."

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

I will also give him

Here "him" refers to the one who conquers.

morning star

This is a bright star that sometimes appears early in the morning just before dawn. It was a symbol of victory.

Revelation 2:29

Let the one who has an ear hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

3¹"To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

"The words of the one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your deeds. You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

²Wake up and strengthen what remains but is about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.

³Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard. Obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come against you.⁴But you have a few names in Sardis who have not stained their clothes, and they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.

⁵The one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never wipe his name out of the Book of Life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.⁶Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

⁷"To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

"The words of the one who is holy and true—
he holds the key of David,
he opens and no one shuts,
he shuts and no one can open.

⁸"I know your deeds. Look, I have put before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have obeyed my word and have not denied my name.

⁹Look! I will cause those who belong to the synagogue of Satan, those calling themselves Jews but are not, but rather liars—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will know that I love you.¹⁰Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is coming on the whole world, to test those who live on the earth.¹¹I am coming soon. Hold to what you have so no one can take away your crown.

¹²The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, the name of the city of my God (the new Jerusalem, that comes down out of heaven from my God), and my new name.¹³Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

¹⁴"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

"The words of the Amen, the reliable and true witness, the ruler over God's creation.

¹⁵"I know your deeds and that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot!¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to vomit you out of my mouth.

¹⁷For you say, 'I am rich, I have had many material possessions, and I need nothing.' But you do not know that you are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.¹⁸Listen to my advice: Buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and brilliant white garments so you may clothe yourself and not show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to anoint your eyes so you will see.

¹⁹I rebuke and discipline everyone whom I love. Therefore, be earnest and repent.²⁰Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his home and will eat with him, and he with me.

²¹The one who conquers I will give him the right to sit down with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.²²Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."""

Revelation 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 2 and 3 together are usually called the "seven letters to the seven churches." You may wish to set each letter apart. The reader can then easily see that they are separate letters.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with verse 7.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven spirits of God

These spirits are the seven spirits of [Revelation 1:4](#).

Seven stars

These stars are the seven stars of [Revelation 1:20](#).

Important metaphors in this chapter

Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking

Jesus speaks of his desire to have the Christians in Laodicea obey him as if he were a man asking people in a house to allow him to enter and eat with them

"Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches"

The speaker knew that almost all of his readers had physical ears. The ear here is a metonym for hearing what God says and desiring to obey him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The angel of the church"

The word "angel" here can also mean "messenger." This might refer to the messenger or leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in [Revelation 1:20](#).

"The words of the one who"

The verses with these words can be difficult to translate. They do not make complete sentences. You may need to add "These are" to the beginning of these verses. Also, Jesus used these words to speak of himself as if he were speaking of another person. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking of other people. Jesus began speaking in [Revelation 1:17](#). He continues to speak through the end of Chapter 3.

Links:

- [Revelation 3:1 Notes](#)
-

Revelation 3:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Sardis.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Sardis

This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

the seven spirits

The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:4]

the seven stars

These stars are symbols that represent the seven angels of the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:16]

You have a name that you are alive

The word "name" here is a metonym for a reputation. Alternate translation: "You have a reputation for being alive" or "People think that you are alive"

alive ... dead

Obeying and honoring God is spoken of as being alive; disobeying and dishonoring him is spoken of as being dead.

Revelation 3:2

Wake up and strengthen what remains but is about to die

The good deeds done by the believers in Sardis are spoken of as if they were alive but in danger of dying. Alternate translation: "Wake up and complete the work that remains; otherwise what you have done will become worthless" or "Wake up. If you do not finish

what you have started to do, your previous work will have been useless"

Wake up

Being alert to danger is spoken of as waking up. Alternate translation: "Be alert" or "Be careful"

Revelation 3:3

what you have received and heard

This refers to God's word, which they believed. Alternate translation: "God's word that you heard and the truth that you believed"

if you do not wake up

Being alert to danger is spoken of as waking up. See how you translated "wake up" on [Revelation 3:2]

I will come as a thief

Jesus will come at a time when people do not expect him, just as a thief comes when not expected.

Revelation 3:4

a few names

The word "names" is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "a few people"

have not stained their clothes

Jesus speaks of sin in a person's life as if it were a stain on clothes. Alternate translation: "have not made their lives sinful"

will walk with me

People commonly spoke of living as "walking." Alternate translation: "will live with me"

dressed in white

White clothes represent a pure life without sin. Alternate translation: "and they will be dressed in white, which shows that they are pure"

Revelation 3:5

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

will be clothed in white garments

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "will wear white garments" or "I will give white clothes"

I will confess his name

He would announce that the person belongs to him, not simply say the person's name. Alternate translation: "I will announce that he belongs to me"

before my Father

"in the presence of my Father"

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

Revelation 3:6

Let the one who has an ear hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 3:7

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Philadelphia.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Philadelphia

This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

key of David

Jesus speaks of his authority to decide who may go into his kingdom as if it were King David's key.

he opens and no one shuts

"he opens the door to the kingdom and no one can close it"

he shuts and no one can open

"he closes the door and no one can open it"

Revelation 3:8

I have put before you an open door

"I have opened a door for you"

you have obeyed my word

Possible meanings are 1) "you have followed by teachings" or 2) "you have obeyed my commands"

my name

The word "name" here is a metonym for the person who has that name. Alternate translation: "me"

Revelation 3:9

General Information:

The writer begins his sentence with "I will cause," but he does not finish the sentence by telling what he will cause "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan" to do. He begins the sentence again with "I will make them," where "them" refers to "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan."

synagogue of Satan

People who gather to obey or honor Satan are spoken of as if they were in a synagogue, a place of worship and teaching for the Jews. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:9]

those calling themselves Jews but are not, but rather liars

"those calling themselves Jews when they are not Jews: instead, they are liars." These words further describe "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan."

bow down

This is a sign of submission, not worship. Alternate translation: "bow down in submission"

before your feet

Here the word "feet" represent the person before whom these people bow down. Alternate translation: "before you" or "to you"

they will know

"they will learn" or "they will admit"

Revelation 3:10

will also keep you from the hour of testing

"will also prevent the hour of testing from happening to you" or "will protect you so you do not enter the hour of testing"

hour of testing

"time of testing." This probably means "the time when people try to make you disobey me."

is coming

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 3:11

I am coming soon

It is understood that he is coming in order to judge. Alternate translation: "I am coming to judge soon"

Hold to what you have

Continuing to believe firmly in Christ is spoken of as if it were holding something tightly. Alternate translation: "Continue to believe firmly"

crown

A crown was a wreath, originally of olive branches or laurel leaves, that was put on the head of a victorious

athlete. Here "crown" stands for a reward. See how you translated "crown" in Revelation 2:10.

Revelation 3:12

The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God

Here "The one who conquers" refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 3:13

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 3:14

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Laodicea.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Laodicea

This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

The words of the Amen

Here "the Amen" is a name for Jesus Christ. He guarantees God's promises by saying amen to them.

the ruler over God's creation

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who rules over everything that God created" or 2) "the one through whom God created everything."

Revelation 3:15

you are neither cold nor hot

The writer speaks of the Laodiceans as if they were water. Possible meanings are 1) "cold" and "hot" represent two extremes of spiritual interest or love for God, where "cold" is to be completely against God, and to be "hot" is to be zealous to serve him, or 2) "cold" and "hot" both refer to water that is useful for drinking or for cooking or healing, respectively. Alternate translation: "you are like water that is neither cold nor hot"

Revelation 3:16

I am about to vomit you out of my mouth

Rejecting them is spoken of as vomiting them out of the mouth. Alternate translation: "I will reject you as I would spit out lukewarm water"

Revelation 3:17

you are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked

Jesus speaks of their spiritual condition as if he were speaking about their physical condition. Alternate translation: "You are like people who are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked"

Revelation 3:18

Buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and brilliant white garments so you may clothe yourself and not show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to anoint your eyes so you will see

Here to "buy" represents receiving things from Jesus that have true spiritual value. The "gold refined by fire" represents spiritual wealth. The "brilliant white garments" represents righteousness. And the "salve to anoint your eyes" represents the ability to understand spiritual things. Alternate translation: "Come to me and receive spiritual wealth, which is more valuable than gold that is refined by fire. Receive from me righteousness, which is like brilliant white garments, so that you will not be ashamed. And receive from me

wisdom, which is like salve for the eyes, so that you may understand spiritual things"

Revelation 3:19

be earnest and repent

"be serious and repent"

Revelation 3:20

I am standing at the door and am knocking

Jesus speaks about wanting people to relate to him as if he wanted them to invite him into their home. Alternate translation: "I am like one standing at the door and knocking"

am knocking

When people want someone to welcome them into their home, they knock on the door. Alternate translation: "I want you to let me come inside"

hears my voice

The phrase "my voice" refers to Christ speaking. Alternate translation: "hears me speak" or "hears me call"

I will come into his home

Some languages might prefer the verb "go" here. Alternate translation: "I will go in to his home"

and will eat with him

This represents being together as friends.

Revelation 3:21

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

to sit down with me on my throne

To sit on a throne means to rule. Alternate translation: "to rule with me" or "to sit down on my throne and rule with me"

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

Revelation 3:22

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the Son of Man's messages to the angels of the seven churches.

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and

put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

4 ¹After these things I looked, and I saw an open door in heaven. The first voice that I had heard was speaking to me like a trumpet, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after these things."² At once I was in the Spirit, and I saw there a throne placed in heaven, with someone sitting on it.³ The one who was sitting on it looked like jasper and carnelian. There was a rainbow around the throne. The rainbow was like an emerald in appearance.

⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, dressed with white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming lamps were burning in front of the throne, lamps that were the seven spirits of God.

⁶Before the throne was a sea of glass, like crystal. In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes, front and back.

⁷The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.⁸ The four living creatures each had six wings, full of eyes on top and underneath. Night and day they do not stop saying,

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and who is, and who is to come."

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever,¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before the one seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne, saying,

¹¹ "Worthy are you, our Lord and our God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created."

Revelation 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with verses 8 and 11.

John has finished describing the letters to the churches. He now begins to describe a vision that God showed him.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jasper, carnelian, and emerald

These words refer to kinds of special stones that the people in John's day considered valuable. It may be difficult for you to translate these words if people in your culture do not value special kinds of stones.

Twenty-four elders

Elders are church leaders. Twenty-four elders may be symbolic of the whole church through the ages. There were twelve tribes in Old Testament Israel and twelve apostles in the New Testament church.

Seven spirits of God

These spirits are the seven spirits of [Revelation 1:4](#).

Giving glory to God

God's glory is the great beauty and radiant majesty that God has because he is God. Other Bible writers describe it as if it were a light so bright that no one can look at it. No one can give God this kind of glory, because it is already his. For people "to give glory" to God and for God "to receive glory" means that people are praising and worshipping God because of the glory he already has. (See: glory and worthy and worship)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Difficult images

Such things as bolts of lightning coming from the throne, lamps that are spirits, and a sea in front of the throne may be difficult to imagine, and so the words for them may be difficult to translate.

Links:

- [Revelation 4:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 4:1

General Information:

John begins to describe his vision of the throne of God.

After these things

"Just after I had seen these things." Here "these things" refers to what John saw in (Revelation 2:1-3:22)

an open door in heaven

This expression stands for the ability that God gave John to see into heaven, at least by means of a vision.

speaking to me like a trumpet

How the voice was like a trumpet can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "speaking to me loudly like the sound of a trumpet"

trumpet

This refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:10.

Revelation 4:2

I was in the Spirit

John speaks of being influenced by God's Spirit as if he were in the Spirit. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:10]

Revelation 4:3

jasper and carnelian

These are valuable stones. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal, and carnelian may have been red.

emerald

a green, valuable stone

Revelation 4:4

twenty-four elders

"24 elders"

golden crowns

These were likenesses of wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Such crowns, made of leaves, were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.

Revelation 4:5

flashes of lightning

Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears.

rumblings, and crashes of thunder

These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder.

seven spirits of God

The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:4]

Revelation 4:6

a sea of glass

How it was like glass or a sea can be stated clearly. Possible meanings are 1) a sea is spoken of as if it were glass. Alternate translation: "a sea that was as smooth as glass" or 2) glass if spoken of as if it were a sea. Alternate translation: "glass that was spread out like a sea"

like crystal

How it was like crystal can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "clear as crystal"

In the middle of the throne and around the throne

"Immediately around the throne" or "Close to the throne and around it"

four living creatures

"four living beings" or "four living things"

Revelation 4:7

The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle

How the head of each living creature appeared to John is expressed as a comparison with something more familiar.

living creature

"living being" or "living thing." See how you translated this in Revelation 4:6

Revelation 4:8

full of eyes on top and underneath

The top and bottom of each wing was covered with eyes.

who is to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 4:9

the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever

This is one person. The one who sits on the throne lives forever and ever.

forever and ever

These two words mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "for all eternity"

Revelation 4:10

twenty-four elders

"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]

fall down

They purposely lie down facing the ground to show that they are worshiping.

They lay their crowns before the throne

These crowns looked like wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. The elders were respectfully placing the crowns on the ground, showing that they were submitting to God's authority to rule. Alternate translation: "they lay their crowns before the throne to show that they are submitting to him"

lay

Possible meanings are 1) to place or 2) to throw down forcibly, as of something worthless ("throw," Revelation 2:22). The reader should understand that the elders are acting respectfully.

Revelation 4:11

our Lord and our God

"our Lord and God." This is one person, the one sitting on the throne.

to receive glory and honor and power

These are things that God always has. Being praised for having them is spoken of as receiving them. Alternate

translation: "to be praised for your glory, honor, and power" or "for everyone to praise you because you are glorious, honorable, and powerful"

5 ¹Then I saw in the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne a scroll written on the front and on the back, sealed with seven seals.²I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?"

³No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to read it.⁴I wept bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to read it.⁵But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

⁶I saw a Lamb standing in the middle of the throne area and among the four living creatures and among the elders. He looked as though he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.⁷He went and took hold of the scroll out of the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne.

⁸When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of them had a harp and a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people.

⁹They sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals.

For you were slaughtered,
and with your blood you purchased people for God
from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

¹⁰ You made them a kingdom and priests to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth."

¹¹Then I looked and heard the sound of many angels who encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. Their total number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands.¹²They said in a loud voice,

"Worthy is the Lamb, who has been slaughtered,
to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength,
honor, glory, and praise."

¹³I heard every created thing that was in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea—everything in them—saying,

"To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise, honor, glory, and dominion
forever and ever."

¹⁴The four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. [1](#)

[1](#)Some important and ancient Greek copies read, the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the one who lives forever and ever .

Revelation 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 9-13.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sealed scroll

Kings and important people in John's time wrote important documents on large pieces of paper or animal skin. They then rolled them up and sealed them with wax so they would stay closed. Only the person to whom the document was written had the authority to open it by breaking the seal. In this chapter, "the one who was seated on the throne" had written the scroll. Only the person called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David" and "the Lamb" had the authority to open it. (See: scroll and authority)

Twenty-four elders

Elders are church leaders. Twenty-four elders may be symbolic of the whole church through the ages. There were twelve tribes in Old Testament Israel and twelve apostles in the New Testament church.

Christian prayers

The prayers of Christians are described as incense. Christian prayers have a good smell to God. He is pleased when Christians pray.

Seven spirits of God

These spirits are the seven spirits of [Revelation 1:4](#).

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

The "Lion of the tribe of Judah" and the "Root of David" are metaphors that refer to Jesus. Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah and the family of David. Lions are fierce, and all animals and people are afraid of them, so they are a metaphor for a king whom everyone obeys. The words "Root of David" speak of Israel's King David as if he were a seed that God had planted and of Jesus as if he were a root growing from that seed.

Links:

- [Revelation 5:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 5:1	a scroll written on the front and on the back
Connecting Statement:	"a scroll with writing on the front and the back"
John continues to describe what he saw in his vision of the throne of God.	sealed with seven seals
Then I saw	"and it had seven seals keeping it closed"
"After I saw those things, I saw"	Revelation 5:2
the one who was seated on the throne	Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?
This is the same "one" as in Revelation 4:2-3.	The person would need to break the seals in order to open the scroll. Alternate translation: "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?

This can be translated as a command: "The one who is worthy to do this should come to break the seals and open the scroll!"

Revelation 5:3

in heaven or on the earth or under the earth

This means everywhere: the place where God and the angels live, the place where people and animals live, and the place where those who have died are. Alternate translation: "anywhere in heaven or on the earth or under the earth"

Revelation 5:4

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 5:5

Look

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

The Lion of the tribe of Judah

This is a title for the man from the tribe of Judah that God had promised would be the great king. Alternate translation: "The one who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah" or "The king who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah"

The Lion

The king is spoken of as if he were a lion because a lion is very strong.

the Root of David

This is a title for the descendant of David that God had promised would be the great king. Alternate translation: "the one who is called the Root of David"

the Root of David

The descendant is spoken of as if David's family were a tree and he were a root of that tree. Alternate translation: "the Descendant of David"

Revelation 5:6

General Information:

The Lamb appears in the throne room.

a Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ.

seven spirits of God

The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:4.

sent out into all the earth

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "which God sent out over all the earth"

Revelation 5:7

He went

He approached the throne. Some languages would use the verb "come." Alternate translation: "He came"

Revelation 5:8

the Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

twenty-four elders

"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]

fell down

"lay down on the ground." Their faces were toward the ground to show that they were worshipping the Lamb. They did this on purpose; they did not fall accidentally.

Each of them

Possible meanings are 1) "each of the elders and living creatures" or 2) "each of the elders."

a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people

The incense here is a symbol for the believers' prayers to God.

Revelation 5:9

For you were slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For they slaughtered you" or "For people killed you"

slaughtered

If your language has a word for killing an animal for a sacrifice, consider using it here.

with your blood

Since blood represents a person's life, losing the blood represents dying. This probably means "by your death" or "by dying."

you purchased people for God

"you bought people so that they could belong to God" or "you paid the price so that people could belong to God"

from every tribe, language, people, and nation

This means that people from every ethnic group are included.

Revelation 5:10

General Information:

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Revelation 5:11

ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands

Use an expression in your language that shows that it is a huge number. Alternate translation: "millions" or "too many thousands to count"

Revelation 5:12

Worthy is the Lamb, who has been slaughtered

"The Lamb, who has been slaughtered, is worthy"

to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise

These are all things that the Lamb has. Being praised for having them is spoken of as receiving them. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns. See how you translated a similar sentence in [Revelation 4:11]

Revelation 5:13

in heaven and on the earth and under the earth

This means everywhere: the place where God and the angels live, the place where people and animals live, and the place where those who have died are. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:3]

To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be

"May he who sits on the throne and the Lamb have"

Revelation 5:14

General Information:

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⁶ I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice that sounded like thunder, "Come!"² I looked and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown. He came out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

³ When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"⁴ Then another horse came out—fiery red. To its rider was given permission to take peace away from the earth, so that its people would slaughter one another. This rider was given a huge sword.

⁵ When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I saw a black horse, and its rider held a pair of scales in his hand.⁶ I heard what seemed to be a voice among the four living creatures say, "A choenix of wheat for one denarius, and three choenices of barley for a denarius. But do not harm the oil and the wine."

⁷ When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"⁸ Then I saw a pale horse. The rider on it was named Death, and Hades was following him. They were given authority over one-fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine and disease, and with the wild animals of the earth.

⁹ When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God and the testimony which they held.¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "How long, Ruler over all, holy and true, until you judge those who live on the earth, and until you avenge our blood?"¹¹ Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told that they should wait a short time longer until the full number of their fellow servants and their brothers who were to be killed, just as they had been killed, was made complete.

¹² When the Lamb opened the sixth seal, I watched and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as black as sackcloth, and the full moon became like blood.¹³ The stars in the heavens fell to the earth, just as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a stormy wind.¹⁴ The sky vanished like a scroll that was being rolled up. Every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the important people, and the commanders, and the rich, and the powerful, and everyone else, slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.¹⁶ They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us! Hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the Lamb's wrath."¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come. Who is able to stand?"

Revelation 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author describes what happened after the Lamb opens each of the first six seals. The Lamb does not open the seventh seal until Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven Seals

Kings and important people in John's time wrote important documents on large pieces of paper or animal skin. They then rolled them up and sealed them with wax so they would stay closed. Only the person to whom the document was written had the authority to open it by breaking the seal. In this chapter, the Lamb opens the seals.

The Four Horsemen

As the Lamb opens each of the first four seals, the author describes horsemen riding different colored horses. The colors of the horses seem to symbolize how the rider will affect the earth.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The Lamb

This refers to Jesus. In this chapter, it is also a title for Jesus.

Similes

In verses 12-14, the author uses several similes to try to describe the images he sees in the vision. He compares the images to everyday things.

Links:

- [Revelation 6:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 6:1

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the events that happened before the throne of God. The Lamb begins to open the seals on the scroll.

Come!

This is a command to one person, apparently the rider of the white horse who is spoken of in verse 2.

Revelation 6:2

he was given a crown

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "he received a crown" or "God gave him a crown"

a crown

Crowns were wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves and were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads. The crown given to rider may have been hammered out in gold in the likeness of wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves.

Revelation 6:3

the second seal

"the next seal" or "seal number two"

the second living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number two"

Revelation 6:4

came out—fiery red

This can be stated as a second sentence. Alternate translation: "came out. It was red like fire" or "came out. It was bright red"

To its rider was given permission

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God gave permission to its rider" or "Its rider received permission"

This rider was given a huge sword

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "This rider received a huge sword" or "God gave this rider a huge sword"

a huge sword

"a very large sword" or "a great sword"

Revelation 6:5

the third seal

"the next seal" or "seal number three"

the third living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number three"

a pair of scales

a tool used for weighing things

Revelation 6:6

A choenix of wheat for one denarius

Some languages might want a verb such as "cost" or "buy" in the sentence. There was very little wheat for all the people, so its price was very high. Alternate translation: "A choenix of wheat now costs one denarius" or "Buy a choenix of wheat with one denarius"

A choenix of wheat ... three choenices of barley

A "choenix" was a specific measure that was about one liter. The plural of "choenix" is "choenices." Alternate translation: "One liter of wheat ... three liters of barley" or "One bowl of wheat ... three bowls of barley"

one denarius

This coin was worth a day's wages. Alternate translation: "one silver coin" or "the pay for one day of work"

But do not harm the oil and the wine

If the oil and wine were harmed, there would be less of them for people to buy, and their prices would go up.

the oil and the wine

These expressions probably stand for the olive oil harvest and the grape harvest.

Revelation 6:7

the fourth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number four"

the fourth living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number four"

Revelation 6:8

pale horse

"grey horse." This is the color of a dead body, so its color is a symbol of death.

one-fourth of the earth

Here "the earth" represents the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "one-fourth of the people on the earth"

the sword

A sword is a weapon, and here it represents war.

with the wild animals of the earth

This means that Death and Hades would cause the wild animals to attack and kill people.

Revelation 6:9

the fifth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number five"

under the altar

This may have been "at the base of the altar."

those who had been killed

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "those whom others had killed"

because of the word of God and the testimony which they held

Here "word of God" is a metonym for the message from God and "held" is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) holding the testimony refers to believing God's word and testimony. Alternate translation: "because of the teachings of scripture and what they taught about Jesus Christ" or "because they believed the word of God, which is his testimony" or 2) holding the testimony refers to testifying about the word of God. Alternate translation: "because they testified about the word of God"

Revelation 6:10

avenge our blood

The word blood here represents their deaths. Alternate translation: "punish those who killed us"

Revelation 6:11

Then each of them was given a white robe

Either God or an angel gave them a white robe. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then each of them received a white robe"

they were told

Either God or an angel is speaking. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God told them" or "an angel told them"

until the full number of their fellow servants and their brothers who were to be killed, just as they had been killed, was made complete

Here "servants" and "brothers" refer to the same group. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until enemies have killed all of Christ's servants whom God had determined would die, just as those under the altar had died"

brothers

Christians are often spoken of as being one another's brothers. Females were among those spoken of here. Alternate translation: "fellow Christians" or "fellow believers"

Revelation 6:12

the sixth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number six"

as black as sackcloth

Sometimes sackcloth was made of black hair. People would wear sackcloth when they were mourning. The image of sackcloth is meant to lead people to think of death and mourning. Alternate translation: "as black as mourning clothes"

like blood

The image of blood is meant to lead people to think of death. How it was like blood can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "red like blood"

Revelation 6:13

just as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a stormy wind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: ""just as figs do when a stormy wind shakes a fig tree and causes it to drop its unripe figs"

Revelation 6:14

The sky vanished like a scroll that was being rolled up

The sky was normally thought of as being as strong as a sheet of metal, but now it had become as weak as a sheet of paper and was easily torn and rolled up.

Revelation 6:15

the commanders

soldiers who command warriors during battle

caves

large holes in the sides of hills

Revelation 6:16

the face of the one

Here "face" represents "presence." Alternate translation: "the presence of the one" or "the one"

Revelation 6:17

the great day of their wrath has come

The day of their wrath refers to the time when they would punish wicked people. Alternate translation: "this is the terrible time when they will punish people"

has come

Existing now is spoken of as having come.

their wrath

"Their" refers to the one on the throne and the Lamb.

Who is able to stand?

Surviving, or staying alive, is spoken of as if it were standing. This question is used to express great sadness and fear that no one will be able to survive when God

punishes him. Alternate translation: "No one can survive."

7 ¹After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, tightly holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind should blow on the earth, on the sea, or against any tree.²I saw another angel coming up from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were given permission to harm the earth and the sea:³"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

⁴I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000, who were sealed from every tribe of the people of Israel:

⁵ twelve thousand from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Reuben,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Gad,
⁶ twelve thousand from the tribe of Asher,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Naphtali,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Manasseh,
⁷ twelve thousand from the tribe of Simeon,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Levi,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Issachar,
⁸ twelve thousand from the tribe of Zebulun,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Joseph, and
twelve thousand from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.

⁹After these things I looked, and there was a huge multitude that no one could count—from every nation, tribe, people, and language—standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands,¹⁰and they were crying out with a loud voice:

"Salvation belongs to our God,
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!"

¹¹All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne. They worshiped God,¹²saying,

"Amen!
Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength
be to our God forever and ever!
Amen!"

¹³Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these, clothed with white robes, and where did they come from?"¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you know," and he said to me, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ For this reason,

they are before the throne of God,
and they worship him day and night in his temple.

The one who is seated on the throne
will spread his tent over them.

¹⁶ They will not be hungry again,
nor will they be thirsty again.
The sun will not beat down on them,
nor any burning heat.

¹⁷ For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will shepherd them,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Scholars have interpreted parts of this chapter in many different ways. Translators do not need to fully understand what this chapter means to accurately translate its contents.

It is important to accurately translate the large numbers in this chapter. The number 144,000 is twelve times twelve thousand.

Translators should be aware that the tribes of the people of Israel are not listed in this chapter the same as they are generally listed in the Old Testament.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 5-8 and 15-17.

Special concepts in this chapter

Worship

God saves his people and keeps them through times of trouble. His people respond by worshipping him. (See: worship)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The Lamb

This refers to Jesus. In this chapter, it is also a title for Jesus.

Links:

- [Revelation 7:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 7:1	would be used to put a mark on God's people. Alternate translation: "the marker of the living God" or "the stamp of the living God"
General Information:	
John begins to describe a vision of 144,000 servants of God who become marked with seals. Their marking takes place after the Lamb opens the sixth seal and before he opens the seventh seal.	Revelation 7:3
the four corners of the earth	put a seal on the foreheads
The earth is spoken of as if it were flat and square like a sheet of paper. The phrase "the four corners" refers to the north, south, east, and west.	The word "seal" here refers to a mark. This mark shows that the people belong to God and that he will protect them. Alternate translation: "put a mark on the foreheads"
Revelation 7:2	foreheads
the seal of the living God	The forehead is the top of the face, above the eyes.
The word "seal" here refers to a tool that is used to press a mark onto a wax seal. In this case the tool	

Revelation 7:4

those who were sealed

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "those whom God's angel marked"

144,000

"one hundred forty-four thousand people"

Revelation 7:5

twelve thousand from the tribe

"12,000 people from the tribe"

twelve thousand from ... Judah were sealed

This can be translated in active form. See how you translated similar words in [Revelation 7:4]

Revelation 7:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 7:7

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the people of Israel who were sealed.

Revelation 7:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 7:9

General Information:

John begins to describe a second vision about a multitude praising God. This vision also takes place after the Lamb opens the sixth seal and before he opens the seventh seal.

a huge multitude

"a huge crowd" or "a great number of people"

white robes

Here the color "white" represents purity.

Revelation 7:10

Salvation belongs to

"Salvation comes from"

Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!

They were praising God and the Lamb. The noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "Our God, who sits on the throne, and the Lamb have saved us!"

Revelation 7:11

the four living creatures

These are the four creatures mentioned in Revelation 4:6-8.

they fell on their faces

Here "fell on their faces" is an idiom that means they lay down facing the ground. See how you translated "prostrated themselves" in [Revelation 4:10]

Revelation 7:12

Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength be to our God

"Our God is worthy of all praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power and strength" or "We must give praise, glory, thanks, and honor to our God"

forever and ever

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the praise will never end.

Revelation 7:13

these, clothed with white robes

The white robes showed that these people were righteous.

Revelation 7:14

have come out of the great tribulation

"have survived the great tribulation" or "have lived through the great tribulation"

the great tribulation

"the time of terrible suffering"

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb

People who have been made righteous by the blood of the Lamb are spoken of as if they have washed their robes in his blood. Alternate translation: "They have been made righteous by washing their robes white in his blood"

the blood of the Lamb

The word "blood" is used to refer to the death of Lamb.

Revelation 7:15

Connecting Statement:

The elder continues to speak to John.

they ... them

These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

day and night

These two parts of the day are used together to mean "all the time" or "without stopping"

will spread his tent over them

"will put his tent up over them." Protecting them is spoken of as if it were giving them shelter to live under. Alternate translation: "will shelter them" or "will protect them"

Revelation 7:16

They ... them

These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

The sun will not beat down

The sun's heat no longer causing people to suffer is spoken of as if the sun would not beat down on them. Alternate translation: "The sun will not burn them" or "The sun will not make them weak"

Revelation 7:17

them ... them ... their

These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

the Lamb at the center of the throne will

"the Lamb, who is standing in the middle of the area around the throne, will be"

For the Lamb ... will shepherd them

The elder speaks of the Lamb's care for his people as if it were a shepherd's care for his sheep. Alternate translation: "For the Lamb ... will be like a shepherd to them" or "For the Lamb ... will care for them as a person cares for his animals"

he will guide them to springs of living water

The elder speaks of what gives life as if it were springs of fresh water. Alternate translation: "he will guide them like a shepherd guiding his sheep to fresh water" or "he will guide them to life like a shepherd guiding his sheep to living water"

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes

Tears here represent sadness. Alternate translation: "God will wipe away their sadness, like wiping away tears" or "God will cause them to not be sad anymore"

⁸When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was a silence in heaven for about half an hour.²Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

³Another angel came, holding a golden incense bowl, standing at the incense altar. Much incense was given to him so that he would offer it with the prayers of all God's holy people on the golden incense altar before the throne.⁴The smoke of the incense—with the prayers of God's holy people—rose up before God from the angel's hand.⁵The angel took the incense bowl and filled it with fire from the altar. Then he threw it down to the earth, and there were crashes of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

⁶The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

⁷The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood. It was thrown down onto the earth so that a third of it was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. ¹

⁸The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea became blood,⁹a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a huge star fell from the sky, blazing like a torch, on a third of the rivers and springs of water.¹¹The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the waters that became bitter.

¹²The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, as well as a third of the moon and a third of the stars. So a third of them turned dark; a third of the day and a third of the night had no light.

¹³I looked, and I heard an eagle ² that was flying overhead calling out with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to those who live on the earth, because of the remaining trumpet blasts that are about to be sounded by the three angels."

¹Some important and ancient Greek copies leave out, so that a third of it was burned up .

²Some copies have the word angel instead of eagle .

Revelation 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven seals and seven trumpets

This chapter begins to show what happens when the Lamb opens the seventh seal. God uses the prayers of all believers to cause dramatic things to happen on earth. John then describes what happens when angels sound the first four of seven trumpets.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes

In verses 8 and 10, John uses similes to try to describe the images he sees in the vision. He compares the images to everyday things.

Links:

- [Revelation 8:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 8:1

Connecting Statement:

The Lamb opens the seventh seal.

the seventh seal

This is the last of the seven seals on the scroll. Alternate translation: "the next seal" or "the final seal" or "seal number seven"

Revelation 8:2

seven trumpets were given to them

They were each given one trumpet. This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God gave them seven trumpets" or 2) "the Lamb gave them seven trumpets"

Revelation 8:3

he would offer it

"he would offer the incense to God by burning it"

Revelation 8:4

the angel's hand

This refers to the bowl in the angel's hand. Alternate translation: "the bowl in the angel's hand"

Revelation 8:5

filled it with fire

The word "fire" here probably refers to burning coals. Alternate translation: "filled it with burning coals" or "filled it with coals of fire"

Revelation 8:6

General Information:

The seven angels sound the seven trumpets, one at a time.

Revelation 8:7

It was thrown down onto the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The angel threw the hail and fire mixed with blood down onto the earth"

a third of it was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it burned up a third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass"

a third

"A third" is a fraction.

Revelation 8:8

The second angel

"The next angel" or "Angel number two"

something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angel threw something like a great mountain burning with fire"

A third

"A third" is a fraction.

became blood

Possible meanings are it 1) "became red like blood" or it 2) really became blood.

Revelation 8:9

the living creatures in the sea

"the things living in the sea" or "the fish and other animals that lived in the sea"

Revelation 8:10

a huge star fell from the sky, blazing like a torch

"a huge star that was blazing like a torch fell from the sky." The fire of the huge star looked similar to the fire of a torch.

torch

a stick with one end lit on fire to provide light

Revelation 8:11

The name of the star is Wormwood

Wormwood is a shrub that tastes bitter. People made medicine out of it, but they also believed that it was poisonous. Alternate translation: "The name of the star is Bitterness" or "The name of the star is Bitter Medicine"

became wormwood

The bitter taste of the water is spoken of as if it were wormwood. Alternate translation: "became bitter like wormwood" or "became bitter"

died from the waters that became bitter

"died when they drank the bitter water"

Revelation 8:12

a third of the sun was struck

Causing something bad to happen to the sun is spoken of as striking, or hitting, it. This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "a third of the sun changed" or "God changed a third of the sun"

a third of them turned dark

Possible meanings are 1) "one third of the time they were dark" or 2) "one third of the sun, one third of the moon, and one third of the stars became dark"

a third of the day and a third of the night had no light

"there was no light during one third of the day and one third of the night" or "they did not shine during one third of the day and one third of the night"

Revelation 8:13

because of the remaining trumpet blasts that are about to be sounded by the three angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the three angels who have not yet sounded their trumpets are about to sound them"

9¹Then the fifth angel sounded his trumpet. I saw a star from heaven that had fallen to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.²He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the shaft like smoke from a huge furnace. The sun and the air were turned dark by the smoke from the shaft.

³Out of the smoke locusts came on the earth, and they were given power like that of scorpions on the earth.⁴They were told not to damage the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree, but only the people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

⁵They were not given permission to kill those people, but only to torture them for five months. Their agony would be like the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a person.⁶In those days people will seek death but will not find it. They will greatly desire to die, but death will flee from them.

⁷The locusts looked like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like crowns of gold, and their faces were like human faces.⁸They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.⁹They had breastplates like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like the sound made by many chariots and horses running into battle.

¹⁰They had tails with stingers like scorpions; in their tails they had power to harm people for five months.¹¹They had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew was Abaddon, and in Greek he had the name Apollyon.

¹²The first woe is past. Look! After this there are still two disasters to come.

¹³The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is present before God,¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who had been bound at the great Euphrates River."¹⁵The four angels who had been prepared for that hour, that day, that month, and that year were released to kill a third of mankind.

¹⁶The number of the soldiers on horseback was 200,000,000. I heard their number.¹⁷This is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode on them: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur.

¹⁸A third of the people were killed by these three plagues: the fire, smoke, and sulfur that came out of their mouths.¹⁹For the power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails—for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflicted wounds on people.

²⁰The rest of mankind, those who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, nor did they stop worshiping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—things that cannot see, hear, or walk.²¹Neither did they repent of their murders, their sorcery, their sexual immorality, or their acts of theft.

Revelation 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, John continues to describe what happens when angels sound seven trumpets.

Woe

John describes several "woes" in the Book of Revelation. This chapter begins to describe three "woes" announced at the end of Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Animal imagery

This chapter includes several animals: locusts, scorpions, horses, lions, and snakes. These animals represent different qualities or traits. For example, a lion is powerful and dangerous. Translators should use the same

animals in their translation if possible. If the animal is unknown, one with similar qualities or traits should be used.

Bottomless pit

This image is seen several times in the Book of Revelation. It is a picture of hell as being inescapable and the opposite direction as heaven. (See: hell)

Abaddon and Apollyon

"Abaddon" is a Hebrew word. "Apollyon" is a Greek word. Both words mean "Destroyer." John used the sounds of the Hebrew word and wrote them with Greek letters. The ULB and UDB write the sounds of both words with English letters. Translators are encouraged to transliterate these words using the letters of the target language. The original Greek readers would have understood "Apollyon" to mean "Destroyer." So translators may also supply what it means in the text or in a footnote.

Repentance

Despite great signs, people are described as not repenting and so remain in their sin. People refusing to repent are also mentioned in Chapter 16. (See: repent and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

John uses many similes in this chapter. They help to describe the images that he sees in his vision.

Links:

- [Revelation 9:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 9:1	the bottomless pit
Connecting Statement:	This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom.
The fifth of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.	
I saw a star from heaven that had fallen	Revelation 9:2
John saw the star after it had fallen. He did not watch it fall.	like smoke from a huge furnace
the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit	A huge furnace gives off a great amount of thick, dark smoke. Alternate translation: "like the great amount of smoke that comes from a huge furnace"
"the key that unlocks the shaft of the bottomless pit"	turned dark
the shaft of the bottomless pit	"became dark"
Possible meanings are 1) "shaft" is another way of referring to the pit and describes it as long and narrow, or 2) "shaft" refers to the opening of the pit.	

Revelation 9:3

locusts

insects that fly together in large groups. People fear them because they can eat up all the leaves in gardens and on trees.

power like that of scorpions

Scorpions have the ability to sting and poison other animals and people. Alternate translation: "the ability to sting people as scorpions do"

scorpions

small insects with poisonous stingers on their tails. Their sting is extremely painful and the pain lasts a long time.

Revelation 9:4

They were told not to damage the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree

Ordinary locusts were a terrible threat to people because when they swarm, they can eat up all the grass and all the leaves on plants and trees. These locusts were told not to do this.

but only the people

The phrase "to damage" or "to harm" is understood. Alternate translation: "but only to harm the people"

the seal of God

The word "seal" refers a mark that would be left by a tool being pressed into a wax seal. In this case it refers to mark that God would place upon the foreheads of his people. The people who do not have this mark do not belong to God. See how you translated "seal" in [Revelation 7:3]

foreheads

The forehead is the top of the face, above the eyes.

Revelation 9:5

They were not given permission

"They" refers to the locusts. (Revelation 9:3)

those people

the people whom the locusts were stinging

but only to torture them

Here the words "given permission" are understood. Alternate translation: "but only given permission to torture them"

to torture them for five months

The locusts would be allowed to do this for five months.

to torture them

"to make them suffer terrible pain"

the sting of a scorpion

A scorpion is a small insect with a poisonous stinger at the end of its long tail. The sting can cause severe pain or even death.

Revelation 9:6

people will seek death but will not find it

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "death." Alternate translation: "people will try to find a way to die but will not find it" or "people will try to kill themselves but will not find a way to die"

will greatly desire to die

"will want very much to die" or "will wish that they could die"

death will flee from them

John speaks of death as if it were a person or animal that could run away. Alternate translation: "they will not be able to die" or "they will not die"

Revelation 9:7

General Information:

These locusts did not look like ordinary locusts. John describes them by telling how parts of them looked like other things.

crowns of gold

These were likenesses of wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Examples actually made of leaves were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.

Revelation 9:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 9:9

General Information:

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Revelation 9:10

They had tails

The word "They" refers to the locusts.

with stingers like scorpions

A scorpion is a small insect with a poisonous stinger at the end of its long tail. Its sting can cause severe pain or even death. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 9:3]

in their tails they had power to harm people for five months

Possible meanings are 1) they had power for five months to harm people or 2) they could sting people and the people would be in pain for five months.

Revelation 9:11

the bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Abaddon ... Apollyon

Both names mean "Destroyer."

Revelation 9:12

there are still two disasters to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 9:13

Connecting Statement:

The sixth of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.

I heard a voice coming

The voice refers to the one who was speaking. John does not say who the speaker was, but it may have been God. Alternate translation: "I heard someone speaking"

horns of the golden altar

These are horn-shaped extensions at each of the four corners of the top of the altar.

Revelation 9:14

the four angels who had been bound

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "the four angels whom God had commanded someone to bind" or "the four angels whom God bound"

Revelation 9:15

The four angels who had been prepared for ... that year were released

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "The angel released the four angels who had been prepared for ... that year"

The four angels who had been prepared

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "The four angels whom God had prepared"

for that hour, that day, that month, and that year

These words are used to show that the time to release the angels is a specific, chosen time and not just any time. Alternate translation: "for that exact time"

Revelation 9:16

General Information:

Suddenly, 200,000,000 soldiers on horseback appear in John's vision. John is no longer speaking about the four angels mentioned in the previous verse.

200,000,000

Some ways to express this are: "two hundred million" or "two hundred thousand thousand" or "twenty thousand times ten thousand." If your language does not have a specific number for this, you could also see how you translated a similar large number in [Revelation 5:11]

Revelation 9:17

fiery red

"red like fire" or "bright red." See how you translated this in Revelation 6:3.

out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur

"fire, smoke, and sulfur came out of their mouths"

Revelation 9:18

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the horses and the plagues brought upon humanity.

A third of the people

"One third of the people." See how you translated "A third" in [Revelation 8:7]

Revelation 9:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 9:20

those who were not killed by these plagues

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the plagues had not killed"

the works of their hands

The word "hand" here is a metonym for the person whose hands they are. Alternate translation: "the deeds they had done"

things that cannot see, hear, or walk

This phrase reminds us that idols are not alive and do not deserve to be worshiped. But the people did not stop worshiping them. Alternate translation: "even though idols cannot see, hear, or walk"

Revelation 9:21

General Information:

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10 ¹Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was clothed in a cloud, and there was a rainbow above his head. His face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire.²He held a little scroll, which was opened in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.

³Then he shouted in a loud voice like a roaring lion. When he shouted, the seven thunders spoke out with their sounds.⁴When the seven thunders spoke out, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders said. Do not write it down."

⁵Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and the earth raised his right hand to heaven.⁶He swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and all that is in it, the earth and all that is on it, and the sea and all that is in it, and the angel said, "There will be no more delay.⁷But on the day when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, then the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he proclaimed the good news to his servants the prophets."

⁸The voice I heard from heaven spoke to me again: "Go, take the open scroll that is in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land."⁹Then I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey."

¹⁰I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but after I ate it, my stomach became bitter.¹¹Then someone said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

Revelation 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven thunders

John here describes the seven thunders as making sounds that he could understand as words. However, translators should use their normal word for "thunder" when translating these verses.

"The mystery of God"

This refers to some aspect of the hidden plan of God. It is not necessary to know what this mystery is to translate it. (See: reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

John uses similes to help him describe the face, legs, and voice of the mighty angel. Translators should understand other objects in this chapter, such as the rainbow and the cloud, with their normal meanings.

Links:

- [Revelation 10:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 10:1	happening from earth. This takes place between the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.
General Information:	He was clothed in a cloud
John begins to describe a vision of a mighty angel holding a scroll. In John's vision he is viewing what is	John speaks of the angel as if he were wearing a cloud as his clothing. This expression may be understood as metaphor. However, because very unusual things were

often seen in visions, it might be understood as a literally true statement in its context.

His face was like the sun

John compares the brightness of his face with the brightness of the sun. Alternate translation: "His face was bright like the sun"

his feet were like pillars of fire

The word "feet" here refers to the legs. Alternate translation: "his legs were like pillars of fire"

Revelation 10:2

He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land

"He stood with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land"

Revelation 10:3

Then he shouted

"Then the angel shouted"

the seven thunders spoke out

The thunder is described as if it were a person who could speak. Alternate translation: "the seven thunders made a loud noise" or "the thunder sounded very loudly seven times"

seven thunders

Thunder occurring seven times is spoken of as if it were seven different "thunders."

Revelation 10:4

but I heard a voice from heaven

The word "voice" refers to words spoken by someone other than the angel. Alternate translation: "but I heard someone speaking from heaven"

Seal up

People in John's day would write a message on a scroll and then seal the scroll so that only the person whom the writers wanted to open it were able to open it. This is a metaphor for keeping something secret. Alternate translation: "Keep secret"

Revelation 10:5

raised his right hand to heaven

He did this to show that he was swearing by God.

Revelation 10:6

He swore by the one who lives forever and ever

"He asked that what he was going to say would be confirmed by the one who lives forever and ever"

the one who lives forever and ever

Here "the one" refers to God.

There will be no more delay

"There will be no more waiting" or "God will not delay"

Revelation 10:7

the mystery of God will be accomplished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will accomplish his mystery" or "God will complete his secret plan"

Revelation 10:8

Connecting Statement:

John hears the voice from heaven, which he had heard in Revelation 10:4, speak to him again.

The voice I heard from heaven

The word "voice" refers to the speaker. Alternate translation: "The one I heard speak from heaven" or "The one who had spoken to me from heaven"

I heard

John heard

Revelation 10:9

He said to me

"The angel said to me"

make ... bitter

"make ... sour" or "make ... acid." This refers to a bad taste from the stomach after eating something that is not good.

Revelation 10:10

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 10:11

languages

This refers to the people who speak the languages.
Alternate translation: "language communities" or
"groups of people who speak their own languages"

11 ¹A reed was given to me to use like a measuring rod. I was told, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it.²But do not measure the courtyard outside the temple, for it has been given over to the Gentiles. They will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

³I will give my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."⁴These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth.⁵If anyone chooses to harm them, fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies. Anyone who wishes to harm them must be killed in this way.

⁶These witnesses have authority to close up the sky so that no rain will fall during the days that they prophesy. They have power to turn the waters to blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague whenever they wish.⁷When they will have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will wage war against them. He will conquer them and kill them.

⁸Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city (which is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt) where their Lord was crucified.⁹For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language, and nation will look at their bodies. They will not permit them to be placed in a tomb.

¹⁰Those who live on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate. They will even send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who lived on the earth.¹¹But after three and a half days a breath of life from God will enter them, and they will stand on their feet. Great fear will fall on those who see them.¹²Then they will hear a loud voice from heaven say to them, "Come up here!" Then they will go up into heaven in a cloud, while their enemies look on.

¹³At that hour there will be a major earthquake, and a tenth part of the city will collapse. Seven thousand people will be killed in the earthquake, and the survivors will be terrified and give glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴The second woe is past. Look! The third woe is coming quickly.

¹⁵Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and loud voices spoke in heaven and said,

"The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,
and he will reign forever and ever."

¹⁶Then the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones in the presence of God, fell upon their faces and worshiped God.¹⁷They said,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
the one who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign. ¹

¹⁸ The nations were enraged,
but your wrath has come.
The time has come for the dead to be judged
and for you to reward your servants the prophets
and God's holy people, and those who feared your name,
both the unimportant and the mighty.
The time has come
for you to destroy those who are destroying the earth."

¹⁹Then God's temple in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.

¹The best copies of the ancient Greek text have the phrase who was, and who is, but some later copies of the Greek add the phrase: and who is to come .

Revelation 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 15 and 17-18.

Woe

John describes several "woes" in the book of Revelation. This chapter describes a second and third "woe" announced at the end of Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gentiles

The word "Gentiles" here refers to ungodly people groups and not Gentile Christians. (See: godly)

Two witnesses

Scholars have suggested many different ideas about these two witnesses. Translators do not need to understand this passage to accurately translate it. (See: prophet)

Bottomless pit

This image is seen several times in the Book of Revelation. It is a picture of hell as being inescapable and the opposite direction as heaven. (See: hell)

Links:

- [Revelation 11:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 11:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a vision about receiving a measuring rod and about two witnesses that God appointed. This vision also takes place between the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.

A reed was given to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave me a reed"

given to me ... I was told

The words "me" and "I" refer to John.

those who worship in it

"count those who worship in the temple"

Revelation 11:2

trample

to treat something as worthless by walking on it

forty-two months

"42 months"

Revelation 11:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues speaking to John.

for 1,260 days

"for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" or "for twelve hundred and sixty days"

days, clothed in sackcloth

Why they will wear sackcloth can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "days, wearing rough mourning clothes" or "days. They will wear scratchy clothes to show that they are very sad"

Revelation 11:4

These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth

The two olive trees and the two lampstands symbolize these people, but they are not literally the people. Alternate translation: "The two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth represent these witnesses"

the two olive trees and the two lampstands that

John expects his readers to know about them because many years earlier another prophet had written about them. Alternate translation: "the two olive trees and the two lampstands, told about in scripture, that"

Revelation 11:5

fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies

Because this is about future events, it can also be stated in the future tense. Alternate translation: "fire will come out of their mouth and devour their enemies"

fire comes ... and devours their enemies

Fire burning and killing people is spoken of as if it were an animal that could eat them up. Alternate translation: "fire will come ... and destroy their enemies" or "fire will come ... and completely burn up their enemies"

Revelation 11:6

to close up the sky so that no rain will fall

John speaks of the sky as if it had a door that can be opened to let rain fall or closed to stop the rain. Alternate translation: "to keep rain from falling from the sky"

the days that they prophesy

"the time that they prophesy." The word "days" here can refer to weeks, months, or years.

to turn

"to change"

to strike the earth with every kind of plague

John speaks of the plagues as if they were a stick that someone could hit the earth with. Alternate translation: "to cause all kinds of trouble to occur on earth"

Revelation 11:7

bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Revelation 11:8

Their bodies

This refers to the bodies of the two witnesses.

in the street of the great city

The city had more than one street. This was a public place where people could see them. Alternate translation: "in one of the streets of the great city" or "in the main street of the great city"

their Lord

They served the Lord, and, like him, would die in that city.

Revelation 11:9

three and a half days

"3 full days and one half day" or "3.5 days" or "3 1/2 days"

They will not permit them to be placed in a tomb

This will be a sign of disrespect.

Revelation 11:10

will rejoice over them and celebrate

"will rejoice that the two witnesses have died"

even send gifts to one another

This action shows how happy the people were.

because these two prophets tormented those who lived on the earth

This is the reason that the people will be so happy that the witnesses have died.

Revelation 11:11

three and a half days

"3 full days and one half day" or "3.5 days" or "3 1/2 days." See how you translated this in [Revelation 11:9]

a breath of life from God will enter them

The ability to breathe is spoken of as if it were something that can go into people. Alternate translation: "God will cause the two witnesses to breathe again and live"

Great fear will fall on those who see them

Fear is spoken of as if it is a object that can fall on people. Alternate translation: "Those who see them will be extremely afraid"

Revelation 11:12

Then they will hear

Possible meanings are 1) the two witnesses will hear or 2) the people will hear what is said to the two witnesses.

a loud voice from heaven

The word "voice" refers to the one who speaks. Alternate translation: "someone speak loudly to them from heaven and"

say to them

"say to the two witnesses"

Revelation 11:13

Seven thousand people

"7,000 people"

the survivors

"those who do not die" or "those who are still living"

give glory to the God of heaven

"say that the God of heaven is glorious"

Revelation 11:14

The second woe is past

"The second terrible event is over." See how you translated "The first woe is past" in Revelation 9:12.

The third woe is coming quickly

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming. Alternate translation: "The third woe will happen soon"

Revelation 11:15

Connecting Statement:

The last of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.

the seventh angel

This is the last of the seven angels. See how you translated "seventh" in [Revelation 8.1]

loud voices spoke in heaven and said

The phrase "loud voices" represents speakers who spoke loudly. Alternate translation: "speakers in heaven spoke loudly and said"

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ

Here "kingdom" refers to the authority to rule the world. Alternate translation: "The authority to rule the world now belongs to our Lord and his Christ" or "Our Lord and his Christ are now the rulers of the world"

the world

This refers to everyone in the world. Alternate translation: "everyone in the world"

Revelation 11:16

twenty-four elders

"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]

fell upon their faces

This is an idiom that means they lay down facing the ground. See how you translated "prostrated themselves" in [Revelation 4:10]

Revelation 11:17

you, Lord God Almighty, the one who is and who was

These phrases can be stated as sentences. Alternate translation: "you, Lord God, the ruler over all. You are the one who is, and you are the one who was"

the one who is

"the one who exists" or "the one who lives"

who was

"who has always existed" or "who has always lived"

you have taken your great power

What God did with his great power can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "you have defeated with your power everyone who has rebelled against you"

Revelation 11:18

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" refer to God.

Connecting Statement:

The twenty-four elders continue praising God.

were enraged

"were extremely angry"

your wrath has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come. Alternate translation: "You are ready to show your anger"

The time has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come. Alternate translation: "The time is right" or "Now is the time"

for the dead to be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God to judge the dead"

the dead

This nominal adjective can be stated as a verb or adjective. Alternate translation: "Those who have died" or "the dead people"

the prophets, those who are believers, and those who feared your name

This list explains what "your servants" means. These were not three completely different groups of people. The prophets also were believers and feared God's name. "Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "the prophets, those who are believers, and those who fear you" or "the prophets and the others who are believers and fear your name"

Revelation 11:19

Then God's temple in heaven was opened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone opened God's temple in heaven"

the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I saw the ark of his covenant in his temple"

flashes of lightning

Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

rumblings, crashes of thunder

These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

12 ¹A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ²She was pregnant, and she was crying out in birth pains, in the anguish of childbirth.

³Then another sign was seen in heaven: Look! There was a huge red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and there were seven crowns on his heads. ⁴His tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them down to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, he would devour her child.

⁵She gave birth to a son, a male child, who would rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was snatched away to God and to his throne, ⁶and the woman fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place for her, so she could be taken care of for 1,260 days.

⁷Now there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸But the dragon was not strong enough to win. So there was no longer any place in heaven for him and his angels. ⁹The great dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan, who deceives the whole world—was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice in heaven:

"Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.

For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accused them before our God day and night.

¹¹ They conquered him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they did not love their lives
even to death.

¹² Therefore rejoice, you heavens
and all who reside in them!
But woe to the earth and to the sea,
because the devil has gone down to you!
He is filled with terrible anger
and knows that he has only a little time!

¹³When the dragon realized he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so that she would flee to the place prepared for her in the wilderness. This was the place where she would be taken care of, for a time, times, and half a time—out of the serpent's presence.

¹⁵The serpent poured water out of his mouth like a river so that he might make a flood to sweep her away. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon was pouring out of his mouth. ¹⁷Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war with the rest of her descendants, those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony about Jesus. ¹⁸Then the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

Revelation 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 10-12.

Special concepts in this chapter

Serpent

The Book of Revelation uses imagery from the Old Testament. For example, John refers to Satan as the serpent. This image comes from the account of the Garden of Eden when Satan tempted Eve.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"A great sign was seen in heaven"

By using the passive voice here, John does not say who saw this great sign in heaven. The translation may be difficult when the subject is unclear, if your language does not have a passive voice. Many English translations use the past tense here and say "A great sign appeared in heaven."

Links:

- [Revelation 12:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 12:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a woman who appears in his vision.

A great sign was seen in heaven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A great sign appeared in heaven" or "I, John, saw a great sign in heaven"

a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a woman who was wearing the sun and had the moon under her feet"

a crown of twelve stars

This was apparently a likeness of a wreath made of laurel leaves or olive branches, but with twelve stars included in it.

twelve stars

"12 stars"

Revelation 12:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 12:3

Connecting Statement:

John describes a dragon that appears in his vision.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos.

Revelation 12:4

His tail swept away a third of the stars

"With his tail he swept away a third of the stars"

a third

"one third." See how you translated this in [Revelation 8:7]

Revelation 12:5

rule all the nations with an iron rod

Ruling harshly is spoken of as ruling with an iron rod. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 2:27]

Her child was snatched away to God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God quickly took her child to himself"

Revelation 12:6

for 1,260 days

"for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" or "for twelve hundred and sixty days"

Revelation 12:7

Now

John uses this word to mark a shift in his account to introduce something else happening in his vision.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:8

So there was no longer any place in heaven for him and his angels

"So the dragon and his angels could no longer stay in heaven"

Revelation 12:9

dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan, who deceives the whole world—was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him

The information about the serpent can be given in a separate sentence after the statement that it was thrown down to the earth. Alternate translation: "dragon was thrown down to earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. He is the old serpent who deceives the world and is called the Devil or Satan"

The great dragon ... was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the great dragon ... and his angels out of heaven and sent them to the earth"

Revelation 12:10

I

The word "I" refers to John.

I heard a loud voice in heaven

The word "voice" refers to someone who speaks. Alternate translation: "I heard someone saying loudly from heaven"

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ

God saving people by his power is spoken of as if his salvation and power were things that have come. God's ruling and Christ's authority are also spoken of as if they have come. Alternate translation: "Now God has saved his people by his power, God rules as king, and his Christ has all authority"

have come

"have begun to really exist" or "have appeared" or "have become real." God is revealing these things because their time to occur has "come." It is not that they did not exist before.

the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down

This is the dragon that was thrown down in Revelation 12:9.

our brothers

Fellow believers are spoken of as if they were brothers. Alternate translation: "our fellow believers"

day and night

These two parts of the day are used together to mean "all the time" or "without stopping"

Revelation 12:11

Connecting Statement:

The loud voice from heaven continues to speak.

They conquered him

"They conquered the accuser"

by the blood of the Lamb

The blood refers to his death. Alternate translation: "because the lamb had shed his blood and died for them"

by the word of their testimony

The word "testimony" can be expressed with the verb "testify." Also, whom they testified about can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "by what they said when they testified to others about Jesus"

even to death

The believers told the truth about Jesus, even though they knew that their enemies might try to kill them because of it. Alternate translation: "but kept testifying even though they knew that doing so might cause their death"

Revelation 12:12

He is filled with terrible anger

The devil is spoken of as if he were a container, and anger is spoken of as if it were a liquid that could be in him. Alternate translation: "He is terribly angry"

Revelation 12:13

the dragon realized he had been thrown down to the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the dragon realized that God had thrown him out of heaven and sent him to earth"

he pursued the woman

"he chased after the woman"

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:14

the serpent's presence

This is another way of referring to the dragon. Alternate translation: "the dragon's presence"

Revelation 12:15

serpent

This is the same being as the dragon mentioned earlier in Revelation 12:9.

poured water out of his mouth like a river so that

The water flowed from his mouth like a river flows. Alternate translation: "poured a very large amount of water out of his mouth so that"

river so that he might make a flood to sweep

"river; he was trying to make a flood that would sweep"

to sweep her away

"to wash her away"

Revelation 12:16

The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon was pouring out of his mouth

The earth is spoken of as if it were a living thing, and a hole in the earth is spoken of as if it were a mouth that could drink up the water. Alternate translation: "A hole in the ground opened up and the water went down into the hole"

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:17

hold to the testimony about Jesus

The word "testimony" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "continue to testify about Jesus"

Revelation 12:18

General Information:

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13 ¹Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads. On its horns were ten crowns, and on each of its heads was a blasphemous name.²This beast I saw was like a leopard. Its feet were like a bear's feet, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave it his power, his throne, and his great authority to rule.

³One of the beast's heads seemed to have a fatal wound, but that fatal wound had been healed. The whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.⁴They also worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast. They worshiped the beast, too, and kept saying, "Who is like the beast?" and "Who can fight against it?"

⁵The beast was given a mouth that could speak proud words and blasphemies. It was permitted to exercise authority for forty-two months.⁶So the beast opened its mouth to speak blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven.

⁷The beast was permitted to wage war with God's holy people and to conquer them. Also, authority was given to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation.⁸All who live on the earth will worship it, everyone whose name was not written in the Book of Life, which belongs to the Lamb who had been slaughtered from the foundation of the world.

⁹If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰ If anyone is to be taken into captivity,
into captivity he will go.
If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
with the sword he will be killed.

Here is a call for the patient endurance and faith of God's holy people.

¹¹Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and it spoke like a dragon.

¹²He exercised all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and he made the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast—the one whose lethal wound had been healed.

¹³He performed mighty miracles. He even made fire come down on the earth from heaven in front of people.¹⁴By the signs he was given power on behalf of the beast, he deceived those who live on the earth, telling them to set up an image for the beast—who was wounded by the sword, but he still lived.

¹⁵He was permitted to give breath to the beast's image so that the image would even speak and cause all who refused to worship the beast to be killed.¹⁶He also forced everyone, unimportant and mighty, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on the right hand or on the forehead.¹⁷It was impossible for anyone to buy or sell unless he had the mark of the beast, that is, the number representing its name.

¹⁸This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast. For it is the number of a human being. His number is 666.

Revelation 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 10, which is from the Old Testament.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes

John uses many similes in this chapter. They help to describe the images that he sees in his vision.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Unknown animals

John uses different animals to try to describe what he saw. Some of these animals may not be known in the target language.

Links:

- [Revelation 13:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 13:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a beast who appears in his vision. The word "I" here refers to John.

Revelation 13:2

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

The dragon gave it his power

The dragon made the beast as powerful as he was. He did not lose his power, however, by giving it to the beast.

his power ... his throne, and his great authority to rule

These are three ways of referring to his authority, and together they emphasize that the authority was great.

his throne

The word "throne" here refers to the dragon's authority to rule as king. Alternate translation: "his royal authority" or "his authority to rule as king"

Revelation 13:3

but that fatal wound had been healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but that fatal wound had healed"

fatal wound

"deadly wound"

The whole earth

The word "earth" refers to the people on it. Alternate translation: "All the people on the earth"

followed the beast

"obeyed the beast"

Revelation 13:4

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

he had given his authority to the beast

"he had caused the beast to have as much authority as he had"

Who is like the beast?

This question shows how amazed they were about the beast. Alternate translation: "No one is as powerful as the beast!"

Who can fight against it?

This question shows how much the people feared the power of the beast. Alternate translation: "No one could ever fight against the beast and win!"

Revelation 13:5

The beast was given ... It was permitted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave the beast ... God permitted the beast"

The beast was given a mouth that could speak

Being given a mouth refers to being allowed to speak.
Alternate translation: "The beast was allowed to speak"

forty-two months

"42 months"

Revelation 13:6

to speak blasphemies against God

"to say disrespectful things about God"

blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven

The words "those who live in heaven" describe "his tabernacle." John is speaking as though God's people were a tabernacle in which God dwells. Alternate translation: "blaspheming his name and those who live in heaven, who are like a tabernacle for him"

blaspheming his name

God's name is a metonym for God himself. Alternate translation: "blaspheming God"

his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven

Some modern translations read, "his name, his tabernacle, and those who live in heaven."

Revelation 13:7

authority was given to it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave authority to the beast"

every tribe, people, language, and nation

This means that people from every ethnic group are included. See how you translated a similar list in Revelation 5:9.

Revelation 13:8

will worship it

"will worship the beast"

everyone whose name was not written ... in the Book of Life

This phrase clarifies who on the earth will worship the beast. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whose names the Lamb did not write ... in The Book of Life" or "those whose names were not ... in the Book of Life"

from the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "from the time that God created the world"

the Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

who had been slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the people slaughtered"

Revelation 13:9

General Information:

These verses are a break from John's account of his vision. Here he gives a warning to the people reading his account.

If anyone has an ear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he is about to say is important. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

If anyone ... let him hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 13:10

If anyone is to be taken

This expression means that someone has decided who should be taken. If needed, translators may state clearly who decided it. Alternate translation: "If God has decided that someone should be taken" or "If it is God's will that someone should be taken"

If anyone is to be taken into captivity

This can be stated in active form. The noun "captivity" can be stated with the verb "capture." Alternate translation: "If it is God's will for the enemy to capture a certain person"

into captivity he will go

The noun "captivity" can be stated with the verb "capture." Alternate translation: "he will be captured" or "the enemy will capture him"

If anyone is to be killed with the sword

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If it is God's will for the enemy to kill a certain person with a sword"

with the sword

The sword represents war. Alternate translation: "in war"

he will be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy will kill him"

Here is a call for the patient endurance and faith of God's holy people

"God's holy people must endure patiently and be faithful"

Revelation 13:11

Connecting Statement:

John begins to describe another beast who appears in his vision.

it spoke like a dragon

Harsh speech is spoken of as if it were the roar of a dragon. Alternate translation: "it spoke harshly like a dragon speaks"

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 13:12

the earth and those who live on it

"everyone on the earth"

the one whose lethal wound had been healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who had a lethal wound that healed"

lethal wound

"deadly wound." This was an injury that was serious enough that it could have made him die.

Revelation 13:13

He performed

"The beast from the earth performed"

Revelation 13:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 13:15

He was permitted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God permitted the beast from the earth"

to give breath to the beast's image

Here the word "breath" represents life. Alternate translation: "to give life to the beast's image"

the beast's image

This is the image of the first beast that had been mentioned.

cause all who refused to worship the beast to be killed

"put to death anyone who refused to worship the first beast"

Revelation 13:16

He also forced everyone

"The beast from the earth also forced everyone"

Revelation 13:17

It was impossible for anyone to buy or sell unless he had the mark of the beast

"People could buy or sell things only if they had the mark of the beast." The implicit information that the beast from the earth commanded it can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "He commanded that people could buy or sell things only if they had the mark of the beast"

the mark of the beast

This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast.

Revelation 13:18

General Information:

This verse is a break from John's account of his vision. Here he gives another warning to the people reading his account.

This calls for wisdom

"Wisdom is needed" or "You need to be wise about this"

If anyone has insight

The word "insight" can be translated with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "If anyone is able to understand things"

let him calculate the number of the beast

"he should discern what the number of the beast means" or "he should figure out what the number of the beast means"

is the number of a human being

Possible meanings are 1) the number represents one person or 2) the number represents all of humanity.

14 ¹I looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. With him were 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.²I heard a voice from heaven sounding like a roar of many waters and loud thunder. The sound I heard was also like harpists playing their harps.

³They sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except for the 144,000 who had been bought from the earth.⁴These are the ones that have not defiled themselves with women, for they have kept themselves sexually pure. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits for God and for the Lamb.⁵No lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

⁶I saw another angel flying in midair, who had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.⁷He called out with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory. For the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him, the one who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water."

⁸Another angel—a second angel—followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, who persuaded all the nations to drink the wine of her immoral passion."

⁹Another angel—a third angel—followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,¹⁰he will also drink some of the wine of God's wrath, the wine that has been poured undiluted into the cup of his anger. The person who drinks it will be tormented with fire and sulfur before God's holy angels and before the Lamb.

¹¹The smoke from their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night—these worshipers of the beast and his image, and everyone who receives the mark of his name.¹²Here is a call for the patient endurance of God's holy people, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus."

¹³I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them."

¹⁴I looked, and there was a white cloud. Seated on the cloud was one like a son of man. He had a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.¹⁵Then another angel came out of the temple and called with a loud voice to the one sitting on the cloud: "Take your sickle and start to reap. For the time to reap has come, since the harvest of the earth is ripe."¹⁶Then the one who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

¹⁷Another angel came out from the temple in heaven; he also had a sharp sickle.¹⁸Still another angel came out from the incense altar, who had authority over the fire. He called out with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather in the clusters of grapes from the vines of the earth, for their grapes are now ripe."

¹⁹The angel swung his sickle to the earth and harvested the grapevine of the earth. He threw it into the great winepress of God's wrath.²⁰The winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood poured out from it up to the height of a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

Revelation 14 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Harvest

Harvest is when people go out to gather ripe food from plants. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about him so those people can be part of God's kingdom. This chapter uses the metaphor of two harvests. Jesus gathers in his people from the whole earth. Then an angel gathers in wicked people whom God will punish. (See: and harvest and faith)

Links:

- [Revelation 14:1 Notes](#)
-

Revelation 14:1

General Information:

The word "I" refers to John.

Connecting Statement:

John begins to describe the next part of his vision.
There are 144,000 believers standing before the Lamb.

Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

144,000

"one hundred forty-four thousand." See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:4]

who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on whose foreheads the Lamb and his Father had written their names"

his Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

Revelation 14:2

a voice from heaven

"a sound from heaven"

Revelation 14:3

They sang a new song

"The 144,000 people sang a new song." This explains what the sound was that John heard. Alternate translation: "That sound was a new song that they sang"

the four living creatures

"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated "living creature" in Revelation 4:6

elders

This refers to the twenty-four elders around the throne. See how you translated "elders" in Revelation 4:4.

No one could learn the song except for the 144,000

This double negative emphasizes that the 144,000 were unique. Alternate translation: "The only ones who could learn the song were the 144,000"

144,000

"one hundred forty-four thousand." See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:4]

Revelation 14:4

have not defiled themselves with women

Possible meanings are 1) "have never had immoral sexual relations with a woman" or 2) "have never had sexual relations with a woman." Defiling oneself with women may be a symbol of worshiping idols.

they have kept themselves sexually pure

Possible meanings are 1) "they have not had sexual relations with a woman who was not their wife" or 2) "they are virgins."

follow the Lamb wherever he goes

Doing what the Lamb does is spoken of as following him. Alternate translation: "they do whatever the Lamb does" or "they obey the Lamb"

redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits

"Firstfruits" here is a metaphor for the first offering to be made to God in celebration of harvest. Alternate translation: "purchased out of the midst of the rest of mankind as a special celebration of salvation"

Revelation 14:5

No lie was found in their mouth

Their "mouth" refers to what they said." Alternate translation: "They never lied when they spoke"

Revelation 14:6

Connecting Statement:

John begins to describe the next part of his vision. This is the first of three angels who proclaim judgment on the earth.

every nation, tribe, language, and people

This means that people from every ethnic group are included. See how you translated a similar list in Revelation 5:9.

Revelation 14:7

the hour of his judgment has come

Here "the hour" represents the time that has been chosen for something, and the hour having "come" is a metaphor for now being the chosen time. The idea of "judgment" can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "now is the time that God has chosen for judgment" or "it is now the time for God to judge people"

Revelation 14:8

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great

The angel speaks of Babylon having been destroyed as if it had fallen. Alternate translation: "Babylon the great has been destroyed"

Babylon the great

"Babylon the large city" or "the important city of Babylon." This was probably a symbol for the city of Rome, which was large, wealthy, and sinful.

who persuaded

Babylon is spoken of as if it were a person, instead of a city filled with people.

to drink the wine of her immoral passion

This is a symbol for participating in her sexually immoral passion. Alternate translation: "to be sexually immoral like her" or "to get drunk like her in sexual sin"

her immoral passion

Babylon is spoken of as if it were a prostitute who has caused other people to sin along with her. This may well have a double meaning: literal sexual immorality and also the worship of false gods.

Revelation 14:9

with a loud voice

"loudly"

Revelation 14:10

will also drink some of the wine of God's wrath

Drinking the wine of God's wrath is a symbol for being punished by God. Alternate translation: "will also drink some of the wine that represents God's wrath"

that has been poured undiluted

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has poured full strength"

that has been poured undiluted

This means that the wine has no water mixed into it. It is strong, and a person who drinks much of it will get very drunk. As a symbol, it means that God will be extremely angry, not just a little angry.

cup of his anger

This symbolic cup holds the wine that represents God's anger.

Revelation 14:11

Connecting Statement:

The third angel continues to speak.

The smoke from their torment

The phrase "their torment" refers to the fire that torments them. Alternate translation: "The smoke from the fire that torments them"

they have no rest

"they have no relief" or "the torment does not stop"

Revelation 14:12

Here is a call for the patient endurance of God's holy people

"God's holy people must endure patiently and be faithful." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 13:10.

Revelation 14:13

the dead who die

"those who die"

who die in the Lord

"who are united with the Lord when they die." This may refer to people who are killed by their enemies. Alternate translation: "who die because they are united to the Lord"

labors

difficulties and sufferings

their deeds will follow them

These deeds are spoken of as if they were alive and able to follow those who did them. Possible meanings are 1) "others will know the good deeds these people have done" or 2) "God will reward them for their deeds"

Revelation 14:14

Connecting Statement:

John begins to describe the next part of his vision. This part is about the Son of Man harvesting the earth. Harvesting the grain is a symbol of God's judging people.

one like a son of man

This expression describes a human figure, someone who looks human. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:13]

golden crown

This was the likeness of a wreath of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Examples actually made of leaves were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.

sickle

a tool with a curved blade used for cutting grass, grain, and vines

Revelation 14:15

came out of the temple

"came out of the heavenly temple"

the time to reap has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

Revelation 14:16

the earth was reaped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he reaped the earth"

Revelation 14:17

Connecting Statement:

John continues describing his vision about the earth being harvested.

Revelation 14:18

who had authority over the fire

Here "authority over" refers to responsibility to tend the fire.

Revelation 14:19

harvested the grapevine of the earth ... threw it

John describes the earth as a grapevine full of ripe grapes that the angel is harvesting. The grapevine is a

metonym for the grapes on the vine, and the grapes are a metaphor for the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "harvested the earth as if he were a person harvesting grapes ... threw the harvest" or "took away the people of the earth as if he were a person harvesting grapes ... threw them"

threw it

"threw the grapevine," a metonym for the harvest from the grapevine, or "threw the harvest from the grapevine"

the great winepress of God's wrath

"the large winepress where God will show his wrath." A winepress is a large container in which people put grapes and then crush them to get the juice out. John is saying that the angel will take the people of the earth and put them where God will punish or destroy them because he is angry with them.

Revelation 14:20

winepress

This is "the great wine vat" of [Revelation 14:19](#).

up to the height of a horse's bridle

"as high as the bridle on a horse's head"

bridle

a device made of leather straps that goes around a horse's head and is used for directing the horse

1,600 stadia

"one thousand six hundred stadia" or "sixteen hundred stadia." A "stadium" is 185 meters. In modern measures this would be about "300 kilometers" or "200 miles."

15 ¹Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: There were seven angels with seven plagues, which are the final plagues, for with them the wrath of God will be completed.

²I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire. Standing beside the sea were those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number representing his name. They were holding harps given to them by God.

³They were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

"Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God, the Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.

⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord,
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you
because your righteous deeds have been revealed."

⁵After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of witness was open in heaven.⁶Out of the temple came the seven angels holding the seven plagues. They were clothed with pure, bright linen and had golden sashes around their chests.

⁷One of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever.⁸The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. No one could enter it until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

Revelation 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter John describes events and pictures that occur in heaven.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 3-4.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Victorious over the beast"

Those who are "victorious over the beast" are spiritually victorious. While most spiritual battles cannot be seen, the Book of Revelation pictures spiritual battles as openly occurring.

"The temple having the tent of witness was open in heaven"

Scripture elsewhere indicates the earthly temple copied God's perfect dwelling place in heaven. Here John seems to refer to God's heavenly dwelling place or temple.

Songs

The Book of Revelation often describes heaven as a place where people sing. They worship God with songs. This illustrates that heaven is a place where God is always worshiped.

Links:

- [Revelation 15:1 Notes](#)
-

Revelation 15:1

General Information:

This verse is a summary of what will happen in 15:6-16:21.

great and marvelous

These words have similar meanings and are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "something that greatly amazed me"

seven angels with seven plagues

"seven angels who had authority to send seven plagues on the earth"

which are the final plagues

"and after them, there will not be any more plagues"

for with them the wrath of God will be completed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for these plagues will complete the wrath of God"

for with them the wrath of God will be completed

Possible meanings are 1) these plagues will show all of God's anger or 2) after these plagues, God will no longer be angry.

Revelation 15:2

General Information:

Here John begins to describe his vision of the people who had been victorious over the beast and who were praising God.

sea of glass

How it was like glass or a sea can be stated clearly. Possible meanings are 1) a sea is spoken of as if it were glass. Alternate translation: "a sea that was as smooth as glass" or 2) glass if spoken of as if it were a sea. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:6]

who had been victorious over the beast and his image

How they were victorious can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "who had been victorious over the beast and his image by not worshiping them"

over the number representing his name

How they were victorious over the number can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "over the number representing his name by not being marked with that number"

the number representing his name

This refers to the number described in Revelation 13:18.

Revelation 15:3

They were singing

"Those who had been victorious over the beast were singing"

Revelation 15:4

Who will not fear you, Lord, and glorify your name?

This question is used to show their amazement at how great and glorious the Lord is. It can be expressed as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Lord, everyone will fear you and glorify your name!"

glorify your name

The phrase "your name" refers to God. Alternate translation: "glorify you"

your righteous deeds have been revealed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have made everyone know about your righteous deeds"

Revelation 15:5

Connecting Statement:

The seven angels with the seven plagues come out of the most holy place. They were spoken of previously in Revelation 15:1.

After these things

"After the people finished singing"

the temple of the tabernacle of witness

The words "the temple" seem to refer either literally to a solid building or metaphorically to a tent or tabernacle. Possible meanings of "tabernacle of witness" are 1) "the tabernacle" is the place where the priests had set the "witness," also called "the ark of the testimony," or 2) the "tabernacle of witness" is another name for "the ark of the testimony."

Revelation 15:6

Out of the temple

This is the "temple" spoken of in [Revelation 15:5](#).

the seven angels holding the seven plagues

These angels were seen as holding seven plagues because in Revelation 17:7 they are given seven bowls full of the wrath of God.

linen

a fine, expensive cloth made from flax

sashes

A sash is a decorative piece of cloth worn on the upper body.

Revelation 15:7

the four living creatures

"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated "living creatures" in Revelation 4:6

seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God

The image of the wine in the bowls can be stated clearly. The word "wrath" here refers to punishment. The wine is a symbol for punishment. Alternate translation: "seven gold bowls full of the wine that represents the wrath of God"

Revelation 15:8

until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed

"until the seven angels finished sending the seven plagues to the earth"

16 ¹I heard a loud voice call out of the temple and say to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of God's wrath."

²The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; ugly and painful sores came on the people who had the mark of the beast, those who worshiped his image.

³The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. It became blood, like the blood of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died.

⁴The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood.⁵I heard the angel of the waters say,

"You are righteous—the one who is and who was, the Holy One—
because you have judged these things.

⁶ Because they poured out the blood of God's holy people and prophets,
you have given them blood to drink;
it is what they deserve."

⁷I heard the altar reply,

"Yes, Lord God Almighty,
your judgments are true and righteous."

⁸The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch the people with fire.

⁹They were scorched by the terrible heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has the authority over these plagues. They did not repent or give him glory.

¹⁰Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and darkness covered its kingdom. They chewed on their tongues because of the pain.¹¹They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and sores, and they still refused to repent of their deeds.

¹²The sixth angel poured out his bowl into the great river, the Euphrates. Its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings that would come from the east.¹³I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouths of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet.¹⁴For they are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs. They were going out to the kings of the whole world in order to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵("Look! I am coming as a thief! Blessed is the one who keeps watching, keeping his garments on so that he does not walk around naked and so that they do not see his shameful condition.")

¹⁶They brought them together at the place that is called Armageddon in Hebrew.

¹⁷Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. Then a loud voice came out of the temple and from the throne, saying, "It is done!"¹⁸There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, and a terrible earthquake—an earthquake greater than any that has ever happened since human beings have been on the earth, so great was this earthquake.¹⁹The great city was split into three parts, and the nations' cities collapsed. Then God called to mind Babylon the great, and he gave that city the cup filled with the wine made from his furious wrath.

²⁰Every island disappeared, and the mountains were no longer found.²¹Great hailstones, weighing about a talent, came down from the sky upon the people. They blasphemed God for the plague of hail because that plague was so terrible.

Revelation 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the vision of chapter 15. Together they give the seven plagues that complete the wrath of God. (See: wrath)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 5-7.

Special concepts in this chapter

"I heard a loud voice call out of the temple"

This is the same temple that was mentioned in chapter 15.

Seven bowls of God's wrath

This chapter reveals severe judgments. They are pictured as angels pouring out seven bowls of God's wrath.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The tone of this chapter is meant to astonish the reader. Translations should not minimize the vivid language expressed in this chapter.

Armageddon

This is a Hebrew word. It is the name of a place. John used the sounds of the Hebrew word and wrote them with Greek letters. Translators are encouraged to transliterate it using the letters of the target language.

Links:

- [Revelation 16:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 16:1

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the part of the vision about the seven angels with the seven plagues. The seven plagues are the seven bowls of God's wrath.

I heard

The word "I" refers to John.

bowls of God's wrath

The image of the wine in the bowls can be stated clearly. The word "wrath" here refers to punishment. The wine is a symbol for punishment. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 15:7]

Revelation 16:2

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. Alternate translation: "poured out the wine from his bowl" or "poured out God's wrath from his bowl"

painful sores

"painful wounds." These could be infections from diseases or injuries that have not healed.

mark of the beast

This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast. See how you translated this in Revelation 13:17.

Revelation 16:3

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the sea

This refers to all the salt water lakes and oceans.

Revelation 16:4

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

rivers and the springs of water

This refers to all bodies of fresh water.

Revelation 16:5

the angel of the waters

These words could be a reference to 1) the third angel who was in charge of pouring out God's wrath on the rivers and springs of water or 2) another angel who was in charge of all the waters.

You are righteous

"You" refers to God.

the one who is and who was

"God who is and who was." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:4.

Revelation 16:6

they poured out the blood of God's holy people and prophets

Here "poured out the blood" means killed. Alternate translation: "they murdered God's holy people and the prophets"

you have given them blood to drink

God will make the evil people drink the waters that he turned to blood.

Revelation 16:7

I heard the altar reply

The word "altar" here refers perhaps to someone at the altar. "I heard someone at the altar reply"

Revelation 16:8

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch the people

John speaks about the sun as if it were a person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on the sun and caused it to severely burn the people"

Revelation 16:9

They were scorched by the terrible heat

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The extreme heat burned them badly"

they blasphemed the name of God

Here the name of God represents God. Alternate translation: "they blasphemed God"

God, who has the authority over these plagues

This phrase reminds readers of something they already know about God. It helps to explain why the people were blaspheming God. Alternate translation: "God because he has the authority over these plagues"

the authority over these plagues

This refers to the power to inflict these plagues on people, and the power to stop the plagues.

Revelation 16:10

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the throne of the beast

This is where the beast reigns from. It may refer to the capital city of his kingdom.

darkness covered its kingdom

Here "darkness" is spoken of as if it were something like a blanket. Alternate translation: "it became dark in all his kingdom" or "all of his kingdom became dark"

They chewed

The people in the beast's kingdom chewed.

Revelation 16:11

They blasphemed

The people in the beast's kingdom blasphemed.

Revelation 16:12

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the Euphrates. Its water was dried up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Euphrates. Its water dried up" or "the Euphrates, and caused its water to dry up"

Revelation 16:13

looked like frogs

A frog is a small animal that lives near water. Jews considered them unclean animals.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in 12:9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 16:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 16:15

Look! I am coming ... his shameful condition

This is in parentheses to show that it is not part of the vision about the spirits. Rather, this is something that

the Lord Jesus said. It can be stated clearly that the Lord Jesus said this, as in the UDB.

I am coming as a thief

Jesus will come at a time when people do not expect him, just as a thief comes when not expected. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 3:3]

keeping his garments on

Living the right way is spoken of as keeping one's clothes on. Alternate translation: "doing what is right, like keeping his clothes on"

keeping his garments on

Some versions translate this as, "keeping his garments with him."

does not walk around naked

Walking around naked is a metaphor for living foolishly without knowing it. Alternate translation: "does not live foolishly"

they do not see his shameful condition

Here the word "they" refers to other people.

his shameful condition

This is a general term for anything of which a person should be ashamed. Here the shame is from living foolishly. Alternate translation: "those things of which he should be ashamed"

Revelation 16:16

They brought them together

"The spirits of the demons brought the kings and their armies together"

the place that is called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place that people call"

Armageddon

This is the name of a place.

Revelation 16:17

Connecting Statement:

The seventh angel pours out the seventh bowl of God's wrath.

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

Then a loud voice came out of the temple and from the throne

This means someone sitting on the throne or someone standing near the throne spoke loudly. It is unclear who is speaking.

Revelation 16:18

flashes of lightning

Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

rumblings, crashes of thunder

These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

Revelation 16:19

The great city was split

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The earthquake split the great city"

Then God called to mind

"Then God remembered" or "Then God thought of" or "Then God started to pay attention to." This does not mean that God remembered something he had forgotten.

he gave that city the cup filled with the wine made from his furious wrath

The wine is a symbol of his wrath. Making people drink it is a symbol of punishing them. Alternate translation: "he made the people of that city drink the wine that represents his wrath"

Revelation 16:20

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the seventh bowl of God's wrath.

the mountains were no longer found

The inability to see any mountains is metonymy expressing the idea that no mountains existed any longer. Alternate translation: "there were no longer any mountains"

Revelation 16:21

a talent

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "33 kilograms"

17 ¹One of the seven angels who had been holding the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the condemnation of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters,² with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of her sexual immorality the inhabitants of the earth became drunk."

³Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names. The beast had seven heads and ten horns.⁴The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and was adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She was holding in her hand a golden cup full of detestable things and the impurities of her sexual immorality.⁵On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth."

⁶I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people and with the blood of the martyrs for Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.⁷But the angel said to me, "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that is carrying her, the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns.

⁸The beast you saw existed, does not exist now, and is about to come up from the bottomless pit. Then he will go on to destruction. Those who live on the earth, those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life since the foundation of the world—they will be astounded when they see the beast, because he once was, and now is not, and yet will come.

⁹This calls for a mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated.¹⁰They are also seven kings. Five kings have fallen, one exists, and the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain for a little while.

¹¹The beast that once was, and now is not, yet he is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

¹²The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings for one hour together with the beast.¹³These are of one mind, and they give over their power and authority to the beast.¹⁴They will wage war against the Lamb. But the Lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and those with him are the called, chosen, and faithful ones."

¹⁵The angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.

¹⁶The ten horns that you saw—they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, they will devour her flesh, and they will burn her completely with fire.¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their power to rule to the beast until God's words are fulfilled.

¹⁸The woman you saw is the great city that has power to rule over the kings of the earth."

Revelation 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins to describe how God will destroy Babylon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prostitute

Scripture often pictures idolatrous Jews as adulterous people and sometimes as prostitutes. This is not the reference here. The translator should allow this illustration to be vague.

Seven hills

This possibly refers to the city of Rome, which was known as the city on seven hills. However, the translator should not attempt to identify Rome in the translation.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

John uses many different metaphors in this chapter. He explains some of their meanings, but allows them to remain relatively unclear. The translator should attempt to do the same.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The beast you saw existed, does not exist now, but is about to come up "

This and similar phrases in this chapter contrast the beast with Jesus. Jesus is called "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come" elsewhere in the Book of Revelation.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in 17:11 is a paradox: "the beast ... is itself also an eighth king; but it is one of those seven kings." The translator should not attempt to resolve this paradox. It should remain a mystery. ([Revelation 17:11](#))

Links:

- [Revelation 17:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 17:1

General Information:

John begins to describe the part of his vision about the great prostitute.

the condemnation of the great prostitute

The noun "condemnation" can be expressed with the verb "condemn." Alternate translation: "how God will condemn the great prostitute"

the great prostitute

"the prostitute that everyone knows about." She represents a certain sinful city.

on many waters

If you need to, you can use a more specific word for the kind of water. Alternate translation: "on many rivers"

Revelation 17:2

with the wine of her sexual immorality the inhabitants of the earth became drunk

The wine represents sexual immorality. Alternate translation: "the people of the earth became drunk by drinking her wine, that is, they were sexually immoral"

her sexual immorality

This may well have a double meaning: sexual immorality among people and also the worship of false gods.

Revelation 17:3

carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness

The setting changes from John being in heaven to being in a wilderness.

Revelation 17:4

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean.

Revelation 17:5

On her forehead was written a name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had written on her forehead a name"

Babylon the great

If it needs to be made clear that the name refers to the woman, it can be put in a sentence. Alternate translation: "I am Babylon, the powerful one"

Revelation 17:6

was drunk with the blood ... and with the blood

"was drunk because she had drunk the blood ... and had drunk the blood"

the martyrs for Jesus

"the believers who have died because they told others about Jesus"

astonished

amazed, surprised

Revelation 17:7

General Information:

The angel begins to explain to John the meaning of the prostitute and the red beast. The angel explains these things through verse 18.

Why are you astonished?

The angel used this question to gently scold John. Alternate translation: "You should not be astonished!"

Revelation 17:8

the bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Then he will go on to destruction

The noun "destruction" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "Then he will be destroyed" or "Then God will destroy him"

he will go on to destruction

The certainty of what will happen in the future is spoken of as if the beast were going to it.

those whose names have not been written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whose names God did not write"

since the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"

Revelation 17:9

Connecting Statement:

The angel continues speaking. Here he explains the meaning of the seven heads of the beast that the woman is riding.

This calls for a mind that has wisdom

The abstract nouns "mind" and "wisdom" can be expressed with "think" and "wise" or "wisely." Why a wise mind is needed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "A wise mind is needed in order to understand this" or "You need to think wisely in order to understand this"

This calls for

"This makes it necessary to have"

The seven heads are seven hills

Here "are" means "stand for" or "represent."

Revelation 17:10

Five kings have fallen

The angel speaks of dying as falling. Alternate translation: "Five kings have died"

one exists

"one is king now" or "one king is alive now"

the other has not yet come, and when he comes

Not having existed yet is spoken of as not yet having come. Alternate translation: "the other has not yet become king; when he becomes king"

he must remain for a little while

The angel speaks of someone continuing to be king as if he were remaining in a place. Alternate translation: "he can be king only for a little while"

Revelation 17:11

He belongs to the seven

Possible meanings are 1) the beast rules twice: first as one of the seven kings, and then as the eighth king or 2) the beast belongs to that group of seven kings because he is like them.

and is going to his destruction

The certainty of what will happen in the future is spoken of as if the beast were going to it. Alternate translation: "and will certainly be destroyed" or "and God will surely destroy him"

Revelation 17:12

Connecting Statement:

The angel continues speaking to John. Here he explains the meaning of the ten horns of the beast.

for one hour

If your language does not divide the day into 24 hours, you may need to use a more general expression. Alternate translation: "for a very short time" or "for a very small part of a day"

Revelation 17:13

These are of one mind

"These all think the same thing" or "These all agree to do the same thing"

Revelation 17:14

the Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

the called, chosen, and faithful ones

This refers to one group of people. The words "called" and "chosen" can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "the ones whom God has called and chosen, who are faithful to him"

Revelation 17:15

The waters you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages

Here "are" stands for "represent."

The waters

If you need to, you can use a more specific word for the kind of water. See how you translated "many waters" in [Revelation 17:1]

multitudes

large groups of people

languages

This refers to people who speak the languages. See how you translated this in [Revelation 10:11]

Revelation 17:16

make her desolate and naked

"steal everything that she has and leave her with nothing"

they will devour her flesh

Destroying her completely is spoken of as eating all her flesh. "They will destroy her completely"

Revelation 17:17

For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give ... until God's words are fulfilled

They would agree to give their power to the beast, but it would not be that they want to obey God. Alternate

translation: "For God has put it into their hearts to agree to give ... until God's words are fulfilled, and by doing this, they would carry out God's purpose"

God has put it into their hearts

Here "heart" is a metonym for desires. Making them want to do something is spoken of as putting it in their hearts to do it. Alternate translation: "God has made them want"

power to rule

"authority" or "kingly authority"

until God's words are fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until God fulfills what he said will happen"

Revelation 17:18

Connecting Statement:

The angel finishes speaking to John about the prostitute and the beast.

is

Here "is" stands for "represents."

the great city that has power to rule

The city having power to rule is a metonym for the leader of the city having power to rule. Alternate translation: "the great city whose leader has power to rule"

18 ¹After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illumined by his glory.²He cried out with a mighty voice, saying,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
She has become a dwelling place for demons,
a prison for every unclean spirit,
a prison for every unclean bird,
a prison for every unclean and detestable animal.

³ For all the nations have drunk
the wine of her immoral passion.
The kings of the earth have committed immorality with her.
The merchants of the earth have become rich from the power of her sensual way of living."

⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven say,

"Come out from her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins,
and so that you will not receive any of her plagues.

⁵ Her sins have piled up as high as heaven,
and God has remembered her evil actions.

⁶ Pay her back as she has paid others back,
and repay her double for her deeds;
in the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her.

⁷ As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
give her just as much torture and grief.

For she says in her heart,
'I am seated as a queen;
I am not a widow,
and I will never see mourning.'

⁸ Therefore in one day her plagues will come:
death, mourning, and famine.
She will be consumed by fire,
for the Lord God is mighty, and he is her judge."

⁹The kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality and went out of control with her will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning.¹⁰They will stand off at a distance, afraid of her torment, saying,

"Woe, woe to the great city,
Babylon, the powerful city!
For in a single hour your punishment has come."

¹¹The merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her since no one buys their merchandise anymore—

¹²merchandise of gold, silver, precious stone, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, every vessel of ivory, every vessel made of most precious wood, bronze, iron, marble,¹³cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of people.

¹⁴The fruit that you desired with all your might is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be found again.

¹⁵The merchants of these goods who became rich by her will stand away from her at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning loudly.

¹⁶They will say,

"Woe, woe to the great city
that was dressed in fine linen, in purple, and in scarlet,
and was adorned with gold, precious jewels, and pearls!

¹⁷ In a single hour all that wealth has been laid waste."

Every ship's captain, every seafaring man, sailors, and all who make their living from the sea stood off at a distance.

¹⁸They cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning. They said, "What city is like the great city?"¹⁹They threw dust on their heads, and cried out, weeping and mourning,

"Woe, woe to the great city
where all who had their ships
at sea became rich from her wealth.
For in a single hour she has been laid waste."

²⁰ "Rejoice over her, heaven,
you holy people and apostles and prophets,
for God has brought your judgment on her!"

²¹ A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

"In this way, Babylon, the great city,
will be thrown down with violence
and will not be seen anymore.

²² The sound made by harpists, musicians,
flute players, and trumpeters
will not be heard anymore in you.

No craftsman of any kind
will be found in you.

No sound of a mill
will be heard anymore in you.

²³ The light of a lamp
will not shine in you anymore.
The voices of the bridegroom and the bride
will not be heard in you anymore,
for your merchants were the princes of the earth,
and the nations were deceived by your sorcery.

²⁴ In her the blood of prophets and of God's holy people was found,
and the blood of all who have been killed on the earth."

Revelation 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 2-8, 10, 16-17, and 19-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

The angel prophesies about Babylon falling, which here means being destroyed. It is spoken of as having already happened. This is common in prophecy. It emphasizes that the coming judgment will certainly happen. The angel also prophesies that the people will lament over Babylon falling.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Prophecy frequently uses metaphors. This chapter has an apocalyptic style that is slightly different from that of the rest of the Book of Revelation.

Links:

- [Revelation 18:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 18:1

her immoral passion

Connecting Statement:

Babylon is spoken of as if it were a prostitute who has caused other people to sin along with her. This may well have a double meaning: literal sexual immorality and also the worship of false gods.

Another angel comes down from heaven and speaks. This is not the angel mentioned in the previous chapter who spoke about the prostitute and the beast.

merchants

Revelation 18:2

A merchant is a person who sells things.

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great

from the power of her sensual way of living

The angel speaks of Babylon having been destroyed as if it had fallen. See how you translated this in [Revelation 14:8]

"because she spent so much money on sexual immorality"

She has become

Revelation 18:4

The pronoun "she" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

General Information:

The pronouns "she" and "her" refer to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

a prison

The word "prison" here is a metaphor for a secure place. This was probably a secure place where the unclean spirits feel safe, such as a refuge or hideout. Alternate translation: "a hideout"

Connecting Statement:

Another voice from heaven begins to speak.

another voice

Revelation 18:3

The word "voice" refers to the speaker, which is probably either Jesus or the Father. Alternate translation: "someone else"

all the nations

from her

The nations is a metonym for the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "the people of all the nations"

The pronoun "her" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

have drunk the wine of her immoral passion

This is a symbol for participating in her sexually immoral passion. Alternate translation: "have become sexually immoral like her" or "have become drunk like her in sexual sin"

Revelation 18:5

Her sins have piled up as high as heaven

The voice speaks of Babylon's sins as if they were objects that could form a pile. Alternate translation: "Her sins are so many they are like a pile that reaches heaven"

has remembered

"has thought of" or "has started to pay attention to." This does not mean that God remembered something he had forgotten. See how you translated "called to mind" in Revelation 16:19.

Revelation 18:6

Pay her back as she has paid others back

The voice speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "Punish her as she has punished others"

her ... she

The pronouns "her" and "she" refer to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

repay her double

The voice speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "punish her twice as much"

in the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her

The voice speaks of causing others to suffer as preparing strong wine for them to drink. Alternate translation: "prepare for her the wine of suffering that is twice as strong as what she made for others" or "make her suffer twice as much as she made others suffer"

mix double the amount

Possible meanings are 1) "prepare twice the amount" or 2) "make it twice as strong"

Revelation 18:7

Connecting Statement:

The same voice from heaven continues speaking about Babylon as if it were a woman.

she glorified herself

"the people of Babylon glorified themselves"

For she says in her heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or thoughts. Alternate translation: "For she says to herself"

I am seated as a queen

She claims to be a ruler, having her own authority.

I am not a widow

She implies that she will not be dependent on other people.

I will never see mourning

Experiencing mourning is spoken of as seeing mourning. Alternate translation: "I will never mourn"

Revelation 18:8

her plagues will come

Existing in the future is spoken of as a coming.

She will be consumed by fire

Being burned up by fires is spoken of as being eaten up by fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Fire will completely burn her up"

Revelation 18:9

General Information:

In these verses the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

committed sexual immorality and went out of control with her

"sinned sexually and did whatever they wanted just as the people of Babylon did"

Revelation 18:10

Connecting Statement:

John tells what people say about Babylon.

afraid of her torment

The abstract noun "torment" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "afraid that they will be tormented as Babylon is" or "afraid that God will torment them as he torments Babylon"

Woe, woe

This is repeated for emphasis.

your punishment has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

Revelation 18:11

mourn for her

"mourn for the people of Babylon"

Revelation 18:12

precious stone, pearls

"many kinds of expensive stones." See how you translated these in Revelation 17:4.

fine linen

expensive cloth made from flax. See how you translated "linen" in Revelation 15:6.

purple, silk, scarlet

Purple is a very dark red cloth that is very expensive. Silk is a soft, strong cloth made from the fine string that silkworms make when they make their cocoons. Scarlet is an expensive red cloth.

every vessel of ivory

"all kinds of containers made of ivory"

ivory

a beautiful hard, white material that people get from the tusks or teeth of very large animals such as elephants or walruses. Alternate translation: "tusks" or "valuable animal teeth"

marble

a precious stone used for building

Revelation 18:13

cinnamon

a spice that smells nice and comes from the bark of a certain kind of tree

spice

a substance used to add flavor to food or a good smell to oil

bodies and souls of people

Possible meanings are 1) the parts of people are used figuratively to refer to people who are sold as slaves. Alternate translation: "slaves" or 2) the word "bodies" refers to slaves, and the phrase "souls of people" expresses the truth that slaves are real people. Alternate translation: "slaves, that is human souls"

Revelation 18:14

The fruit

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "The result"

desired with all your might

"wanted very much"

vanished, never to be found again

Not to be found stands for not existing. This figure of speech can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "vanished; you will never have them again"

Revelation 18:15

General Information:

In these verses, the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

because of the fear of her torment

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "fear" and "torment." Alternate translation: "because they will be afraid of God tormenting them they way he torments her" or "because they will be afraid of suffering the way she is suffering"

weeping and mourning loudly

This is what the merchants will be doing. Alternate translation: "and they will weep and mourn loudly"

Revelation 18:16

the great city that was dressed in fine linen

Throughout this chapter, Babylon is spoken of as if it were a woman. The merchants speak of Babylon as being dressed in fine linen because its people were dressed in fine linen. Alternate translation: "the great city, which was like a woman dressed in fine linen" or "the great city, whose women were dressed in fine linen"

that was dressed in fine linen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that wore fine linen"

was adorned with gold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "adorned herself with gold" or "adorned themselves with gold" or "wore gold"

precious jewels

"valuable gems" or "treasured gems"

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean. See how you translated this in [Revelation 17:4]

Revelation 18:17

who make their living from the sea

The phrase "from the sea" refers to what they do on the sea. Alternate translation: "who travel on the sea to make their living" or "who sail on the sea to different places in order to trade things"

Revelation 18:18

General Information:

In these verses the word "they" refers to the sailors and seafarers, and the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

What city is like the great city?

This question shows that the merchants thought the city of Babylon was very important. Alternate translation: "No other city is like the great city, Babylon!"

Revelation 18:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 18:20

God has brought your judgment on her

The noun "judgment" can be expressed with the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "God has judged her for you" or "God has judged her because of the bad things she did to you"

Revelation 18:21

Connecting Statement:

Another angel begins to speak about Babylon. This angel is not one of those who has spoken previously.

millstone

a large round stone used to crush grain

Babylon, the great city, will be thrown down with violence and will not be seen anymore

God will completely destroy the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will violently throw down Babylon, the great city, and it will no longer exist"

will not be seen anymore

"no one will see it anymore." Not being seen here means that it will not exist. Alternate translation: "it will not exist anymore"

Revelation 18:22

The sound made by harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will not be heard anymore in you

Not being heard here means that they will not be there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"Harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will no longer make a sound in your city"

in you

The angel speaks as if he were talking to Babylon.
Alternate translation: "in Babylon"

No craftsman ... will be found in you

Not being found there means that they will not be there. Alternate translation: "No craftsman ... will be in your city"

No sound of a mill will be heard anymore in you

The sound of something not being heard means that no one will make that sound. Alternate translation: "No one will use a mill in your city anymore"

Revelation 18:23

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" refer to Babylon.

Connecting Statement:

The angel who threw the millstone finishes talking.

The voices of the bridegroom and the bride will not be heard in you anymore

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will ever again hear in Babylon the happy voices of a bridegroom and a bride"

will not be heard in you anymore

Not being heard here means that they will not be there.
Alternate translation: "will not be in your city anymore"

your merchants were the princes of the earth

The angel speaks of important and powerful people as if they were princes. Alternate translation: "your merchants were like princes of the earth" or "your merchants were the most important men in the world"

the nations were deceived by your sorcery

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you deceived the people of the nations with your magic spells"

Revelation 18:24

General Information:

The word "her" refers to Babylon.

In her the blood of prophets and of God's holy people was found, and the blood of all who have been killed on the earth

Blood being found there means that the people there were guilty of killing people. Alternate translation: "Babylon is guilty of killing the prophets and believers and all the other people in the world who were killed"

19 ¹After these things I heard what sounded like a loud voice of a large number of people in heaven calling out,

"Hallelujah!

Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God.

² His judgments are true and just,
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality.
He has avenged the blood of his servants
from her hand."

³They spoke a second time:

"Hallelujah!

The smoke rises from her forever and ever."

⁴The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. They were saying,

"Amen. Hallelujah!"

⁵Then a voice came out from the throne, saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
both the unimportant and the powerful."

⁶Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great number of people, like the roar of many waters, and like mighty crashes of thunder, saying,

"Hallelujah!

For the Lord reigns, our God, the Almighty.

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him the glory!
For the wedding celebration of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.

⁸ She was permitted to be dressed
in bright and clean fine linen"

(for fine linen is the righteous acts of God's holy people).

⁹The angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." He also said to me, "These are true words of God."¹⁰I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Do not do this! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold the testimony about Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

¹¹Then I saw heaven open, and I looked and there was a white horse. The one riding it is called faithful and true. It is with justice that he judges and wages war.¹²His eyes are like a fiery flame, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but himself.¹³He is clothed with a robe that was dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

¹⁴The armies of heaven were following him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.¹⁵Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword with which he strikes down the nations, and he will rule them with an iron rod. He tramples in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.¹⁶He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: "King of kings and Lord of lords."

¹⁷I saw an angel standing in the sun. He called out in a loud voice to all the birds flying overhead, "Come, gather together for the great feast of God.¹⁸Come eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, the unimportant and the powerful."

¹⁹I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies. They were assembling in order to wage war with the one who rode the horse and with his army.²⁰The beast was captured and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence. With these signs he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

²¹The rest of them were killed by the sword that came out of the mouth of the one who rode on the horse. All the birds ate their dead flesh.

Revelation 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The beginning of chapter 19 concludes the topic of Babylon falling.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 1-8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Songs

The Book of Revelation often describes heaven as a place where people sing. They worship God with songs. This illustrates that heaven is a place where God is always worshiped. (See: heaven)

Wedding celebration

The wedding celebration or feast is an important image in Scripture. Jewish culture often pictured paradise, or life with God after death, as a feast. Here, the wedding feast is for the Lamb, who is Jesus, and his bride, who is all his people.

Links:

- [Revelation 19:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 19:1	I heard
General Information:	Here "I" refers to John.
This is the next part of John's vision. Here he describes the rejoicing in heaven over the fall of the great prostitute, who is the city of Babylon.	Hallelujah This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord."

Revelation 19:2

the great prostitute

Here John refers to the city of Babylon whose wicked people rule over all the people of the earth and lead them to worship false gods. He speaks of the wicked people of Babylon as if they were a great prostitute. Alternate translation: "that wicked city that was like a prostitute"

who corrupted the earth

Here "the earth" is a metonym for its inhabitants. Alternate translation: "who corrupted the people of the earth"

He has avenged the blood of his servants from her hand

Here "the blood ... from her hand" is a metonym for her murdering people. The word "her" refers to the "prostitute," the city of Babylon. Alternate translation: "He has punished her for murdering his servants"

Revelation 19:3

They spoke

Here "They" refers to the crowd of people in heaven.

Hallelujah

This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.

smoke rises from her

The word "her" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute. The smoke is from the fire that destroys the city. Alternate translation: "smoke rises from that city"

Revelation 19:4

twenty-four elders

"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]

the four living creatures

"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated this in Revelation 4:6

who was seated on the throne

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who sat on the throne"

Hallelujah

This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.

Revelation 19:5

a voice came out from the throne

Here John speaks of the "voice" as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "someone spoke from the throne"

Praise our God

Here "our" refers to the speaker and all God's servants.

you who fear him

Here "fear" does not mean to be afraid of God, but to honor him. Alternate translation: "all you who honor him"

both the unimportant and the powerful

The speaker uses these words together to mean all of God's people.

Revelation 19:6

Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great number of people, like the roar of many waters, and like mighty crashes of thunder

John speaks of what he is hearing as if it were like the sound made by a very large crowd of people, a large body of rushing water, and very loud thunder.

Hallelujah

This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.

For the Lord

"Because the Lord"

Revelation 19:7

Connecting Statement:

The voice of the crowd from the previous verse continues speaking.

Let us rejoice

Here "us" refers to all of God's servants.

give him the glory

"give God the glory" or "honor God"

wedding celebration of the Lamb ... his bride has made herself ready

Here John speaks of the joining of Jesus and his people together forever as if it were a wedding celebration.

Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

his bride has made herself ready

John speaks of God's people as if they were a bride who has gotten ready for her wedding.

Revelation 19:8

She was permitted to be dressed in bright and clean fine linen

Here "she" refers to the people of God. John speaks of the righteous acts of God's people as if they were a bright and clean dress that a bride wears on her wedding day. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed her to wear a dress of bright and clean fine linen"

Revelation 19:9

General Information:

An angel begins to speak to John. This is likely the same angel who began to speak to John in Revelation 17:1.

those who are invited

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the people whom God invites"

the wedding feast of the Lamb

Here the angel speaks of the joining of Jesus and his people forever as if it were a wedding feast.

Revelation 19:10

I fell down at his feet

This means that John purposely lay on the ground and stretched himself out in reverence or submission. This action was an important part of worship, to show respect and willingness to serve. See how you translated "fell down" in Revelation 5:8.

your brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to all believers, male and female.

who hold the testimony about Jesus

Here holding stands for believing in or announcing. Alternate translation: "who speak the truth about Jesus"

for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy

Here "spirit of prophecy" refers to God's Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "for it is the Spirit of God who gives people the power to speak the truth about Jesus"

Revelation 19:11

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new vision. John begins to describe a rider on a white horse.

Then I saw heaven open

This imagery is used to signify the beginning of a new vision. See how you translated this idea in Revelation 4:1 and Revelation 11:19 and Revelation 15:5.

The one riding it

The rider is Jesus.

It is with justice that he judges and wages war

Here "justice" refers to what is right. Alternate translation: "He judges all people and wages war according to what is right"

Revelation 19:12

His eyes are like a fiery flame

John speaks of the rider's eyes as if they shone like a flame of fire.

He has a name written on him

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has written a name on him"

on him that no one knows but himself

"on him, and only he knows the meaning of that name"

Revelation 19:13

He is clothed with a robe that was dipped in blood

You can state this in an active form. Alternate translation: "He wears a robe that has blood on it"

his name is called the Word of God

You can state this in active form. "Word of God" here is a metonym for Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "his name is called the Message of God" or "his name is also the Word of God"

Revelation 19:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 19:15

Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword

The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion. See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:16.

strikes down the nations

"destroys the nations" or "brings the nations under his control"

rule them with an iron rod

John speaks of the rider's power as if he were ruling with an iron rod. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:27]

He tramples in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty

John speaks of the rider's destroying his enemies as if they were grapes that a person tramples in a winepress. Here "wrath" refers to God's punishment of evil persons. Alternate translation: "He crushes his enemies according to the judgment of God Almighty, just as a person crushes grapes in a winepress"

Revelation 19:16

He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh:

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has written a name on his robe and thigh:"

Revelation 19:17

I saw an angel standing in the sun

Here "the sun" is a metonym for the light of the sun. Alternate translation: "Then I saw an angel standing in the light of the sun"

Revelation 19:18

both free and slave, the unimportant and the powerful

The angel uses these two sets of opposite-meaning words together to mean all people.

Revelation 19:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 19:20

The beast was captured and with him the false prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The rider on the white horse captured the beast and the false prophet"

the mark of the beast

This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast. See how you translated this in Revelation 13:17.

The two of them were thrown alive

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the beast and the false prophet alive"

the fiery lake of burning sulfur

"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur"

Revelation 19:21

The rest of them were killed by the sword that came out of the mouth of the one who rode on the horse

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The rider of the horse killed the remainder of the beast's armies with the sword that extended from his mouth"

the sword that came out of the mouth

The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion. See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:16.

20 ¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had the key to the bottomless pit, and he had a great chain in his hand. ²He took hold of the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the bottomless pit. He shut it and sealed it over him. This was so that he would not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were over. After that, he must be set free for a short amount of time.

⁴Then I saw thrones. Seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony about Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, and they had refused to receive the mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

⁶Blessed and holy is anyone who takes part in the first resurrection! Over these the second death has no power. They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

⁷When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be released from his prison. ⁸He will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to bring them together for the battle. They will be as many as the sand of the sea.

⁹They went up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's holy people—the beloved city. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and the one who is seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled away from his presence, but there was no place for them to go. ¹²I saw the dead—the mighty and the unimportant—standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Then another book was opened—the Book of Life. The dead were judged by what was recorded in the books, according to their deeds.

¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and the dead were judged according to their deeds. ¹⁴Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. ¹⁵If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The thousand-year reign of Christ

In this chapter, Jesus is said to reign for a thousand years, at the same time that Satan is bound. Scholars are divided over whether this refers to a future period of time or to Jesus reigning now from heaven. It is not necessary to understand this passage in order to translate it accurately. (See: prophet)

Final rebellion

This chapter also describes what happens after the thousand years are ended. During this time, Satan and many people will attempt to rebel against Jesus. This will result in God's ultimate and final victory over sin and evil. (See: sin and evil and eternity)

Great white throne

This chapter ends with God judging all people who ever lived. God separates people who believe in Jesus from those who do not believe in him. (See: judge and heaven and faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Book of Life

This is a metaphor for eternal life. Those possessing eternal life are said to have their names written in this Book of Life.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Hades and the lake of fire

These appear to be two distinct places. The translator may wish to do further research to determine how to translate these two places differently. They should not be made the same as each other in translation. (See: hell)

Links:

- [Revelation 20:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 20:1

deceive the nations

General Information:

Here "nations" is a metonym for the people of the earth.
Alternate translation: "deceive the people-groups"

John begins to describe a vision of an angel throwing the devil into the bottomless pit.

the thousand years

Then I saw

"1,000 years"

Here "I" refers to John.

he must be set free

bottomless pit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will command the angel to free him"

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Revelation 20:4

General Information:

This is the next part of John's vision. He describes suddenly seeing thrones and the souls of believers.

Revelation 20:2

dragon

who had been given authority to judge

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God had given authority to judge"

Revelation 20:3

who had been beheaded

sealed it over him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose heads others had cut off"

The angel sealed the pit to keep anyone from opening it. Alternate translation: "sealed it to prevent anyone from opening it"

for the testimony about Jesus and for the word of God

"because they had spoken the truth about Jesus and about the word of God"

for the word of God

These words are a metonym for the message from God.
Alternate translation: "for what they taught about the scriptures"

They came to life

"They came back to life" or "They became alive again"

Revelation 20:5

The rest of the dead

"All of the other dead people"

the thousand years were ended

"the end of the 1,000 years"

Revelation 20:6

Over these the second death has no power

Here John describes "death" as a person with power.
Alternate translation: "These people will not experience the second death"

the second death

"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]

Revelation 20:7

Satan will be released from his prison

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will release Satan from his prison"

Revelation 20:8

They will be as many as the sand of the sea

This emphasizes the extremely large number of soldiers in Satan's army.

Revelation 20:9

They went

"Satan's army went"

the beloved city

This refers to Jerusalem.

fire came down from heaven and devoured them

Here John speaks of fire as if it were alive. Alternate translation: "God sent fire from heaven to burn them up"

Revelation 20:10

The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the devil, who had deceived them, into" or "God's angel threw the devil, who had deceived them, into"

lake of burning sulfur

"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:20.

where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where he had also thrown the beast and the false prophet"

They will be tormented

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will torment them"

Revelation 20:11

General Information:

This is the next part of John's vision. He describes suddenly seeing a great white throne and the dead being judged.

The earth and the heavens fled away from his presence, but there was no place for them to go

John describes heaven and earth as if they were people who were trying to escape God's judgment. This means that God completely destroyed the old heaven and earth.

Revelation 20:12

the books were opened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone opened the books"

The dead were judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God judged the people who had died and now lived again"

by what was recorded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by what he had recorded"

Revelation 20:13

The sea gave up the dead ... Death and Hades gave up the dead

Here John speaks of the sea, death, and Hades as if they were living persons.

the dead were judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God judged the dead people"

Hades

Here "Hades" is a metonym that represents the place where unbelievers go when they die, to wait for God's judgment.

Revelation 20:14

Death and Hades were thrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw Death and Hades" or "God's angel threw Death and Hades"

the second death

"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]

Revelation 20:15

If anyone's name was not found written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If God's angel did not find a person's name"

he was thrown into the lake of fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angel threw him into the lake of fire" or "the angel threw him into the place where fire burns forever"

21 ¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, that came down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

³I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Look! The dwelling place of God is with human beings, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and he will be their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or grieving, or crying, or pain. The former things have passed away.

⁵The one who was seated on the throne said, "Look! I make all things new." He said, "Write this down because these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶He said to me, "These things are done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who thirsts I will give drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

⁷The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸But as for the cowards, the faithless, the detestable, the murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. That is the second death."

⁹One of the seven angels came to me, the one who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and he said, "Come here. I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰Then he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

¹¹Jerusalem had the glory of God, and its brightness was like a very precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper. ¹²It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. ¹³On the east were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

¹⁴The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵The one who spoke with me had a measuring rod made of gold to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

¹⁶The city was laid out in a square; its length was the same as its width. He measured the city with the measuring rod, twelve thousand stadia in length (its length, width, and height were the same). ¹⁷He also measured its wall, 144 cubits thick by human measurement (which is also the angel's measure).

¹⁸The wall was built of jasper and the city of pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first was jasper, the second was sapphire, the third was agate, the fourth was emerald, ²⁰the fifth was onyx, the sixth was carnelian, the seventh was chrysolite, the eighth was beryl, the ninth was topaz, the tenth was chrysoprase, the eleventh was jacinth, and the twelfth was amethyst.

²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each of the gates was made from a single pearl. The streets of the city were pure gold, like transparent glass. ²²I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

²³The city had no need of the sun or the moon in order to shine on it because the glory of God shone on it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴The nations will walk by the light of that city. The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵Its gates will not be shut during the day, and there will be no night there.

²⁶They will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it, ²⁷but nothing unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives a detailed picture of the new Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Second death

Death is a type of separation. The first death is physically dying, when the soul is separated from the body. The second death is being eternally separated from God. (See: death and soul and eternity)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Book of Life

This is a metaphor for eternal life. Those possessing eternal life are said to have their names written in this Book of Life.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

New heaven and new earth

It is unclear whether this is an entirely new heaven and earth or if it is remade out of the present heaven and earth. The same is also true of the new Jerusalem. It is possible this will affect translation in some languages. The word "new" in the original language means different and better than the old. It does not mean new in time.

Links:

- [Revelation 21:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 21:1

General Information:

John begins to describe his vision of the new Jerusalem.

I saw

Here "I" refers to John.

Revelation 21:2

like a bride adorned for her husband

This compares the new Jerusalem to a bride who has made herself beautiful for her bridegroom.

Revelation 21:3

a great voice from the throne saying

The word "voice" refers to the one who speaks.
Alternate translation: "someone speak loudly from the throne saying"

Look!

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

The dwelling place of God is with human beings, and he will live with them

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that God will, indeed, live among men.

Revelation 21:4

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes

Tears here represent sadness. See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:17]

Revelation 21:5

these words are trustworthy and true

Here "words" refers to the message that they formed.
Alternate translation: "this message is trustworthy and true"

Revelation 21:6

the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize God's eternal nature.

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If the meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first and last letters of your alphabet. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:8]

the beginning and the end

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and the one who will cause all things to end" or 2) "the one who existed before all things and who will exist after all things."

To the one who thirsts ... water of life

God speaks of a person's desire for eternal life as if it were thirst and of that person receiving eternal life as if he were drinking life-giving water.

Revelation 21:7

Connecting Statement:

The one seated on the throne continues to speak to John.

Revelation 21:8

the cowards

"those who are too afraid to do what is right"

the detestable

"those who do terrible things"

the fiery lake of burning sulfur

"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:20.

the second death

"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]

Revelation 21:9

the bride, the wife of the Lamb

The angel speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a woman who is about to marry her groom, the Lamb. Jerusalem is metonymy for those who believers who will inhabit it.

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

Revelation 21:10

carried me away in the Spirit

The setting changes as John is taken to a high mountain where he can see the city of Jerusalem. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 17:3]

Revelation 21:11

Jerusalem

This refers to the "Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven" that he described in the previous verse and not to the physical Jerusalem.

like a very precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the brilliance of Jerusalem by naming a specific jewel.

crystal-clear

"extremely clear"

jasper

This is a valuable stone. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:12

twelve gates

"12 gates"

were written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had written"

Revelation 21:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 21:14

Lamb

This refers to Jesus. See how you translated this in Revelation 5:6.

Revelation 21:15

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Revelation 21:16

twelve thousand stadia

"12,000 stadia." You may convert this to modern measures. Alternate translation: "2,200 kilometers"

Revelation 21:17

144 cubits

"one hundred forty-four cubits." You may convert this to modern measures. Alternate translation: "66 meters"

Revelation 21:18

The wall was built of jasper and the city of pure gold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had built the wall with jasper and the city with pure gold"

pure gold, like clear glass

The gold was so clear that it is spoken of as if it were glass.

jasper

This is a valuable stone. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:19

The foundations of the wall were adorned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone adorned the foundations of the wall"

jasper ... sapphire ... agate ... emerald

These are valuable stones. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated it in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:20

onyx ... chrysolite ... beryl ... topaz ... chrysoprase ... jacinth ... amethyst

These are all valuable gems.

Revelation 21:21

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean. See how you translated this in [Revelation 17:4]

each of the gates was made from a single pearl

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had made each of the gates from a single pearl"

pure gold, like transparent glass

The gold was so clear that it is spoken of as if it were glass. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 21:18]

Revelation 21:22

Lord God ... and the Lamb are its temple

The temple represented God's presence. This means the new Jerusalem does not need a temple because God and the Lamb will live there.

Revelation 21:23

its lamp is the Lamb

Here the glory of Jesus, the Lamb, is spoken of as if it were a lamp that gives light to the city.

Revelation 21:24

The nations will walk

The words "the nations" are a metonym for the people who live in the nations. "Walk" here is a metaphor for "live." Alternate translation: "The people from all the different nations will live"

Revelation 21:25

Its gates will not be shut

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will shut the gates"

Revelation 21:26

They will bring

"The kings of the earth will bring"

Revelation 21:27

nothing unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "only what is clean will ever enter, and never anyone"

but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but only those whose names the Lamb wrote in his Book of Life"

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

22 ¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal. It was flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the city's street. On each side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, and it bears its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

³There will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵There will be no more night; they will have no need for the light of a lamp or sunlight because the Lord God will shine on them. They will reign forever and ever.

⁶The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon." ⁷"Look! I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who obeys the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁸I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing me these things. ⁹He said to me, "Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you, with your brothers the prophets, and with those who obey the words of this book. Worship God!"

¹⁰Then he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹The one who is unrighteous, let him continue to do unrighteousness. The one who is morally filthy, let him continue to be morally filthy. The one who is righteous, let him continue to do what is righteous. The one who is holy, let him continue to be holy."

¹²"Look! I am coming soon. My reward is with me, to pay back each one according to his deeds. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they will have the right to eat from the tree of life and to enter the city through the gates. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

¹⁷The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever desires it, let him freely have the water of life.

¹⁸I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written about in this book. ¹⁹If anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are written about in this book. ²

²⁰The one who testifies to these things says, "Yes! I am coming soon." Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. ³

¹Instead of, Blessed are those who wash their robes, some ancient copies of the Greek text read, Blessed are those who do his commandments .

²Some older copies read God will take away his share in the Book of Life and in the holy city that are written about in this book .

³Some ancient copies of the Greek text or ancient translations of the Greek text add the phrase: be with you holy people or be with all you holy people or be with all of his holy people .

Revelation 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter emphasizes that Jesus is coming soon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tree of life

There is probably an intended connection between the tree of life in the Garden of Eden and the tree of life mentioned in this chapter. The curse that began in Eden will end at this time.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Alpha and omega

These are the names of the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. The ULB spells out their names in English. This strategy can serve as a model for translators. Some translators, however, may decide to use the first and last letters in their own alphabet. This would be "A and Z" in English.

Links:

- [Revelation 22:1 Notes](#)

Revelation 22:1

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the new Jerusalem as the angel shows it to him.

showed me

Here "me" refers to John.

the river of the water of life

"the river flowing with life-giving water"

the water of life

Eternal life is spoken of as if it were provided by life-giving water. See how you translated this in [Revelation 21:6]

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here it is used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

Revelation 22:2

the nations

Here "nations" refers to the people who live in every nation. Alternate translation: "the people of all nations"

Revelation 22:3

There will no longer be any curse

Possible meanings are 1) "There will never be anyone there that God will curse" or 2) "There will not be anyone there who is under God's curse"

his servants will serve him

Possible meanings of "his" and "him" are 1) both words refer to God the Father, or 2) both words refer to both God and the Lamb, who rule together as one.

Revelation 22:4

They will see his face

This is an idiom, meaning to be in God's presence. Alternate translation: "They will be in God's presence"

Revelation 22:5

General Information:

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Revelation 22:6

General Information:

This is the beginning of the end of John's vision. In this versethe angel is speaking to John. This can be shown clearly as it is in the UDB.

These words are trustworthy and true

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 21:5]

the God of the spirits of the prophets

Possible meanings are 1) the word "spirits" refers to the inward disposition of the prophets and indicates that God inspires them. Alternate translation: "God who inspires the prophets" or 2) the word "spirits" refers to the Holy Spirit who inspires the prophets. Alternate translation: "God who gives his Spirit to the prophets"

Revelation 22:7

General Information:

This is the beginning of the end of John's vision. Jesus is speaking. This can be shown clearly as it is in the UDB.

Look!

Here Jesus begins to speak. The word "Look" adds emphasis to what follows.

I am coming soon!

It is understood that he is coming in order to judge. See how you translated this in Revelation 3:11. Alternate translation: "I am coming to judge soon!"

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. Alternate translation: "the prophetic message of this book"

Revelation 22:8

General Information:

John tells his readers about how he responded to the angel.

I fell down to worship at the feet

This means that John purposely lay on the ground and stretched himself out in reverence or submission. This action was an important part of worship, to show respect and willingness to serve. See how you translated similar words in Revelation 19:10.

Revelation 22:9

General Information:

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Revelation 22:10

Connecting Statement:

The angel finishes speaking to John.

Do not seal up ... this book

To seal a book was to keep it closed with something that makes it impossible for anyone to read what was inside without breaking the seal. The angel is telling John not to keep the message a secret. Alternate translation: "Do not keep secret ... this book"

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 22:7]

Revelation 22:11

General Information:

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Revelation 22:12

General Information:

As the book of Revelation is ending, Jesus gives a closing greeting.

Revelation 22:13

the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end

These three phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that Jesus has existed and will exist for all time.

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If these meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first

and last letters of your alphabet. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:8]

the first and the last

This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:17]

the beginning and the end

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and the one who will cause all things to end" or 2) "the one who existed before all things and who will exist after all things." See how you translated this in Revelation 21:6.

Revelation 22:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues giving his closing greeting.

those who wash their robes so that

Becoming righteous is spoken of as if it were washing one's clothing. See how you translated as similar phrase in [Revelation 7:14]

Revelation 22:15

Outside

This means they are outside the city and not allowed to enter.

are the dogs

In that culture the dog was an unclean, despised animal. Here the word "dogs" is derogatory and refers to people who are wicked.

Revelation 22:16

to testify to you

Here the word "you" is plural.

the root and the descendant of David

The words "root" and "descendant" mean basically the same thing. Jesus speaks of being a "descendant" as if he were a "root" that grew out of David. Together the words emphasize that Jesus belongs to the family of David.

the bright morning star

Jesus speaks of himself as if he were the bright star that sometimes appears early in the morning and indicates that a new day is about to begin. See how you translated "morning star" in [Revelation 2:28]

Revelation 22:17

Connecting Statement:

This verse is a response to what Jesus said.

the Bride

Believers are spoken of as if they were a bride about to be married to her groom, Jesus.

Come!

Possible meanings are 1) that this is an invitation for people to come and drink the water of life. Alternate translation: "Come and drink!" or 2) that this is a polite request for Jesus to return. Alternate translation: "Please come!"

Whoever is thirsty ... the water of life

A person's desire for eternal life is spoken of as if it were thirst and of that person receiving eternal life as if he were drinking life-giving water.

the water of life

Eternal life is spoken of as if it were provided by life-giving water. See how you translated this in Revelation 21:6.

Revelation 22:18

General Information:

John gives his final remarks.

I testify

Here "I" refers to John.

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 22:7]

If anyone adds to them ... God will add

This is a strong warning to not change anything about this prophecy.

that are written about in this book

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which I have written about in this book"

Revelation 22:19

If anyone takes away ... God will take away

This is a strong warning to not change anything about this prophecy.

Revelation 22:20

General Information:

In these verses John gives his and Jesus's closing greetings.

The one who testifies to these things says

"Jesus, who testifies to these things, says"

Revelation 22:21

with all

"with every one of you"
