

Language: English

Book: Matthew

Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Matthew

1. The birth of Jesus Christ and the beginning of his ministry (1:1-4:25)
2. Jesus's Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:28)
3. Jesus illustrates the kingdom of God through acts of healing (8:1-9:34)
4. Jesus's teaching about mission and the kingdom (9:35-10:42)
5. Jesus's teaching about the gospel of the kingdom of God. The beginning of opposition to Jesus. (11:1-12:50)
6. Jesus's parables about the kingdom of God (13:1-52)
7. Further opposition to Jesus and misunderstanding of the kingdom of God (13:53-17:57)
8. Jesus's teaching about life in the kingdom of God (18:1-35)
9. Jesus ministers in Judea (19:1-22:46)
10. Jesus's teaching about the final judgment and salvation (23:1-25:46)
11. The crucifixion of Jesus, his death and resurrection (26:1-28:19)

What is the book of Matthew about?

The Gospel of Matthew is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life of Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. Matthew showed that Jesus was the Messiah and that God would save Israel through him. Matthew often explained that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. This may indicate that he expected most of his first readers to be Jewish. (See: christ)

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Gospel of Matthew" or "The Gospel according to Matthew." Or they may choose a title that may be clearer, such as "The Good News about Jesus that Matthew wrote."

Who wrote the Book of Matthew?

The book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times most Christians have thought that the author was the Apostle Matthew.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the "kingdom of heaven?"

Matthew spoke of the kingdom of heaven in the same way that other gospel writers spoke of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven represents God ruling over all people and all creation everywhere. Those whom God accepts into his kingdom will be blessed. They will live with God forever.

What were Jesus's teaching methods?

The people regarded Jesus as a rabbi. A rabbi is a teacher of God's law. Jesus taught in ways similar to other religious teachers in Israel. He had students who followed him wherever he went. These students were called disciples. He often told parables. Parables are stories that teach moral lessons. (See: lawofmoses and disciple and parable)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are the Synoptic Gospels?

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because they have many similar passages. The word "synoptic" means to "see together."

The texts are considered "parallel" when they are the same or almost the same among two or three gospels. When translating parallel passages, translators should use the same wording and make them as similar as possible.

Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "Son of Man"?

In the gospels, Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man." It is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In this passage there is a person described as a "son of man." That means the person was someone who looked like a human being. God gave authority to the son of man to rule over the nations forever. And all the people will worship him forever.

Jews of Jesus's time did not use "Son of Man" as a title for anyone. Therefore, Jesus used it for himself to help them understand who he truly was. (See: sonofman)

Translating the title "Son of Man" can be difficult in many languages. Readers may misunderstand a literal translation. Translators can consider alternatives, such as "The Human One." It may also be helpful to include a footnote to explain the title.

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

The following verses are found in older versions of the Bible but are not included in most modern versions:

- "Bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you" (5:44)
- "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (6:13)
- "But this kind of demon does not go out except with prayer and fasting" (17:21)
- "For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost" (18:11)
- "Many are called, but few are chosen" (20:16)
- "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses, while you make a show of long prayers. You will therefore receive greater condemnation." (23:14)

Translators are advised not to include these passages. However, if in the translators' region there are older versions of the Bible that include one or more of these passages, the translators can include them. If they are included, they should be put inside square brackets

Chapter 1

Matthew 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set a quotation from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this for the quoted material in 1:23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogy

A genealogy is a list that records a person's ancestors or descendants. Jews used genealogies to choose the right man to become king. They did this because only a son of a king could become king. Most important people had records of their genealogies.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Use of the passive voice

Matthew uses the passive voice very purposefully in this chapter to indicate that Mary did not have a sexual relationship with anyone. She became pregnant with Jesus because the Holy Spirit performed a

miracle. Many languages do not have a passive voice, so translators in those languages must find other ways to present the same truths.

Matthew 1:1

General Information:

The author begins with Jesus's genealogy in order to show that he is a descendant of King David and of Abraham. The genealogy continues through Matthew 1:16.

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ

You could translate this as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "This is the list of the ancestors of Jesus Christ"

Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham

There were many generations between Jesus, David, and Abraham. Here "son" means "descendant." Alternate translation: "Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was a descendant of Abraham"

son of David

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

Matthew 1:2

Abraham was the father of Isaac

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

Isaac the father ... Jacob the father

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

Matthew 1:3

Perez ... Zerah ... Hezron ... Ram

These are names of men.

Perez the father ... Hezron the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Perez was the father ... Hezron was the father"

Matthew 1:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Amminadab the father ... Nahshon the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Amminadab was the father ... Nahshon was the father"

Matthew 1:5

Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab

"Salmon was the father of Boaz, and Boaz's mother was Rahab" or "Salmon and Rahab were the parents of Boaz"

Boaz the father ... Obed the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Boaz was the father ... Obed was the father"

Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth

"Boaz was the father of Obed, and Obed's mother was Ruth" or "Boaz and Ruth were the parents of Obed"

Matthew 1:6

David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah

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

the wife of Uriah

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

Matthew 1:7

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa

The word "was" is understood in both of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Rehoboam was the father of Abijah, and Abijah was the father of Asa"

Matthew 1:8

Joram

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

Matthew 1:9

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew 1:10

Amon

Sometimes this is translated "Amos."

Matthew 1:11

Josiah was an ancestor of Jechoniah

A more specific term for "ancestor" can also be used, particularly if the word "ancestor" would only

be used for someone who lived before one's grandparents. Alternate translation: "Josiah was a grandfather of Jechoniah"

at the time of the deportation to Babylon
"when they were forced to move to Babylon" or "when the Babylonians conquered them and made them go live in Babylon." If your language needs to specify who went to Babylon, you could say "the Israelites" or "the Israelites who lived in Judah."

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

Matthew 1:12

Connecting Statement:
This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

After the deportation to Babylon
Use the same wording you used in Matthew 1:11.

Shealtiel was an ancestor of Zerubbabel
Shealtiel was Zerubbabel's grandfather.

Matthew 1:13

General Information:
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Matthew 1:14

General Information:
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Matthew 1:15

Connecting Statement:
This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew 1:16

Connecting Statement:
The author concludes Jesus's genealogy, which began in Matthew 1:1.

Mary, by whom Jesus was born
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mary, who gave birth to Jesus"

who is called Christ
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom people call Christ"

Matthew 1:17

fourteen
"14"

deportation to Babylon
Use the same wording you used in Matthew 1:11.

Matthew 1:18

General Information:
This begins a new part of the story in which the author describes the events leading up to the birth of Jesus.

His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph
"His mother, Mary, was going to marry Joseph." Parents normally arranged the marriages of their children. Alternate translation: "The parents of Mary, the mother of Jesus, had promised her in marriage to Joseph"

His mother, Mary, was engaged
Translate in a way that makes it clear that Jesus was not already born when Mary was engaged to Joseph. Alternate translation: "Mary, who would be the mother of Jesus, was engaged"

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

she was found to be pregnant
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they realized that she was pregnant" or "it happened that she was pregnant"

to be pregnant
"to be carrying a child"

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

Matthew 1:19

Joseph, her husband
Joseph had not married Mary yet, but when a man and woman promised to marry each other, Jews considered them husband and wife though they did not live together. Alternate translation: "Joseph, who was supposed to marry Mary"

to divorce her quietly
"to quietly cancel their plans to get married"

Matthew 1:20

As he thought
"As Joseph thought"

appeared to him in a dream
"came to him while Joseph was dreaming"

son of David
Here "son" means "descendant."

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant with this child"

Matthew 1:21

She will bear a son

Because God sent the angel, the angel knew the baby was a boy.

you will call his name

"you must name him" or "you must give him the name." This is a command.

for he will save

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

his people

This refers to the Jews.

Matthew 1:22

General Information:

The author quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's birth was according to scripture.

all this happened

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

what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord told the prophet to write long ago"

the prophet

There were many prophets. Matthew was speaking of Isaiah. Alternate translation: "the prophet Isaiah"

Matthew 1:23

Behold ... Immanuel

Here Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah.

Behold, the virgin

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: the virgin"

Immanuel

This is a male name.

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

This is not in the book of Isaiah. Matthew is explaining the meaning of the name "Immanuel." You could translate it as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Immanuel." This name means 'God with us.'"

Matthew 1:24

Connecting Statement:

The author concludes his description of the events leading up to the birth of Jesus.

as the angel of the Lord commanded

The angel had told Joseph to take Mary as his wife and to name the child Jesus.

he took her as his wife

"he married Mary"

Matthew 1:25

he did not know her

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "he did not have sexual relations with her"

to a son

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

Then he called his name Jesus

"Joseph named the child Jesus"

Chapter 2

Matthew 2 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 6 and 18, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

"His star"

These words probably refer to a star that the learned men believed to be the sign of a new king of Israel. (See: sign)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Learned men"

English translations use many different words to translate this phrase. These words include "magi" and "wise men." These men could have been scientists or astrologers. If you can, you should translate this with the general words "learned men."

Matthew 2:1

General Information:

A new part of the story begins here and continues through the end of the chapter. Matthew tells about Herod's attempt to kill the new King of the Jews.

Bethlehem of Judea

"the town of Bethlehem in the province of Judea"

in the days of Herod the king

"when Herod was king there"

Herod

This refers to Herod the Great.

learned men from the east

"men from the east who studied the stars"

from the east

"from a country far east of Judea"

Matthew 2:2

Where is he who was born King of the Jews?

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

his star

They were not saying that the baby was the rightful owner of the star. Alternate translation: "the star that tells about him" or "the star that is associated with his birth"

in the east

"as it came up in the east" or "while we were in our country"

worship

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

Matthew 2:3

he was troubled

"he was worried." Herod was worried that this baby would replace him as king.

all Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" refers to the people. Also, "all" means "many." Matthew is exaggerating to emphasize how many people were worried. Alternate translation: "many of the people in Jerusalem"

Matthew 2:4

General Information:

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Matthew 2:5

In Bethlehem of Judea

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

this is what was written by the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what the prophet wrote long ago"

Matthew 2:6

General Information:

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

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

Micah was speaking to the people of Bethlehem as if they were with him but they were not. Also, "are not the least" can be translated with a positive phrase. Alternate translation: "you, people of Bethlehem, ... your town is among the most important towns in Judah"

who will shepherd my people Israel

Micah speaks of this ruler as a shepherd. This means he will lead and care for the people. Alternate translation: "who will lead my people Israel as a shepherd leads his sheep"

Matthew 2:7

Herod secretly called the learned men

This means that Herod talked to the learned men without other people knowing.

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

This can be translated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "men, and he asked them, 'When exactly did this star appear?'"

what time the star had appeared

It is implied that the learned men told him when the star appeared. Alternate translation: "what time the star had appeared. The learned men told Herod when the star first appeared"

Matthew 2:8

young child

This refers to Jesus.

bring me a report

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

worship him

See how you translated this in Matthew 2:2.

Matthew 2:9

After they

"After the learned men"

they had seen in the east

"they had seen come up in the east" or "they had seen in their country"

went before them

"guided them" or "led them"

stood still over

"stopped over"

where the young child was

"the place where the young child was staying"

Matthew 2:10

General Information:

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Matthew 2:11

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to the house where Mary, Joseph, and the young Jesus were living.

They went

"The learned men went"

They fell down and worshiped him

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

their treasures

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

Matthew 2:12

God warned them

"Afterwards, God warned the learned men." God knew that Herod wanted to harm the child.

dream not to return to Herod, so

This can be translated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "dream, saying, 'Do not go back to King Herod,' so"

Matthew 2:13

they had departed

"the learned men had departed"

appeared to Joseph in a dream

"came to Joseph while he was dreaming"

Get up, take ... flee ... Remain ... you

God is speaking to Joseph, so these should all be singular forms.

until I tell you

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "until I tell you it is safe to come back"

I tell you

Here "I" refers to God. The angel is speaking for God.

Matthew 2:14

General Information:

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Matthew 2:15

General Information:

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

He remained

It is implied that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus remained in Egypt. Alternate translation: "They remained"

until the death of Herod

Herod does not die until Matthew 2:19. This statement describes the length of their stay in Egypt, and it does not say that Herod died at this time.

what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord had said through the prophet; he had said" or "what the Lord had told the prophet to tell the people; he had said"

Out of Egypt I have called my Son

"I have called my Son out of Egypt"

my Son

In Hosea this refers to the people of Israel. Matthew quoted it to say that this was true of God's Son, Jesus. Translate it using a word for son that could refer to the only son or the first son.

Matthew 2:16

General Information:

These events happen before Herod's death, which Matthew mentioned in [Matthew 2:15]

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts back to Herod and tells what he did when he learned that the learned men had deceived him.

he had been mocked by the learned men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the learned men had embarrassed him by tricking him"

He sent and killed all the male children

Herod did not kill the children himself. Alternate translation: "He gave orders for his soldiers to kill all the boys" or "He sent soldiers there to kill all the boy babies"

two years old and under

"2 years old and younger"

according to the time

"based on the time"

Matthew 2:17

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Jeremiah to show that the death of all of the male children in the region of Bethlehem was according to scripture.

Then was fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled" or "Herod's actions fulfilled"

what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophet Jeremiah"

Matthew 2:18

A voice was heard ... they were no more

Matthew is quoting the prophet Jeremiah.

A voice was heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People heard a voice" or "There was a loud sound"

Rachel weeping for her children

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

she refused to be comforted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could comfort her"

because they were no more

"because the children were gone and would never return." Here "were no more" is a mild way of saying they are dead. Alternate translation: "because they were dead"

Matthew 2:19

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to Egypt, where Joseph, Mary, and the young Jesus are living.

behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Matthew 2:20

those who sought the child's life

Here "sought the child's life" is a way of saying they wanted to kill the child. Alternate translation:

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

those who sought

This refers to King Herod and his advisors.

Matthew 2:21

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 2:22

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 2:1 about Herod's attempt to kill the new King of the Jews.

But when he heard

"But when Joseph heard"

Archelaus

This is the name of Herod's son.

he was afraid

"Joseph was afraid"

Matthew 2:23

what had been spoken through the prophets

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophets"

he would be called a Nazarene

Here "he" refers to Jesus. The prophets before the time of Jesus would have referred to him as the Messiah or the Christ. Alternate translation: "people would say that the Christ is a Nazarene"

Chapter 3

Matthew 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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 material in verse 3.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Bear fruit worthy of repentance"

Fruit is a common picture word in the scriptures. Writers use it to describe the results of either good or bad behavior. In this chapter, good fruit is the result of living as God commands. (See: fruit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of heaven is near"

No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when John spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Matthew 3:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of the ministry of John the Baptist.

In those days

This is many years after Joseph and his family left Egypt and went to Nazareth. This is probably near the time that Jesus begins his ministry. Alternate translation: "Some time later" or "Some years later"

Matthew 3:2

Repent

This is plural in form. John is speaking to the crowds.

the kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use the word "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "our God in heaven will soon show himself to be king"

Matthew 3:3

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that John the Baptist was God's appointed messenger to prepare for Jesus's ministry.

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Isaiah the prophet was speaking of John the Baptist when he said"

The voice of one calling out in the wilderness

This can be expressed as a sentence. Alternate translation: "The voice of one calling out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone calling out in the wilderness"

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

These two phrases mean the same thing.

Make ready the way of the Lord

"Get the road ready for the Lord." Doing this represents being prepared to hear the Lord's message when he comes. People do this by repenting of their sins. Alternate translation: "Prepare to hear the Lord's message when he comes" or "Repent and be ready for the Lord to come"

Matthew 3:4

Now ... wild honey

The word "Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells background information about John the Baptist.

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

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

Matthew 3:5

Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region

The words "Jerusalem," "Judea," and "the region" are metonyms for the people from those areas. The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize that very many people went out. Alternate translation:

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

Matthew 3:6

They were baptized by him ... River, confessing their sins
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John baptized them ... River after they confessed their sins"

They

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

Matthew 3:7

General Information:

John the Baptist begins to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees.

You offspring of vipers, who

This is a metaphor. Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are a kind of dangerous snakes and represent evil. This can be stated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "You evil poisonous snakes! Who" or "You are evil like poisonous snakes! Who"

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

John uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees because they were asking him to baptize them so that God would not punish them, but they did not want to stop sinning. Alternate translation: "you cannot flee from God's wrath like this." or "do not think that you can flee from God's wrath just because I baptize you."

flee from the wrath that is coming

The word "wrath" is being used to refer to God's punishment because his wrath precedes it. Alternate translation: "run away from the punishment that is coming" or "escape because God is about to punish you"

Matthew 3:8

Bear fruit worthy of repentance

The phrase "bear fruit" is a metaphor referring to a person's actions. Alternate translation: "Let your actions show that you have truly repented"

Matthew 3:9

We have Abraham for our father

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

For I say to you

This adds emphasis to what John is about to say.

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

"God is able to make physical descendants out of even these stones and give them to Abraham"

Matthew 3:10

Connecting Statement:

John the Baptist continues to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees.

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

This metaphor means God is ready to punish sinners. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has his axe and he is ready to cut down and burn any tree that grows bad fruit" or "As a person gets his axe ready to cut down and burn a tree that grows bad fruit, God is ready to punish you for your sins"

Matthew 3:11

for repentance

"to show that you have repented"

But he who comes after me

Jesus is the person who comes after John.

is mightier than I

"is more important than I am"

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

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

Matthew 3:12

His winnowing fork is in his hand

This metaphor compares the way Christ will separate the righteous people from the unrighteous people to the way a man separates wheat grain from chaff. Alternate translation: "Christ is like a man whose winnowing fork is in his hand"

His winnowing fork is in his hand

Here "in his hand" means the person is ready to act. Alternate translation: "Christ is holding a winnowing fork because he is ready"

winnowing fork

This is a tool for tossing wheat up into the air to separate the wheat grain from the chaff. The heavier grain falls back down and the unwanted chaff is blown away by the wind. It is similar in shape to a pitchfork but with wide tines made of wood.

his threshing floor

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

gather his wheat into the storehouse ... burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out

This is a metaphor showing how God will separate righteous people from evil people. The righteous will go to heaven like wheat into a farmer's storehouse, and God will burn the people who are like chaff with a fire that will never be put out.

can never be put out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will never burn out"

Matthew 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time when John the Baptist baptizes Jesus.

to be baptized by John

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so John could baptize him"

Matthew 3:14

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

John uses a question to show his surprise at Jesus's request. Alternate translation: "You are more important than I am. I should not baptize you. You should baptize me."

Matthew 3:15

for us

Here "us" refers to Jesus and John.

John permitted him

You may need to make explicit that John permitted Jesus to be baptized by John. Alternate translation:

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

Matthew 3:16

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about John the Baptist. It describes what happened after he baptized Jesus.

After he was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After John baptized Jesus"

behold

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

the heavens were opened to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus saw the sky open" or "God opened the heavens to Jesus"

coming down like a dove

Possible meanings are 1) this is simply a statement that the Spirit was in the form of a dove or 2) this is a simile that compares the Spirit coming down upon Jesus gently, the way a dove would.

Matthew 3:17

a voice came out of the heavens saying

"Jesus heard a voice from heaven." Here "voice" refers to God speaking. Alternate translation: "God spoke from heaven"

Son

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

Chapter 4

Matthew 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 the poetry in verses 6, 15 and 16, which is from the Old Testament.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"the kingdom of heaven has come near"

No one knows for use whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when Jesus spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrase "is coming near" and "has come near."

"If you are the Son of God"

The reader should not understand these words in verses 3 and 6 to mean that Satan did not know whether Jesus was the Son of God. God had already said that Jesus was his Son (Matthew 3:17), so Satan knew who Jesus was. He also knew that Jesus could make stones become bread and could throw himself off of high places and not be hurt. He was trying to make Jesus do these things and so disobey God and obey Satan. These words can be translated as "Show me your power if you are the Son of God" (See: *satan* and *sonofgod*)

Matthew 4:1

General Information:

Here Matthew begins a new part of the story in which Satan tempts Jesus in the wilderness after Jesus has been there for 40 days.

Jesus was led up by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Spirit led Jesus"

to be tempted by the devil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so the devil could tempt Jesus"

Matthew 4:2

he had fasted ... he was hungry

These refer to Jesus.

forty days and forty nights

"40 days and 40 nights." This refers to 24-hour periods. Alternate translation: "40 days"

Matthew 4:3

The tempter

These words refer to the same being as "the devil" (verse 1). You may have to use the same word to translate both.

If you are the Son of God, command

It is best to assume that Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. Possible meanings are 1) this is a temptation to do miracles for Jesus's own benefit. Alternate translation: "You are the Son of God, so you can command" or 2) this is a challenge or

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

the Son of God

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

command these stones to become bread.

You could translate this with a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "say to these stones, 'Become bread.'"

bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

Matthew 4:4

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with a quotation from Deuteronomy.

It is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote this in the scriptures long ago"

Man does not live on bread alone

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

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

Here "word" and "mouth" refer to what God says. Alternate translation: "but by listening to everything that God says"

Matthew 4:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 4:6

General Information:

Satan quotes from the Psalms in order to tempt Jesus.

If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down

It is best to assume that Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. Possible meanings are 1) this is a temptation to do a miracle for Jesus's own benefit. Alternate translation: "Since you are truly the Son of God, you can throw yourself down" or 2) this is a challenge or accusation. Alternate translation: "Prove that you are truly the Son of God by throwing yourself down"

the Son of God

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

throw yourself down

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

for it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the writer wrote in the scriptures" or "for it says in the scriptures"

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

This can be translated with a direct quotation, and you can specify that it is God who will command. Alternate translation: "'God will say to his angels, 'Take care of him,'" and" or "'God will command his angels to take care of you,' and"

They will carry you

"The angels will hold you"

Matthew 4:7

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with another quotation from Deuteronomy.

Again it is written

It is understood that Jesus is quoting scripture again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Again, I will tell you what Moses wrote in the scriptures"

You must not test

Here "you" refers to anyone. Alternate translation: "One should not test" or "No person should test"

Matthew 4:8

Again, the devil

"Next, the devil"

Matthew 4:9

He said to him

"The devil said to Jesus"

All these things I will give you

"I will give you all these things." The tempter is emphasizing here that he will give "all these things," not just some of them.

fall down

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

Matthew 4:10

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with another quotation from Deuteronomy.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about how Satan tempted Jesus.

For it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Moses also wrote in the scriptures"

You will worship ... you will serve

Both instances of "you" are singular, a command to everyone who hears it.

Matthew 4:11

behold

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

Matthew 4:12

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story in which Matthew describes the beginning of Jesus's ministry in Galilee. These verses explain how Jesus came to be in Galilee.

Now

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

John had been handed over

This can be stated in active form and the information omitted from the euphemism can be stated. Alternate translation: "the king had handed

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

Matthew 4:13

in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali

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

Matthew 4:14

This happened

This refers to Jesus's going to live in Capernaum.

what was said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God said"

Matthew 4:15

General Information:

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

The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali ... Galilee of the Gentiles!

These are two descriptions of the same territory.

toward the sea

This is the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 4:16

General Information:

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

The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light

Here "darkness" is a metaphor for not knowing the truth about God. And "light" is a metaphor for God's true message that saves people from their sin.

The people who sat

These words can be combined with the sentence beginning with "The land of Zebulun" (verse 15). Alternate translation: "In the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali ... where many Gentiles live, the people who sat"

who sat ... who sat

"who were living ... who were living." The word "sat" is an idiom for having lived for a long time in one place, not to sitting on the ground or a piece of furniture.

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

This basically has the same meaning as the first part of the sentence. Here "those who sat in the region and shadow of death" is a metaphor. It

represents those who did not know God. These people were in danger of dying and being separated from God forever.

Matthew 4:17

the kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "the kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, include a word that means "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 3:2]

Matthew 4:18

General Information:

This begins a new scene within the part of the story about Jesus's ministry in Galilee. Here he begins to gather men to be his disciples.

casting a net into the sea

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "throwing a net into the water to catch fish"

Matthew 4:19

Come, follow me

Jesus invites Simon and Andrew to follow him, live with him, and become his disciples. Alternate translation: "Be my disciples"

I will make you fishers of men

This metaphor means Simon and Andrew will teach people God's true message, so others will also follow Jesus. Alternate translation: "I will teach you to gather men to me like you used to gather fish"

Matthew 4:20

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 4:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus calls more men to be his disciples.

He called them

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

Matthew 4:22

they immediately left

"at that moment they left"

left the boat ... and followed him

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

for the rest of their lives, you should probably translate as they were leaving for the rest of their lives. It would be good to have a note saying that the Greek does not specify how long they would be gone.

Matthew 4:23

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about the beginning of Jesus's ministry in Galilee. The rest of this chapter summarizes what he did and how the people responded.

teaching in their synagogues

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

preaching the gospel of the kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God's reign as king. Alternate translation: "preaching the good news that God will show himself as king"

every kind of disease and sickness

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

Matthew 4:24

those who were possessed by demons

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom demons controlled"

the epileptics

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

Matthew 4:25

the Decapolis

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

Chapter 5

Matthew 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Many people call the words in Matthew 5-7 the Sermon on the Mount. This is one long lesson that Jesus taught. Bibles divide this lesson into three chapters, but this can sometimes confuse the reader. If your translation divides the text into sections, be sure that the reader understands that the whole sermon is one large section.

Matthew 5:3-10, known as The Beatitudes or as The Blessings, has been set apart by being set farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text, with each line beginning with the word "blessed." This way of placing the words on the page highlights the poetic form of this teaching.

Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Special concepts in this chapter

"His disciples"

It is possible to refer to anyone who followed Jesus as a follower or disciple. Jesus selected twelve of his followers to become his closest disciples, "the twelve disciples." They would later become known as the apostles.

Matthew 5:1

Connecting Statement:

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

Matthew 5:2

He opened his mouth

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Jesus began to speak"

taught them

The word "them" refers to his disciples.

Matthew 5:3

General Information:

Here, Jesus begins to describe the characteristics of people who are blessed.

the poor in spirit

This means people who are humble. Alternate translation: "those who know they need God"

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

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

Matthew 5:4

those who mourn

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

they will be comforted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will comfort them"

Matthew 5:5

the meek

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

they will inherit the earth

"God will give them the entire earth"

Matthew 5:6

those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

This metaphor describes people who strongly desire to do what is right. Alternate translation: "those who desire to live right as much as they desire food and drink"

they will be filled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will fill them" or "God will satisfy them"

Matthew 5:7

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 5:8

the pure in heart

"people whose hearts are pure." Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being or intentions. Alternate translation: "those who only want to serve God"

they will see God

This means they will be able to live in God's presence. Alternate translation: "God will allow them to live with him"

Matthew 5:9

the peacemakers

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

for they will be called sons of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God will call them his children" or "they will be children of God"

sons of God

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

Matthew 5:10

those who have been persecuted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those people whom others treat unfairly"

for righteousness' sake

"because they do what God wants them to do"

theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:3]

Matthew 5:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes describing the characteristics of people who are blessed.

Blessed are you

The word "you" is plural.

say all kinds of evil things against you falsely

"say all kinds of evil lies about you" or "say bad things about you that are not true"

for my sake

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

Matthew 5:12

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 5:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about how his disciples are like salt and light.

You are the salt of the earth

Possible meanings are 1) just as salt makes food good, disciples of Jesus influence the people of the world so that they will be good. Alternate translation: "You are like salt for the people of the world" or 2) just as salt preserves food, disciples of Jesus keep people from becoming totally corrupt. Alternate translation: "As salt is for food, you are for the world"

if the salt has lost its taste

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

how can it be made salty again?

"how can it be made useful again?" Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "there is no way for it to become useful again."

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "except for people to throw it out into the road and walk on it"

Matthew 5:14

You are the light of the world

This means Jesus's followers bring the message of God's truth to all the people who do not know God. Alternate translation: "You are like a light for the people of the world"

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden

At night when it is dark, people can see the city lights shining. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "During the night, no one can hide the lights that shine from a city on a hill" or "Everyone sees the lights of a city on a hill"

Matthew 5:15

Neither do people light a lamp

"People do not light a lamp"

put it under a basket

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

Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before people

This means a disciple of Jesus should live in such a way that others can learn about God's truth. Alternate translation: "Let your lives be like a light that shines before people"

your Father who is in heaven

It is best to translate "Father" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human father.

Matthew 5:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law.

the prophets

This refers to what the prophets wrote in the scriptures.

Matthew 5:18

truly I say to you

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

until heaven and earth pass away

Here "heaven" and "earth" refer to the entire universe. Alternate translation: "as long as the universe lasts"

all things have been accomplished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all things have happened" or "God causes all things to happen"

all things

The phrase "all things" refers to everything in the law. Alternate translation: "everything in the law" or "all that is written in the law"

Matthew 5:19

whoever breaks

Possible meanings are 1) "whoever disobeys" or 2) "whoever ignores."

the least one of these commandments and teaches

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

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if anyone ... teaches others to do so, God will call that person"

least in the kingdom of heaven

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in Matthew. If possible use "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "the least important in his heavenly kingdom" or "the least important under the rule of our God in heaven"

keeps them and teaches them

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

great

most important

Matthew 5:20

For I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

you ... your ... you

These are plural.

that unless your righteousness exceeds ... Pharisees, you will in no way enter

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "that your righteousness must exceed ... Pharisees in order to enter"

Matthew 5:21

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The understood "you" is singular in "Do not murder," but in some languages it may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about murder and anger.

it was said to them in ancient times

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God said to those who lived long ago" or "Moses said to your ancestors long ago"

will be subject to judgment

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

Matthew 5:22

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "I say to you."

But I say

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

brother

This refers to a fellow believer, not to a literal brother or a neighbor.

worthless person ... fool

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

council

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

Matthew 5:23

you

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

offering your gift

"giving your gift" or "bringing your gift"

at the altar

It is implied that this is God's altar at the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "to God at the altar in the temple"

there remember

"while you are standing at the altar you remember"

your brother has anything against you

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

Matthew 5:24

First be reconciled with your brother

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "First make peace with the person"

Matthew 5:25

Agree with your

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

your adversary

This is a person who takes someone to court for doing something wrong to accuse him before a judge.

may hand you over to the judge

Here "hand you over" means to give someone into the control of someone else. Alternate translation: "will let the judge deal with you"

the judge may hand you over to the officer

Here "hand you over" means to give someone into the control of someone else. Alternate translation: "the judge will give you over to the officer"

officer

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

you may be thrown into prison

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the officer might put you in prison"

Matthew 5:26

Truly I say to you

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

from there

"from prison"

Matthew 5:27

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The understood "you" is singular in "Do not commit adultery," but in some languages it may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about adultery and lust.

that it was said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God said" or "that Moses said"

commit

This word means to act out or do something.

Matthew 5:28

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

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

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

to lust after her

"and lusts after her" or "and desires to sleep with her"

in his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "in his mind" or "in his thoughts"

Matthew 5:29

If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you

The irony here is that people use their eyes in part to keep from stumbling. Here "eye" is a metonym for what a person chooses to look at or learn about, "stumble" is a metaphor for "sin," and "pluck it out and throw it away from you" is a hyperbolic metaphor for doing everything possible to avoid sinning. Alternate translation: "if what you are interested in causes you to want to sin, do everything you can to stay away from it"

If your

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

right eye

This refers to the eye on the right-hand side of the face. The Jews thought of the right hand as more important than the left, so the phrase "right eye" was a metaphor for the most important eye. You may need to translate "right" as "better" or "stronger."

pluck it out

This is an exaggerated command for a person to do whatever he needs to do to stop sinning. It means "forcefully remove it" or "destroy it." If the right eye is not specifically mentioned, you may need to translate this "destroy your eyes." If eyes have been mentioned, you may need to translate this "destroy them."

throw it away from you
"get rid of it"

one of your members should perish

"you should lose one part of your body"

than that your whole body should be thrown into hell

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than for God to throw your whole body into hell"

Matthew 5:30

If your right hand causes

In this metonymy, the hand stands for the actions of the whole person.

right hand

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

cut it off

This is an exaggerated command for a person to do whatever he needs to do to stop sinning.

Matthew 5:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about divorce.

It was also said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also said" or "Moses also said"

sends his wife away

This is a euphemism for "divorces his wife."

let him give

"he must give"

Matthew 5:32

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

makes her an adulteress

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

her after she has been divorced

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "her after her husband has divorced her" or "the divorced woman"

Matthew 5:33

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The "you" and "your" are singular in "Do not swear" and "carry out your oaths," but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about swearing oaths.

Again, you

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

it was said to those in ancient times

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God said to those who lived long ago" or "Moses said to your ancestors long ago"

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

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

Matthew 5:34

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is equally important to the original commands from God. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

swear not at all

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

it is the throne of God

Because God reigns from heaven, Jesus speaks of heaven as if it were a throne. Alternate translation: "it is from here that God rules"

Matthew 5:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes his words from verse 34, telling the people not to swear.

nor by the earth ... city of the great King

Here Jesus means that when people make a promise or when they say that something is true,

they must not swear by anything. Some people were teaching that if a person swears by God that he will do something, then he must do it, but if he swears by something else, such as by heaven or earth, then it is less offensive if he does not do what he swore to do. Jesus says that swearing by heaven or earth or Jerusalem is just as serious as swearing by God because those things all belong to God.

it is the footstool for his feet

This metaphor means the earth also belongs to God. Alternate translation: "it is like a footstool where a king rests his feet"

for it is the city of the great King

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

Matthew 5:36

General Information:

Previously Jesus told his hearers that God's throne, footstool, and earthly home are not theirs to swear by. Here he says that they may not swear even by their own heads.

your ... you

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of these words are singular, but you may have to translate them as plural.

swear

This refers to taking an oath. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:34.

Matthew 5:37

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

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

Matthew 5:38

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "you have heard" is plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about retaliating against an enemy.

that it was said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:27]

eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth

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

Matthew 5:39

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "I say to you" is plural. The "you" in "whoever strikes you" and the understood "you" in "turn to him" are both singular, but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

But I say

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

one who is evil

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

strikes ... your right cheek

To strike the side of a man's face was an insult in Jesus's culture. As with the eye and the hand, the right cheek is the more important one, and striking that cheek was a terrible insult.

strikes

hits with the back of an open hand

turn to him the other also

"let him hit your other cheek also"

Matthew 5:40

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular. In some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

tunic ... cloak

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

let that person also have

"give also to that person"

Matthew 5:41

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The word "you" is singular, as is the understood "you" in the command "go." In some languages these may need to be translated as plural.

Whoever

"Anyone who." The context implies that he is speaking about a Roman soldier.

one mile

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

with him

This refers to the one who compels you to go.

go with him two

"go the mile he forces you to go, and then go another mile." If "mile" is confusing, you can translate it as "two kilometers" or "twice as far."

Matthew 5:42

do not turn away from

"do not refuse to lend to." This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "lend to"

Matthew 5:43

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "you have heard" is plural. The "you" and "your" are singular in "You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy," but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about loving enemies.

that it was said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:27]

your neighbor

Here the word "neighbor" does not refer to a specific neighbor, but to any members of one's community or people group. These are people whom one usually desires to treat kindly or at least believes he ought to treat kindly. Alternate translation: "your countrymen" or "those who belong to your people group"

Matthew 5:44

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

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

Matthew 5:45

you may be sons of your Father

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

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 5:46

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. This section began in Matthew 5:17.

what reward do you get?

Jesus uses this question to teach the people that loving those who love them is not something special

that God will reward them for. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "you will get no reward."

Do not even the tax collectors do the same thing?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Even the tax collectors do the same thing."

Matthew 5:47

what do you do more than others?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you do nothing more than others."

greet

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

Do not even the Gentiles do the same thing?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Even the Gentiles do the same thing."

Matthew 5:48

Father

This is an important title for God.

Chapter 6

Matthew 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Matthew 6 continues Jesus's extended teaching known as "The Sermon on the Mount."

You may wish to set apart the prayer in 6:9-11 by placing it farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Matthew 6:1

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3. In this section, Jesus addresses the "acts of righteousness" of alms, prayer, and fasting.

Watch out

This is a way to warn people to be careful.
Alternate translation: "Be careful" or "Beware"

before people to be seen by them

It is implied that those who see the person will honor him. This can be stated in active form.
Alternate translation: "in front of people just so that they can see you and give you honor for what you have done"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 6:2

do not sound a trumpet before yourself

This metaphor means to do something that purposefully gets people's attention. Alternate translation: "do not draw attention to yourself like someone who plays a loud trumpet in a crowd"

Truly I say to you

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

Matthew 6:3

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples about alms.

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

This is a metaphor for total secrecy. Just as hands usually work together and each can be said to "know" what the other is doing at all times, you should not let even those closest to you know when you are giving to the poor.

Matthew 6:4

your alms may be given in secret

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can give to the poor without other people knowing"

Matthew 6:5

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7 are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about prayer.

so that they may be seen by people

It is implied that those who see them will give them honor. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that people will see them and give them honor"

Truly I say to you

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

Matthew 6:6

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7

are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

enter your inner chamber. Shut the door

"go to a private place" or "go where you can be alone"

Father, who is in secret

Possible meanings are 1) no one can see God. Alternate translation: "Father, who is invisible" or 2) God is in that private place with the praying person. Alternate translation: "Father, who is with you in private"

Father

This is an important title for God.

your Father who sees in secret

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

Matthew 6:7

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7 are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

do not make useless repetitions

Possible meanings are 1) the repetitions are useless. Alternate translation: "do not keep uselessly saying things over and over again" or 2) the words or sentences are meaningless. Alternate translation: "do not keep repeating meaningless words"

they will be heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their false gods will hear them"

Matthew 6:8

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about how they as individuals should pray. The words "you" and "your" are plural in the first sentence. Within the prayer, the words "you" and "your" are singular and refer to God, "Our Father in heaven."

Father

This is an important title for God.

you ask him

See how you translated "ask" in Matthew 5:42.

Matthew 6:9

Our Father in heaven

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

may your name be honored as holy

Here "your name" refers to God himself. This can also be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "may people honor you as holy" or "may people honor you because you are holy"

may your name be honored as holy

By saying this, people show that they want to honor God as holy. Alternate translation: "help us to honor your name as holy" or "we want to honor you as holy"

Matthew 6:10

May your kingdom come

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "May you rule over everyone and everything completely"

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May everything on earth happen in accordance with your will, just as everything in heaven does"

Matthew 6:11

General Information:

This is part of a prayer that Jesus was teaching the people. All instances of "we," "us," and "our" refer only to those who would pray this prayer. Those words do not also refer to God, to whom they would be praying.

daily bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general.

Matthew 6:12

debts

A debt is what one person owes another. This is a metaphor for sins.

our debtors

A debtor is a person who owes a debt to another person. This is a metaphor for those who have sinned against us.

Matthew 6:13

Do not bring us into temptation

The word "temptation," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Do not let anything tempt us" or "Do not let anything cause us to desire to sin"

Matthew 6:14

General Information:

All instances of "you" and "your" are plural. However, Jesus is telling his hearers what will

happen to them as individuals if each person does not forgive others.

their trespasses

The abstract noun "trespasses" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when they trespass against you"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 6:15

their trespasses ... your trespasses

The abstract noun "trespasses" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "them when they trespass against you ... you when you trespass against God" or "them when they do things that harm you ... you when you do things that make your Father angry"

Matthew 6:16

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about fasting.

they disfigure their faces

The hypocrites would not wash their faces and would not comb their hair. They did this purposely to draw attention to themselves so that people would see them and give them honor for fasting.

Truly I say to you

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

Matthew 6:17

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated as plural.

anoint your head

"put oil in your hair" or "groom your hair." To "anoint" the head here is to take normal care of one's hair. It has nothing to do with "Christ" meaning "anointed one." Jesus means that people should look the same whether they are fasting or not.

Matthew 6:18

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All

occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated as plural.

Father who is in secret

Possible meanings are 1) no one can see God. Alternate translation: "Father, who is invisible" or 2) God is with that person who fasts secretly. Alternate translation: "Father, who is with you in private" See how you translated this in Matthew 6:6.

Father

This is an important title for God.

who sees in secret

"who sees what you do in private." See how you translated this in Matthew 6:6.

Matthew 6:19

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about money and possessions.

treasures

riches, the things to which a person gives the most value

where moth and rust destroy

"where moth and rust ruin treasures"

moth

a small, flying insect that destroys cloth

rust

a brown substance that forms on metals

Matthew 6:20

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do.

store up for yourselves treasures in heaven

This is a metaphor that means do good things on earth so God will reward you in heaven.

Matthew 6:21

General Information:

All occurrences of "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated in plural.

there will your heart be also

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

Matthew 6:22

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

The eye is the lamp of the body

This is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) the eye is like a lamp because it enables a person to see things, or 2) the eye is like a lamp shining on a person's body because it shows what the person is really like. Alternate translation: "A person's eyes are like a lamp for his body"

if your eye is good, the whole body is filled with light

Possible meanings are 1) "if your eye is good, it fills your body with light" or 2) "if your eye is good, it shows that your body is filled with light."

if your eye is good

Possible meanings are "if your eye is noble" or "if your eye sees clearly." Jesus speaks of the eye to talk about what a person thinks about and wants. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "if you are generous" or 2) "if you look at and want at what is good"

the whole body is filled with light

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

eye is

You may have to translate this as plural, "eyes are."

Matthew 6:23

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

Possible meanings are 1) "if your eye is bad, it fills your body with darkness" or 2) "if your eye is bad, it shows that your body is full of darkness."

if your eye is bad

Possible meanings are "if your eye is evil" or "if your eye does not see clearly." Jesus speaks of the eye to talk about what a person thinks about and wants. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "if you are greedy," or 2) "if you do not look at and want what is right."

if your eye is bad

This does not refer to magic. Jewish people often used this as a metaphor for someone who is greedy.

your whole body is full of darkness

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

if the light that is in you is actually darkness, how great is that darkness!

"if that which is supposed to cause light in your body causes darkness, then your body is in complete darkness"

Matthew 6:24

for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that a person cannot love and be devoted both to God and money at the same time.

You cannot serve God and wealth

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

Matthew 6:25

General Information:

Here the instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

to you

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do.

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

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "obviously life is more than what you eat, and your body is more than what you wear." or "clearly there are things in life that are more important than food, and there are things concerning the body that are more important than clothes."

Matthew 6:26

barns

places to store crops

Father

This is an important title for God.

Are you not more valuable than they are?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "Obviously you are more valuable than birds."

Matthew 6:27

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

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

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Here to "add one cubit to his lifespan" is a metaphor for adding time to how long a person will live.

Alternate translation: "None of you can, just by worrying, add years to your life. You cannot add even one minute to your life! So you should not worry about things you need."

one cubit

A cubit, a measure of a little less than half a meter, is used here as a metaphor for a short period of time.

Matthew 6:28

Why are you anxious about clothing?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "You should not be worried about what you will wear."

Think about

"Consider"

lilies ... They do not labor, and they do not spin cloth

Jesus speaks about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.

lilies

A lily is a kind of wild flower.

Matthew 6:29

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

Jesus speaks about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

was not clothed like one of these

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did not wear clothes that are as beautiful as these lilies"

Matthew 6:30

so clothes the grass in the fields

Jesus continues to speak about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.

grass

If your language has a general word that can refer both to "grass" and to the word you used for "lilies" in the previous verse, you can use it here.

is thrown into the oven

The Jews at that time used grass in their fires to cook their food. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone throws it into a fire" or "someone burns it"

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

Jesus uses this question to teach the people that God will provide what they need. Alternate translation: "he will certainly clothe you ... faith."

you of little faith

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

Matthew 6:31

Therefore

"Because of all of this,"

What clothes will we wear

In this sentence, "clothes" is a synecdoche for material possessions. Alternate translation: "What possessions will we have"

Matthew 6:32

For the Gentiles search for these things

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

your heavenly Father knows that you need them

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

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 6:33

seek first his kingdom and his righteousness

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "concern yourselves first with serving God, who is your king, and doing what is right"

all these things will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will provide all these things for you"

Matthew 6:34

Therefore

"Because of all this"

tomorrow will be anxious for itself

Jesus speaks of "tomorrow" as if it were a person who could worry. Jesus means that a person will have enough to worry about when the next day comes.

Chapter 7

Matthew 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Special concepts in this chapter

Matthew 5-7

Many people call the words in Matthew 5-7 the Sermon on the Mount. This is one long lesson that Jesus taught. Bibles divide this lesson into three chapters, but this can sometimes confuse the reader. If your translation divides the text into sections, be sure that the reader understands that the whole sermon is one large section.

"By their fruits you will know them"

Fruit is a common image in the scriptures. It is used to describe the results of either good or bad actions. In this chapter, good fruit is the result of living as God commands. (See: fruit)

Matthew 7:1

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The instances of "you" and the commands are plural.

Connecting Statement:

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

Do not judge

It is implied here that "judge" has the strong meaning of "condemn harshly" or "declare guilty." Alternate translation: "Do not condemn people harshly"

you will not be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not condemn you harshly"

Matthew 7:2

For

Be sure the reader understands the statement in 7:2 is based on what Jesus said in 7:1.

with the judgment you judge, you will be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will condemn you in the same way you condemn others"

measure

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

it will be measured out to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will measure it out to you"

Matthew 7:3

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

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

Jesus uses this question to rebuke the people for paying attention to other people's sins and ignoring their own. Alternate translation: "You look ... brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye." or "Do not look ... brother's eye and ignore the log that is in your own eye."

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

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

tiny piece of straw

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

brother

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

the log that is in your own eye

This is a metaphor for a person's most important faults. A log could not literally go into a person's eye. Jesus is exaggerating to emphasize that a person should pay attention to his own more important faults before he deals with another person's less important faults.

log

the largest part of a tree that someone has cut down

Matthew 7:4

How can you say ... your own eye?

Jesus asks this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "You should not say ... your own eye."

Matthew 7:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 7:6

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.

dogs ... pigs

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

pearls

These are similar to round, valuable stones or beads. They are a metaphor for the knowledge of God or precious things in general.

they may trample

"the pigs may trample"

then turn and tear

"the dogs will then turn and tear"

Matthew 7:7

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.

Ask ... Seek ... Knock

These are metaphors for praying to God. The verb form shows that we are to keep praying until he answers. If your language has a form for continuing to do something over and over, use it here.

Ask

request things from someone, in this case God. See how you translated this word in Matthew 5:42.

it will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give you what you need"

Seek

look for someone, in this case God

Knock

To knock on a door was a polite way to request that the person inside the house or room open the door. If knocking on a door is impolite or not done in your culture, use the word that describes how people politely ask for doors to be opened. Alternate translation: "Tell God you want him to open the door"

it will be opened to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will open it for you"

Matthew 7:8

who ... asks

See how you translated "ask" in Matthew 5:42.

Matthew 7:9

Or which one of you ... a stone?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "There is not one person among you ... a stone."

son asks

See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.

a loaf of bread

This refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "some food"

stone

This noun should be translated literally.

Matthew 7:10

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

Jesus asks another question to teach the people. It is understood that Jesus is still referring to a man and his son. Alternate translation: "And there is not one person among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake."

he asks

See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.

fish ... snake

These nouns should be translated literally.

Matthew 7:11

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

how much more will your Father in heaven give ... him?
Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "then your Father in heaven will most certainly give ... him."

Father

This is an important title for God.

ask him

See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.

Matthew 7:12

whatever things you want people to do to you
"whatever way you want others to act toward you"

for this is the law and the prophets

Here "law" and "prophets" refer to what Moses and the prophets wrote. Alternate translation: "for this is what Moses and the prophets teach in the scriptures"

Matthew 7:13

General Information:

This image of walking through a wide gate to destruction or a narrow gate to life represents how people live and the results of how they live. When you translate, use appropriate words for "wide" and "broad" that are as different as possible from "narrow" in order to emphasize the differences between the two sets of gates and ways.

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

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

Enter through the narrow gate

You may need to move this to the end of verse 14: "Therefore, enter through the narrow gate."

the gate ... the way

Possible meanings are 1) "the way" refers to the road that leads to the gate of a kingdom, or 2) the "the gate" and "the way" both refer to the entrance to the kingdom.

to destruction

This abstract noun can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "to the place where people die"

Matthew 7:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak of people choosing how they are going to live as if they are choosing whether to go on one path or another.

to life

The abstract noun "life" can be translated using the verb "live." Alternate translation: "to the place where people live"

Matthew 7:15

Beware of

"Be on guard against"

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

This metaphor means that false prophets will pretend they are good and want to help people, but they are really evil and will do people harm.

ravenous wolves

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

Matthew 7:16

By their fruits you will know them

This metaphor refers to a person's actions. Alternate translation: "Just as you know a tree by the fruit that grows on it, you will know false prophets by how they act"

Do people gather ... thistles?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. The people would have known that the answer is no. Alternate translation: "People do not gather ... thistles."

Matthew 7:17

every good tree produces good fruit

Jesus continues to use the metaphor of fruit to refer to good prophets who produce good works or words.

the bad tree produces bad fruit

Jesus continues to use the metaphor of fruit to refer to bad prophets who produce evil works.

Matthew 7:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 7:19

Every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire

Jesus continues to use fruit trees as a metaphor to refer to false prophets. Here, he only states what will happen to the bad trees. It is implied that the same thing will happen to the false prophets.

is chopped down and thrown into the fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people chop down and burn"

chopped down

See how you translated this in Matthew 3:10

Matthew 7:20

you will recognize them by their fruits

The word "their" can refer to either the prophets or the trees. This metaphor implies that the fruit of trees and the deeds of prophets both reveal whether they are good or bad. If possible, translate this in a way so that it can refer to both trees and prophets.

Matthew 7:21

will enter into the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "will live with God in heaven when he shows himself to be king"

those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven
"whoever does what my Father in heaven desires"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 7:22

in that day

Jesus said "that day" knowing his hearers would understand he was referring to the day of judgment. You should include "the day of judgment" only if your readers would not understand otherwise.

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

The people use a question to emphasize that they did these things. Alternate translation: "we prophesied ... we drove out demons ... we did many miracles."

we

This "we" does not include Jesus.

in your name

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

Matthew 7:23

I never knew you

This means the person does not belong to Jesus. Alternate translation: "You are not my follower" or "I have nothing to do with you"

Matthew 7:24

Therefore

"For that reason"

my words

Here "words" refers to what Jesus says.

like a wise man who built his house upon a rock

Jesus compares those who obey his words to a person who builds his house where nothing can harm it.

rock

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

Matthew 7:25

it was founded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he put its foundation"

Matthew 7:26

like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand

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

Matthew 7:27

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3.

fell

Use the general word in your language that describes what happens when a house falls down.

its destruction was complete

The rain, floods, and wind completely destroyed the house.

Matthew 7:28

General Information:

These verses describe how the people in the crowds reacted to Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.

It came about that when

This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "When" or "After"

were astonished by his teaching

It is clear in 7:29 that they were amazed not just at what Jesus taught but also the way he taught it.

Alternate translation: "were amazed by the way he taught"

Matthew 7:29

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Chapter 8

Matthew 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a new section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracles

Jesus performed miracles to show that he could control things that no other people could control. He also showed that it is proper to worship him because he performed miracles. (See: authority)

Matthew 8:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that contains several accounts of Jesus healing people. This theme continues through Matthew 9:35.

When Jesus had come down from the hill, large crowds followed him

"After Jesus came down from the hill, a large crowd followed him." The crowd may have included both people who had been with him on the mountain and people who had not been with him.

Matthew 8:2

Behold

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

a leper

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

bowed before him

This is a sign of humble respect before Jesus.

if you are willing

"if you want to" or "if you desire." The leper knew that Jesus had the power to heal him, but he did not know if Jesus would want to touch him.

you can make me clean

Here "clean" means to be healed and to be able to live in the community again. Alternate translation: "you can heal me" or "please heal me"

Matthew 8:3

Be clean

By saying this, Jesus healed the man.

Immediately he was cleansed

"At that moment he was cleansed"

he was cleansed of his leprosy

The result of Jesus saying "Be clean" was that the man was healed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he was well" or "the leprosy left him" or "the leprosy ended"

Matthew 8:4

to him

This refers to the man that Jesus just healed.

say nothing to any man

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

show yourself to the priest

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

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

The law of Moses required that someone healed of leprosy give a thanksgiving offering to the priest. When the priest accepted the gift, people would know that the man had been healed. Lepers were ostracized, banned from the community, until they had proof of their healing.

to them

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

Matthew 8:5

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a different time and place and tells about Jesus healing another person.

When he was coming into Capernaum

"When Jesus was coming into Capernaum"

Matthew 8:6

paralyzed

unable to move because of disease or stroke

Matthew 8:7

Jesus said to him

"Jesus said to the centurion"

I will come and heal him

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

Matthew 8:8

under my roof

This is an idiom that refers to inside the house. Alternate translation: "into my house"

say the word

Here "word" represents a command. Alternate translation: "give the command"

will be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will become well"

Matthew 8:9

under authority ... under me

To be "under" someone means to be less important and to obey the commands of someone more important.

Matthew 8:10

Truly I say to you

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

I have not found anyone with such faith in Israel

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

Matthew 8:11

you

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

from the east and the west

Using the opposites "east" and "west" is a way of saying "everywhere." Alternate translation: "from everywhere" or "from far away in every direction"

recline at the table

People in that culture would lie down beside the table while eating. This phrase indicates that all those at the table are family and close friends. The

joy in the kingdom of God is frequently spoken of as if the people there were feasting. Alternate translation: "live as family and friends"

in the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "when our God in heaven shows that he is king"

Matthew 8:12

sons of the kingdom will be cast out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cast the sons of the kingdom out"

the sons of the kingdom

The phrase "the sons of the kingdom" is a metonym, referring to the unbelieving Jews of the kingdom of Judea. There is also irony here because the "sons" will be thrown out while the strangers will be welcomed. Alternate translation: "those who should have allowed God to rule over them"

the outer darkness

Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. Alternate translation: "the dark place away from God"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. Alternate translation: "weeping and showing their extreme suffering"

Matthew 8:13

so may it be done for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so I will do it for you"

the servant was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed the servant"

at that very hour

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

Matthew 8:14

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a different time and place and tells of Jesus healing another person.

Jesus had come

The disciples were probably with Jesus, but the focus of the story is on what Jesus said and did, so introduce the disciples only if needed to avoid wrong meaning.

Peter's mother-in-law
"the mother of Peter's wife"

Matthew 8:15

the fever left her
If your language would understand this personification to mean that the fever could think and act on its own, this can be translated as "she became better" or "Jesus healed her."

got up
"got out of bed"

Matthew 8:16

Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to later that evening and tells of Jesus healing more people and casting out demons.

When evening had come
Because Jews did not work or travel on the Sabbath, "evening" may imply after the Sabbath. They waited until evening to bring people to Jesus. You do not need to mention the Sabbath unless you need to avoid wrong meaning.

many who were possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many people whom demons possessed" or "many people whom demons controlled"

He drove out the spirits with a word
Here "word" stands for a command. Alternate translation: "He commanded the spirits to leave"

Matthew 8:17

This was to fulfill
"Jesus did this to fulfill"

what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Isaiah the prophet had spoken"

He took our illnesses and bore our diseases
Matthew is quoting the prophet Isaiah to show that when Jesus healed people, he fulfilled what Isaiah had said would happen. These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Jesus truly did this. Alternate translation: "Truly he took our illnesses"

Matthew 8:18

Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts and tells about Jesus's response to some people who wanted to follow him.

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

he gave instructions
"he told his disciples"

Matthew 8:19

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

wherever
to any place

Matthew 8:20

Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests
Jesus answers with this proverb. This means even wild animals have somewhere to rest.

Foxes
Foxes are animals like dogs. They eat nesting birds and other small animals. If foxes are unknown in your area, use a general term for dog-like creatures or other furry animals.

holes
Foxes make holes in the ground to live in. Use the appropriate word for the place where the animal you use for "foxes" lives.

the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.

nowhere to lay his head
This refers to a place to sleep. Alternate translation: "no place of his own to sleep"

Matthew 8:21

allow me first to go and bury my father
It is unclear whether the man's father has died and he will bury him immediately, or if the man wants to stay for a longer amount of time until his father dies so he can bury him then. The main point is that the man wants to do something else first before he follows Jesus.

Matthew 8:22

leave the dead to bury their own dead
Jesus does not mean literally that dead people will bury other dead people. Possible meanings of "the dead": 1) it is a metaphor for those who will soon die, or 2) it is a metaphor for those who do not follow Jesus and are spiritually dead. The main point is that a disciple must not let anything delay him from following Jesus.

Matthew 8:23

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to the account of Jesus calming a storm as he and his disciples cross the Sea of Galilee.

entered a boat

"got onto a boat"

his disciples followed him

Try to use the same words for "disciple" and "follow" that you used in (Matthew 8:21-22).

Matthew 8:24

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of showing this. Alternate translation: "Suddenly" or "Without warning"

there arose a great storm on the sea

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a powerful storm arose on the sea"

so that the boat was covered with the waves

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the waves covered the boat"

Matthew 8:25

General Information:

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

woke him up, saying, "Save us

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

us ... we

If you need to translate these words as inclusive or exclusive, then inclusive is best. The disciples probably meant they wanted Jesus to save the disciples and himself from drowning.

we are perishing

"we are going to die very soon." The word "perishing" is a strong word for "dying."

Matthew 8:26

to them

"to the disciples"

Why are you afraid ... faith?

Jesus was rebuking the disciples with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "You should not be afraid ... faith!" or "There is nothing for you to be afraid of ... faith!"

you of little faith

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

Matthew 8:27

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

"Even the winds and the sea obey him! What sort of man is this?" This rhetorical question shows that the disciples were surprised. Alternate translation: "This man is unlike any man we have ever seen! Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

even the winds and the sea obey him

For people or animals to obey or disobey is not surprising, but for wind and water to obey is very surprising. This personification describes the natural elements as being able to hear and respond like people.

Matthew 8:28

Connecting Statement:

Here the author returns to the theme of Jesus healing people. This begins an account of Jesus healing two demon-possessed men.

to the other side

"to the other side of the Sea of Galilee"

the Gadarenes

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

two men who were possessed by demons

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "two men whom demons possessed" or "two men whom demons were controlling"

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

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

Matthew 8:29

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of showing this.

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

The demons use a question but they are being hostile toward Jesus. Alternate translation: "Do not bother us, Son of God!"

Son of God

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

Have you come here to torment us before the set time?
Again, the demons use a question in a hostile way.
Alternate translation: "You should not disobey God by punishing us before the specific time God has set when he will punish us!"

Matthew 8:30

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

Matthew 8:31

If you cast us out
It is implied that the demons knew that Jesus was going to cast them out. Alternate translation: "Because you are going to cast us out"

us
This is exclusive, meaning the demons only.

Matthew 8:32

to them
This refers to the demons inside the men.

The demons came out and went into the pigs
"The demons left the men and entered the pigs"

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

rushed down the steep hill
"ran quickly down the steep slope"

they died in the water
"they fell into the water and drowned"

Matthew 8:33

Connecting Statement:
This concludes the account of Jesus healing two demon-possessed men.

tending the pigs
"taking care of the pigs"

what had happened to the men who had been possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Jesus did to help the men whom demons had controlled"

Matthew 8:34

Behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of showing this.

all the city
The word "city" is a metonym for the people of the city. The word "all" is probably an exaggeration to emphasize how very many people came out. Not necessarily every person came out.

their region
"their area"

Chapter 9

Matthew 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Sinners"

When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. When Jesus said that he came to call "sinners," he meant that only people who believe that they are sinners can be his followers. This is true even if they are not what most people think of as "sinners." (See: sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice

Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. You may have to translate the sentence so that it tells the reader who performed the action.

Rhetorical questions

Speakers in this chapter asked questions to which they already knew the answer. They asked the questions to show that they were not happy with the hearers or to teach them or to get them to think. Your language may have another way of doing this.

Proverbs

Proverbs are very short sentences that use words that are easy to remember. They teach about something that is generally true. People who understand proverbs usually have to know much about the language and culture of the speaker. When you translate the proverbs in this chapter, you may have to use many more words than the speakers used so that your readers can understand things that the original audiences understood.

Matthew 9:1

Connecting Statement:

Matthew returns to the theme, which he began in Matthew 8:1, of Jesus healing people. This begins an account of Jesus healing a paralyzed man.

Jesus entered a boat

It is implied that the disciples were with Jesus.

a boat

This is probably the same boat as in Matthew 8:23. You only need to specify this if needed to avoid confusion.

into his own city

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

Matthew 9:2

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of showing this.

they brought

"some men from the city brought"

their faith

This refers to the faith of the men and may also include the faith of the paralyzed man.

Son

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

Your sins have been forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:3

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

among themselves

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

blaspheming

Jesus was claiming to be able to do things the scribes thought only God can do.

Matthew 9:4

knew their thoughts

Jesus knew what they were thinking either supernaturally or because he could see them talking to each other.

Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?

Jesus used this question to rebuke the scribes. Here "hearts" refers to their minds or their thoughts. Alternate translation: "Do not think evil thoughts."

evil

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

Matthew 9:5

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

Jesus uses this question to make the scribes think about what might prove whether or not he could really forgive sins. Alternate translation: "I just said 'Your sins are forgiven.' You may think that it is harder to say 'Get up and walk,' because the proof of whether or not I can heal the man will be shown by whether or not he gets up and walks." or "You may think that it is easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up and walk.'"

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

The quotes can be translated as indirect quotes. Alternate translation: "which is easier, to tell someone that his sins are forgiven, or to tell him to get up and walk?" or "you may think that it is easier to tell someone that his sins are forgiven than to tell him to get up and walk."

Your sins are forgiven

Here "your" is singular. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:6

that you may know

"I will prove to you." The "you" is plural.

your mat ... your house

Here "you" is singular.

go to your house

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

Matthew 9:7

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 9:8

they were afraid

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

who had given

"because he had given"

such authority

This refers to the authority to declare sins forgiven.

Matthew 9:9

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the account of Jesus healing a paralyzed man. Jesus then calls a tax collector to be one of his disciples.

As Jesus passed by from there

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

passed by

"was leaving" or "was going"

Matthew ... him ... He

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

He said to him

"Jesus said to Matthew"

He got up and followed him

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

Matthew 9:10

the house

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

behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

sinners

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

Matthew 9:11

When the Pharisees saw it

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

Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?

The Pharisees use this question to criticize what Jesus is doing. Alternate translation: "Your teacher should not eat with tax collectors and sinner."

Matthew 9:12

When Jesus heard this

Here "this" refers to the question the Pharisees asked about Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners.

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

Jesus answers with a proverb. He means that he eats with these kinds of people because he has come to help sinners.

People who are strong in body

"People who are healthy"

physician
doctor

those who are sick

The phrase "need a physician" is understood. Alternate translation: "people who are sick need a physician"

Matthew 9:13

You should go and learn what this means

Jesus is about to quote the scriptures. Alternate translation: "You should learn the meaning of what God said in the scriptures"

You should go

Here "you" is plural and refers to the Pharisees.

I desire mercy and not sacrifice

Jesus is quoting what the prophet Hosea wrote in the scriptures. Here, "I" refers to God.

For I came

Here "I" refers to Jesus.

the righteous

Jesus is using irony. He does not think there are any people who are righteous and do not need to repent. Alternate translation: "those who think they are righteous"

Matthew 9:14

Connecting Statement:

The disciples of John the Baptist question the fact that Jesus's disciples do not fast.

do not fast

"continue to eat regularly"

Matthew 9:15

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

Jesus uses a question to answer John's disciples. They all knew that people do not mourn and fast at a wedding celebration. Jesus uses this proverb to show that his disciples do not mourn because he is still there with them. Alternate translation: "The sons of the wedding hall never mourn while the bridegroom is still with them."

sons of the wedding hall

This is an idiom that refers to the men who serve a bridegroom during a wedding. Alternate translation: "bridegroom's attendants"

the days will come when

This is a way of referring to some time in the future. Alternate translation: "the time will come when" or "someday"

the bridegroom will be taken away from them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bridegroom will not be able to be with them any longer" or "someone will take the bridegroom away from them"

will be taken away

Jesus is probably referring to his own death, but this should not be made explicit here in the translation. To maintain the imagery of a wedding, it is best to just state that the bridegroom will not be there any longer.

Matthew 9:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to answer the question that the disciples of John had asked. He did this by giving two examples of old things and new things that people do not put together.

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

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

an old garment ... the garment

"old clothing ... the clothing"

the patch will tear away from the garment

If someone were to wash the garment, the patch of new cloth would shrink, but the old garment would

not shrink. This would tear the patch off the garment and leave a bigger hole.

the patch

"the piece of new cloth." This is the piece of cloth used to cover a hole in the old garment.

a worse tear will be made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this will make the tear worse"

Matthew 9:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to answer the question that disciples of John had asked.

Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins

Jesus uses another proverb to answer John's disciples. This means the same as the proverb in Matthew 9:16.

Neither do people put

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

new wine

This refers to wine that has not fermented yet. If grapes are unknown in your area, use the general term for fruit. Alternate translation: "grape juice"

old wineskins

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

wineskins

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

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and this will ruin the wineskins and spill the wine"

the skins will burst

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

fresh wineskins

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

both will be preserved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this will keep safe both the wineskins and the wine"

Matthew 9:18

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus bringing to life the daughter of a Jewish official after she had died.

these things

This refers to the answer Jesus gave John's disciples about fasting.

behold

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

bowed down to him

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

come and lay your hand on her, and she will live

This shows that the Jewish official believed Jesus had the power to bring his daughter back to life.

Matthew 9:19

his disciples

"Jesus's disciples"

Matthew 9:20

Connecting Statement:

This describes how Jesus healed another woman while he was on the way to the Jewish official's house.

Behold

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

who suffered from a discharge of blood

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

twelve years

"12 years"

his garment

"his robe" or "what he was wearing"

Matthew 9:21

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

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

If only I touch his clothes

According to Jewish law, because she was bleeding she was not supposed to touch anyone. She touches his clothes so that Jesus's power would heal her and yet

Matthew 9:22

But Jesus

"The woman was hoping she could touch him secretly, but Jesus"

Daughter

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

your faith has made you well

"because you believed in me, I will heal you"

the woman was healed from that hour

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed her at that moment"

Matthew 9:23

Connecting Statement:

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

the flute players and the crowd making a commotion

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

flute players

"people who play flutes"

and the crowd making a commotion

The phrase "making a commotion" applies only to "the crowd" and does not include the flute players. Alternation translation: "and the crowd making a lot of noise" or "and the noisy crowd"

Matthew 9:24

Go away

Jesus was speaking to many people, so use the plural command form if your language has one.

the girl is not dead, but she is asleep

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

Matthew 9:25

When the crowd had been put outside

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After Jesus had sent the crowd outside" or "After the family had sent the people outside"

got up

"got out of bed." This is the same meaning as in Matthew 8:15.

Matthew 9:26

General Information:

This is a summary statement that describes the result of Jesus raising this girl from the dead.

Connecting Statement:

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

The news about this spread into all that region

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

Matthew 9:27

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus healing two blind men.

As Jesus passed by from there

As Jesus was leaving the region

passed by

"was leaving" or "was going"

followed him

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

Have mercy on us

It is implied that they wanted Jesus to heal them.

Son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the men were probably calling Jesus by this title.

Matthew 9:28

When Jesus had come into the house

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

Yes, Lord

The full content of their answer is not stated, but it is understood. Alternate translation: "Yes, Lord, we believe you can heal us"

Matthew 9:29

touched their eyes and said

It is not clear whether he touched both men's eyes at the same time or used only his right hand to touch one then the other. As the left hand was customarily used for unclean purposes, it is most likely that he used only his right hand. It is also not clear whether he spoke as he was touching them or touched them first and then spoke to them.

Let it be done to you according to your faith

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will do as you have believed" or "Because you believe, I will heal you"

Matthew 9:30

their eyes were opened

This means they were able to see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God healed their eyes" or "the two blind men were able to see"

See that no one knows about this

Here "See" means "be sure." Alternate translation: "Be sure no one finds out about this" or "Do not tell anyone that I healed you"

Matthew 9:31

But the two men

"The two men did not do what Jesus told them to do. They"

spread the news

"told many people what had happened to them"

Matthew 9:32

Connecting Statement:

This is the account of Jesus healing a demon-possessed man who could not speak, and how people responded.

behold

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

a mute man ... was brought to Jesus

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought a mute man ... to Jesus"

mute

not able to talk

possessed by a demon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom a demon had possessed" or "whom a demon was controlling"

Matthew 9:33

When the demon had been driven out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After Jesus had forced the demon out" or "After Jesus had commanded the demon to leave"

the mute man spoke

"the mute man began to speak" or "the man who had been mute spoke" or "the man, who was no longer mute, spoke"

The crowds were astonished

"The people were amazed"

This has never been seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This has never happened before" or "No one has ever done anything like this before"

Matthew 9:34

he drives out demons

"he forces demons to leave"

he drives

The pronoun "he" refers to Jesus.

Matthew 9:35

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in [Matthew 8:1]

all the cities

The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize how very many cities Jesus went to. He did not necessarily go to every one of them. Alternate translation: "many of the cities"

cities ... villages

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

the gospel of the kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. See how you translated this in [Matthew 4:23]

all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness

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

Matthew 9:36

General Information:

This begins a new part of the story where Jesus teaches his disciples and sends them to preach and heal as he has done.

They were like sheep without a shepherd

This simile means they did not have a leader to take care of them. Alternate translation: "The people did not have a leader"

Matthew 9:37

General Information:

Jesus uses a proverb about harvesting to tell his disciples how they should respond to the needs of the crowds mentioned in the previous section.

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few
Jesus uses a proverb to respond to what he is seeing. Jesus means there are a lot of people who are ready to believe God but only few people to teach them God's truth.

The harvest is plentiful
"There is plenty of ripe food for someone to collect"

laborers
"workers"

Matthew 9:38

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

Chapter 10

Matthew 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The sending of the twelve disciples

Many verses in this chapter describe how Jesus sent the twelve disciples out. He sent them to tell his message about the kingdom of heaven. They were to tell his message only in Israel and not to share it with the Gentiles.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

"The kingdom of heaven has come near"

No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when Jesus spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Matthew 10:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus sending out his twelve disciples to do his work.

called his twelve disciples together
"summoned his 12 disciples"

gave them authority

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

to drive them out

"to make the unclean spirits leave"

all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness

"every disease and every sickness." The words "disease" and "sickness" are closely related but should be translated as two different words if possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be

sick. "Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that results from having a disease.

Matthew 10:2

General Information:

Here the author provides the names of the twelve apostles as background information.

Now

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

twelve apostles

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

first

This is first in order, not in rank.

Matthew 10:3

Matthew the tax collector

"Matthew, who was a tax collector"

Matthew 10:4

the Zealot

Possible meanings are 1) "the Zealot" is a title that shows that he was part of the group of people who wanted to free the Jewish people from Roman rule. Alternate translation: "the patriot" or "the nationalist" or 2) "the Zealot" is a description that shows that he was zealous for God to be honored. Alternate translation: "the zealous one" or "the passionate one"

who would betray him

"who would betray Jesus"

Matthew 10:5

General Information:

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

Connecting Statement:

Here Jesus begins to give instructions to his disciples about what they should do and expect when they go to preach.

These twelve Jesus sent out

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

sent out

Jesus sent them out for a particular purpose.

He instructed them

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

Matthew 10:6

lost sheep of the house of Israel

This is a metaphor comparing the entire nation of Israel to sheep who have strayed from their shepherd.

house of Israel

This refers to the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "people of Israel" or "descendants of Israel"

Matthew 10:7

as you go

Here "you" is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

The kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use the word "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 3:2]

Matthew 10:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go to preach.

Heal ... raise ... cleanse ... cast out ... you have received ... give

These verbs and pronouns are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

raise the dead

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cause the dead to live again"

Freely you have received, freely give

Jesus did not state what the disciples had received or were to give. Some languages may require this information in the sentence. Here "freely" means that there was no payment. Alternate translation: "Freely you have received these things, freely give them to others" or "You received these things without paying, so give them to others without making them pay"

Freely you have received, freely give

Here "received" is a metaphor that represents being made able to do things, and "give" is a metaphor that represents doing things for others. Alternate translation: "Freely you have received the ability to do these things, freely do them for others" or "Freely I have made you able to do these things, freely do them for others"

Matthew 10:9

your

This refers to the twelve apostles and so is plural.

gold, silver, or copper

These are metals out of which coins were made. This list is a metonym for money, so if the metals are unknown in your area, translate the list as "money."

belts

"money belts." A belt is a long strip of cloth or leather worn around the waist. It was often wide enough that it could be folded and used to carry money. Alternate translation: "purses" or "pouches"

Matthew 10:10

traveling bag

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

an extra tunic

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

laborer worker

his food

Here "food" refers to anything a person needs. Alternate translation: "what he needs"

Matthew 10:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go out to preach.

Whatever city or village you enter

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

city ... village

"large village ... small village" or "large town ... small town." See how you translated this in Matthew 9:35.

you

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

worthy

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

stay there until you leave

The full meaning of the statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "stay in that person's house until you leave the town or village"

Matthew 10:12

As you enter into the house, greet it

The phrase "greet it" means greet the house. A common greeting in those days was "Peace be to this house!" Here "house" represents the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "As you enter the house, greet the people who live in it"

you

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

Matthew 10:13

your ... your

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

the house is worthy ... not worthy

Here "the house" represents those who live in the house. A "worthy" person is a person who is willing to welcome the disciples. Jesus compares this person to one who is "not worthy," a person who does not welcome the disciples. Alternate translation: "the people who live in that house receive you well" or "the people who live in that house treat you well"

let your peace come upon it

The word "it" refers to the house, which represents the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "let them receive your peace" or "let them receive the peace that you greeted them with"

if it is not worthy

The word "it" means the house. Here "house" refers to the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "if they do not receive you well" or "if they do not treat you well"

let your peace return to you

Possible meanings are 1) if the household was not worthy, then God would hold back peace or blessings from that household or 2) if the household was not worthy, then the apostles were supposed to do something, such as asking God not to honor their greeting of peace. If your language has a similar meaning of taking back a greeting or its effects, that should be used here.

Matthew 10:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go to preach.

As for those who do not receive you or listen

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

you ... your

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

listen to your words

Here "words" refers to what the disciples say. Alternate translation: "listen to your message" or "listen to what you have to say"

city

You should translate this the same way you did in Matthew 10:11.

shake off the dust from your feet

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

Matthew 10:15

Truly I say to you

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

it will be more bearable

"the suffering will be less"

the land of Sodom and Gomorrah

This refers to the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah. Alternate translation: "the people who lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

that city

This refers to the people in the city that does not receive the apostles or listen to their message. Alternate translation: "the people of the city that does not receive you"

Matthew 10:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples. Here he begins to tell them about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

See, I send

The word "See" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look, I send" or "Listen, I send" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you. I send"

I send you out

Jesus is sending them out for a particular purpose.

as sheep in the midst of wolves

Sheep are defenseless animals that wolves often attack. Jesus is stating that people may harm the disciples. Alternate translation: "as sheep among people who are like dangerous wolves" or "as sheep among people who act the way dangerous animals act"

be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves

Jesus is telling the disciples they must be cautious and harmless among the people. If comparing the disciples to serpents or doves is confusing, it might be better not to state the similes. Alternate translation: "act with understanding and caution, as well as with innocence and virtue"

Matthew 10:17

Watch out for people! They will

You can translate with "because" to show how these two statements relate. Alternate translation: "Watch out for people because they will"

will deliver you up to

"will put you under the control of"

councils

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

whip you

"beat you with a whip"

Matthew 10:18

you will be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will bring you" or "they will drag you"

for my sake

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

to them and to the Gentiles

The pronoun "them" refers either to the "governors and kings" or to the Jewish accusers.

Matthew 10:19

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

When they deliver you up

"When people take you to the councils." The "people" here are the same "people" as in Matthew 10:17.

you ... you

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

do not be anxious

"do not worry"

how or what you will speak

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

for what to say will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the Holy Spirit will tell you what to say"

at that time

"right then" or "at that time"

Matthew 10:20

you ... your

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

the Spirit of your Father

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

Father

This is an important title for God.

in you

"through you"

Matthew 10:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

Brother will deliver up brother to death

"One brother will deliver up his brother to death" or "Brothers will deliver up their brothers to death." Jesus speaks of something that will happen many times.

deliver up brother to death

The abstract noun "death" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "hand brother over to authorities who will execute him"

a father his child

These words can be translated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "fathers will deliver up their children to death"

rise up against

"rebel against" or "turn against"

cause them to be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "have them put to death" or "have the authorities execute them"

Matthew 10:22

You will be hated by everyone

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will hate you" or "All people will hate you"

You

This is plural and refers to the twelve disciples.

because of my name

Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you trust in me"

whoever endures

"whoever stays faithful"

to the end

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

that person will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will deliver that person"

Matthew 10:23

in this city

Here "this" does not refer to a specific city. Alternate translation: "in one city"

flee to the next

"flee to the next city"

truly I say to you

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

before the Son of Man has

Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "before I, the Son of Man, have"

has come

"arrives"

Matthew 10:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

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

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

A disciple is not greater than his teacher

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

nor a servant above his master

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

Matthew 10:25

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

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

be like his teacher

If necessary, you can make explicit how the disciple becomes like the teacher. Alternate translation: "know as much as his teacher knows"

the servant like his master

If necessary, you can make explicit how the servant becomes like the master. Alternate translation: "the

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

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

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

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

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

If they have called

"Since people have called"

the master of the house

Jesus is using this as a metaphor for himself.

Beelzebul

This name can either be 1) transcribed directly as "Beelzebul" or 2) translated with its original, intended meaning of "Satan."

his household

This is a metaphor for Jesus's disciples.

Matthew 10:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

do not fear them

Here "them" refers to the people who mistreat followers of Jesus.

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

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Being concealed or hidden represents being kept secret, and being revealed represents being made known. Jesus is emphasizing that God will make all things known. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will reveal the things that people hide"

Matthew 10:27

What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight, and what you hear softly in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that the disciples should tell everyone what he tells the disciples in private. Alternate translation: "Tell people in the daylight what I tell you in the darkness, and proclaim upon the housetops what you hear softly in your ear"

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

Here "darkness" is a metonym for "night" which is a metonym for "private." Here "daylight" is a metonym for "public." Alternate translation: "What I tell you privately at night, say in public in the daylight"

what you hear softly in your ear

This is a way of referring to whispering. Alternate translation: "what I whisper to you"

proclaim upon the housetops

Housetops where Jesus lived were flat, and people far away could hear anyone speaking with a loud voice from one. Here "housetops" refers to any place where all people can hear. Alternate translation: "speak loudly in a public place for all to hear"

Matthew 10:28

General Information:

Here Jesus also begins to give reasons why his disciples should not be afraid of the persecution they might experience.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go to preach.

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

This is not distinguishing between people who cannot kill the soul and people who can kill the soul. No person can kill the soul. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid of people. They can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul"

kill the body

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

body

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

kill the soul

This means to harm people after they have physically died.

soul

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

fear him who is able

You can add "because" to clarify why people should fear God. Alternate translation: "fear God because he is able"

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?

Jesus states this proverb as a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "Think about the sparrows. They have so little value that you can buy two of them for only one small coin."

sparrows

These are very small, seed-eating birds. Alternate translation: "small birds"

a small coin

This is often translated as the least valuable coin available in your country. It refers to a copper coin worth about one-sixteenth of a day's wage for a laborer. Alternate translation: "very little money"

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

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "your Father knows when every one of them falls to the ground"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 10:30

even the hairs of your head are all numbered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows even how many hairs are on your head"

numbered "counted"

Matthew 10:31

You are more valuable than many sparrows

"God values you more than many sparrows"

Matthew 10:32

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.

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

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

confesses me before men

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

I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven

You can make explicit the information that is understood. Alternate translation: "I will also

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

my Father who is in heaven

"my heavenly Father"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 10:33

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

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

denies me before men

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

I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven

You can make explicit the information that is understood. Alternate translation: "I will deny before my Father who is in heaven that this person belongs to me"

Matthew 10:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.

Do not think

"Do not suppose" or "You must not think"

upon the earth

This refers to the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "to the people of the earth" or "to people"

a sword

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

Matthew 10:35

to set ... against

"to cause ... to fight against"

a man against his father

"a son against his father"

Matthew 10:36

A man's enemies

"A person's enemies" or "A person's worst enemies"

those of his own household

"members of his own family"

Matthew 10:37

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.

He who loves ... is not worthy

Here "he" means any person in general. Alternate translation: "Those who love ... are not worthy" or "If you love ... you are not worthy"

loves

The word for "love" here refers to "brotherly love" or "love from a friend." Alternate translation: "cares for" or "is devoted to" or "is fond of"

worthy of me

"deserve to belong to me" or "worthy to be my disciple"

Matthew 10:38

pick up his cross and follow after me

"carry his cross and follow me." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"

pick up

"take up" or "pick up and carry"

Matthew 10:39

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

Jesus uses a proverb to teach his disciples. This should be translated with as few words as possible. Alternate translation: "Those who find their lives will lose them. But those who lose their lives ... will find them" or "If you find your life you will lose it. But if you lose your life ... you will find it"

finds

This is a metaphor for "keeps" or "saves." Alternate translation: "tries to keep" or "tries to save"

will lose it

This does not mean the person will die. It is a metaphor that means the person will not experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will not have true life"

who loses his life

This does not mean to die. It is a metaphor that means a person considers obeying Jesus more important than his own life. Alternate translation: "who denies himself"

for my sake

"because he trusts me" or "on my account" or "because of me." This is the same idea as "for my sake" in Matthew 10:18.

will find it

This metaphor means the person will experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will find true life"

Matthew 10:40

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.

He who welcomes

This means he receives someone as a guest.

He who

The word "He" refers to anyone in general. Alternate translation: "Whoever" or "Anyone who" or "The one who"

you

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles to whom Jesus is speaking.

He who welcomes you welcomes me

Jesus means that when someone welcomes you, it is like welcoming him. Alternate translation: "When someone welcomes you, it is like he is welcoming me" or "If someone welcomes you, it is as if he were welcoming me"

he who welcomes me also welcomes him who sent me

This means that when someone welcomes Jesus, it is like welcoming God. Alternate translation: "When someone welcomes me, it is like he is welcoming God the Father who sent me" or "If someone welcomes me, it is as if he were welcoming God the Father who sent me"

Matthew 10:41

in the name of a prophet

"because that prophet is a prophet" or "because he knows that that person is a prophet." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a prophet.

a prophet's reward

This refers to the reward that God gives the prophet, not to the reward that a prophet gives to another person.

in the name of a righteous man

"because that righteous man is a righteous man" or "because he knows that that person is righteous." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the

reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a righteous man.

a righteous man's reward

This refers to the reward God gives to a righteous person, not a reward that a righteous person gives to another person.

Matthew 10:42

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes instructing his disciples about what they should do and expect when they go to preach.

Whoever gives

"Anyone who gives"

one of these little ones

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

in the name of a disciple

"because that disciple" or "because he knows that that person is a disciple." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a disciple.

truly I say to you

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

he will ... his reward

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

he will in no way lose

"God will not deny him." This has nothing to do with having a possession taken away. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly give him"

Chapter 11

Matthew 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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 material in 11:10.

Some scholars believe that Matthew 11:20 begins a new stage in the ministry of Christ because of Israel's rejection of him.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hidden revelation

After Matthew 11:20 Jesus begins to reveal information about himself and about the plans of God the Father, while hiding this information from those who reject him (Matthew 11:25).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of heaven is near"

No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when John spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Matthew 11:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of how Jesus responded to disciples of John the Baptist.

It came about that when

This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "Then when" or "After"

had finished instructing

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

his twelve disciples

This refers to the twelve chosen apostles of Jesus.

in their cities

Here "their" refers to all the Jews in general.

Matthew 11:2

Now

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

when John heard in the prison about

This is the first mention of John being in prison. Some languages may need to state that he had been put in prison or that he was in prison. Alternate translation: "Now John had been put in prison. When he heard about" or "When John, who was in prison, heard about"

he sent a message by his disciples

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

Matthew 11:3

said to him

The pronoun "him" refers to Jesus.

Are you the one who is coming

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

should we look for another

"should we be expecting someone else." The pronoun "we" refers to all Jews, not only John's disciples.

Matthew 11:4

report to John

"tell John"

Matthew 11:5

lepers are being cleansed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am healing lepers"

the dead are being raised back to life

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people who have died are being caused to live again" or "I

am causing those who have died to become alive again" and

the gospel is being preached to the poor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am preaching good news to the poor"

the poor

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Matthew 11:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 11:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

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

Jesus uses a question to cause the people to think about what kind of person John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "Surely you did not go out to the desert to see a reed ... wind!"

a reed being shaken by the wind

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus mean the literal plants by the Jordan River or 2) Jesus is using a metaphor to mean a kind of person. Alternate translation: "a man who easily changes his mind and is like a reed blowing back and forth in the wind"

being shaken by the wind

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "swaying in the wind" or "blowing in the wind"

Matthew 11:8

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

Jesus uses a question to cause the people to think about what kind of person John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "And surely you did not go out to the desert to see a man ... clothing!"

dressed in soft clothing

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

Really

This word adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed"

kings' houses

"kings' palaces"

Matthew 11:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

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

Jesus uses a question to make the people think about what kind of man John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "But surely you went out to the desert to see a prophet!"

Yes, I say to you,

"I say to you yes,"

much more than a prophet

This can be translated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "the person you saw was much more than a prophet"

much more than

much more important than

Matthew 11:10

General Information:

Here, Jesus quotes the prophet Malachi to show that the life and ministry of John the Baptist fulfilled prophecy.

This is he of whom it was written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what the prophet Malachi wrote long ago about John the Baptist"

I am sending my messenger

The pronouns "I" and "my" refer to God. Malachi is quoting what God said.

before your face

Here "your" is singular, because God was speaking to the Messiah in the quotation. Also, "face" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "in front of you" or "to go ahead of you"

prepare your way before you

This is a metaphor that means the messenger will prepare the people to receive the Messiah's message.

Matthew 11:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

Truly I say to you

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

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

The word "arisen" is a metaphor for being active, referring here to John's activity as a prophet. Alternate translation: "no one born of women has been a greater prophet than John the Baptist"

among those born of women

Even though Adam and Eve were not born of a woman, this is a way of referring to all humans. Alternate translation: "out of all people who have ever lived"

the least important person in the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, try to keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "the least important person under the rule of our God in heaven"

is greater than he is

"is more important than John is"

Matthew 11:12

From the days of John the Baptist

"From the time John began preaching his message." The word "days" probably refers here to a period of months or even years.

the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force

There are various possible interpretations of this verse. The UDB assumes that it means that some people want to use God's kingdom for their own selfish purposes and that they are willing to use force against other people to accomplish this. Other versions assume a positive interpretation, that the call to enter the kingdom of God has become so urgent that people must act in an extreme manner in order to answer that call and to resist the temptation to sin further. A third interpretation is that violent people are harming God's people and trying to stop God from ruling.

Matthew 11:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

all the prophets and the law have been prophesying until John

Here "prophets and the law" refer to the things that the prophets and Moses wrote in scripture. Alternate translation: "these are the things that the prophets and Moses have prophesied through the scriptures until the time of John the Baptist"

Matthew 11:14

if you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the crowd.

he is Elijah who was to come

The word "he" refers to John the Baptist. This does not mean John the Baptist is literally Elijah. Jesus means John the Baptist fulfills the prophecy about "Elijah, who is to come" or the next Elijah. Alternate translation: "when the prophet Malachi said that Elijah would return, he was speaking about John the Baptist"

Matthew 11:15

He who has ears to hear, let him 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 "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"

He who has ... let him hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "You who have ... listen"

Matthew 11:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

To what should I compare this generation?

Jesus uses a question to introduce a comparison between the people of that day and what children might say in the marketplace. Alternate translation: "This is what this generation is like"

this generation

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

marketplaces

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

Matthew 11:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues the parable that begins with the words "It is like" in verse 16.

saying ... and you did not weep

Jesus uses a parable to describe the people who were alive at that time. He compares them to a group of children who are trying to get the other children to play with them. However, no matter what they do, the other children will not join them.

Jesus means that it does not matter if God sends someone like John the Baptist, who lives in the desert and fasts, or someone like Jesus, who celebrates with sinners and does not fast. The people, most specifically the Pharisees and religious leaders, still remain stubborn and refuse to accept God's truth.

We played a flute for you

"We" refers to the children sitting in the marketplace. Here "you" is plural and refers to the other group of children.

and you did not dance

"but you did not dance to the happy music"

We mourned

This means they sang sad songs like women did at funerals.

and you did not weep

"but you did not cry with us"

Matthew 11:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes talking to the crowds about John the Baptist.

not eating bread or drinking wine

Here "bread" refers to food. It does not mean that John never ate food. It means he fasted often, and when he ate, he did not eat good, expensive food. Alternate translation: "frequently fasting and not drinking alcohol" or "not eating fancy food and not drinking wine"

they say, 'He has a demon.'

This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "they say that he has a demon." or "they accuse him of having a demon."

they say

All occurrences of "they" refer to the people of that generation, and most specifically to the Pharisees and religious leaders.

Matthew 11:19

The Son of Man came

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"

came eating and drinking

This is the opposite of John's behavior. This means more than just consuming the normal amount of food and drink. It means Jesus celebrated and enjoyed good food and drink like other people did.

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

This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "they say that he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners." or "they

accuse him of eating and drinking too much and of being ... sinners." If you translated "The Son of Man" as "I, the Son of man," you can state this as an indirect statement and use the first person. Alternate translation: "they say that I am a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners."

he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard

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

But wisdom is justified by her deeds

This is a proverb that Jesus applies to this situation, because the people who rejected both him and John were not being wise. Jesus and John the Baptist are the wise ones, and the results of their deeds prove it.

wisdom is justified by her deeds

Here "wisdom" is described as a woman who is proven to be right by what she does. Jesus means that the results of a wise person's actions prove that he is truly wise. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the results of a wise person's deeds prove that he is wise"

Matthew 11:20

General Information:

Jesus begins to denounce the people of the cities where he previously did miracles.

denounce the cities

Here "the cities" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "rebuked the people of the cities" or "accuse the people of the cities of doing wrong"

cities

"towns"

in which most of his miracles were done

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in which he did most of his miracles"

miracles

"mighty works" or "works of power"

Matthew 11:21

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!

Jesus speaks as if the people of the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida were there listening to him, but they were not.

Woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you." Here "you" is singular and refers to the city. If it is more natural to refer to the people instead of a city, you could translate with a plural "you."

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

The names of these cities are used as metonyms for the people living in these cities.

If the miracles ... in sackcloth and ashes

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

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

This can be translated with active forms. Alternate translation: "If I had done the miracles among the people of Tyre and Sidon that I have done among you"

which were done in you

Here the "you" is plural and refers to Chorazin and Bethsaida. If it is more natural for your language, you could use a dual "you" to refer to the two cities, or a plural "you" to refer to the people of the cities.

they would have repented long ago

The pronoun "they" refers to the people of Tyre and Sidon.

would have repented

"would have shown they were sorry for their sins"

Matthew 11:22

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

Here "Tyre and Sidon" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely at the day of judgment than the people of Tyre and Sidon"

than for you

Here the "you" is plural and refers to Chorazin and Bethsaida. If it is more natural for your language, you could use a dual "you" to refer to the two cities, or a plural "you" to refer to the people of the cities. The implied information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "than for you, because you did not repent and believe in me, even though you saw me do miracles"

Matthew 11:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the people of the cities where he previously did miracles.

You, Capernaum

Jesus now speaks to the people in the city of Capernaum as if they were listening to him, but they were not. The pronoun "you" is singular and refers to Capernaum throughout these two verses.

You

All occurrences of "you" are singular. If it is more natural to refer to the people of the city, you could translate with a plural "you."

Capernaum ... Sodom

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

do you think you will be exalted to heaven?

"do you think you will be raised up to heaven?"

Jesus uses a rhetorical question to rebuke the people of Capernaum for their pride. It can be stated in active form: Alternate translation: "you cannot raise yourself up to heaven!" or "the praise of other people will not raise you up to heaven!" or "God will not bring you up to heaven like you think he will!"

you will be brought down to Hades

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will send you down to Hades"

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

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

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if I had done the miracles among the people of Sodom that I have done among you"

miracles

"mighty works" or "works of power"

it would still have remained

The pronoun "it" refers to the city of Sodom.

Matthew 11:24

I say to you

This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

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

Here "land of Sodom" refer to the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely in the day of judgment than the people of Sodom"

than for you

The implicit information can be made explicit.

Alternate translation: "than for you, because you did not repent and believe in me, even though you saw me do miracles"

Matthew 11:25

General Information:

Here, Jesus prays to his heavenly Father while still in the presence of the crowd.

Father

This is an important title for God.

Lord of heaven and earth

"Lord who rules over heaven and earth." The phrase "heaven and earth" is a merism that refers to all people and things in the universe. Alternate translation: "Lord who rules over the whole universe"

you concealed these things ... and revealed them

It is not clear what is meant by "these things." If your language needs to specify what is meant, an alternative translation might be best. Alternate translation: "you concealed these truths ... and revealed them"

you concealed these things from

"you hid these things from" or "you have not made these things known to." This verb is the opposite of "revealed."

from the wise and understanding

These nominal adjectives can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "from people who are wise and understanding"

the wise and understanding

Jesus is using irony. He does not think these people are really wise. Alternate translation: "people who think they are wise and understanding"

revealed them

"made them known." The pronoun "them" refers to "these things" earlier in this verse.

to little children

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

Matthew 11:26

General Information:

Here, Jesus continues praying to his heavenly Father while still in the presence of the crowd.

for this was pleasing in your sight

The phrase "in your sight" is a metonym that stands for how a person considers something. Alternate translation: "for you considered it good to do this"

Matthew 11:27

General Information:

Here, Jesus begins to address the people again.

All things have been entrusted to me from my Father

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has entrusted all things to me" or "My Father has given everything over to me"

All things

Possible meanings are 1) God the Father has revealed everything about himself and his kingdom to Jesus or 2) God has given all authority to Jesus.

my Father

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

no one knows the Son except the Father

This double negative emphasizes that the Father is the only one who knows the Son. Alternate translation: "the only one who knows the Son is the Father"

no one knows

The word "knows" here means more than just being acquainted with someone. It means knowing someone intimately because of having a special relationship with him.

the Son

Jesus was referring to himself in the third person.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

no one knows the Father except the Son

"only the Son knows the Father"

Matthew 11:28

all you

All occurrences of "you" are plural.

who labor and are heavy burdened

Jesus speaks of people being discouraged in their attempts to obey all the laws as if those laws were heavy burdens and the people were laboring to carry them. Alternate translation: "who are discouraged from trying so hard" or "Who are discouraged from trying so hard to obey the laws perfectly"

I will give you rest

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

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke on you

Jesus continues the metaphor. Jesus is inviting the people to become his disciples and follow him.

I am meek and lowly in heart

Here "meek" and "lowly in heart" mean basically the same thing. Jesus combines them to emphasize that he will be much kinder than the religious

leaders. Alternate translation: "I am gentle and humble" or "I am very gentle"

lowly in heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "lowly in heart" is an idiom that means "humble." Alternate translation: "humble"

you will find rest for your souls

Here "soul" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "you will find rest for yourselves" or "you will be able to rest"

Matthew 11:30

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light

Both of these phrases mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that it is easier to obey him than it is the Jewish law. Alternate translation: "For what I place on you, you will be able to carry because it is light"

my burden is light

The word "light" here is the opposite of heavy, not the opposite of dark.

Chapter 12

Matthew 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 12:18-21, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Sabbath

This chapter has much to say about how God's people are to obey the Sabbath. Jesus said that the rules that the Pharisees made up did not help people obey the Sabbath the way God wanted them to. (See: sabbath)

"Blasphemy against the Spirit"

No one knows for sure what actions people perform or what words they say when they commit this sin. However, they probably insult the Holy Spirit and his work. Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to make people understand that they are sinners and that they need to have God forgive them. Therefore, anyone who does not try to stop sinning is probably committing blasphemy against the Spirit. (See: blasphemy and holyspirit)

Matthew 12:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of growing opposition to Jesus's ministry. Here, the Pharisees criticize his disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath.

At that time

This marks a new part of the story. Alternate translation: "A little later"

grainfields

This is a place to plant grain. If wheat is unknown and "grain" is too general, then you can use "fields of the plant they made bread from."

pluck heads of grain and eat them

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

to pluck heads of grain and eat them

"to pick some of the wheat and eat it" or "to pick some of the grain and eat it"

heads of grain

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

Matthew 12:2

do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath

Picking grain in others' fields and eating it was not considered stealing. The question was whether one

could do this otherwise lawful activity on the Sabbath.

the Pharisees

This does not mean all of the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "some Pharisees"

See, your disciples

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

Matthew 12:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' criticism.

to them

"to the Pharisees"

Have you never read ... with him?

Jesus uses a question to respond to the criticism of the Pharisees. Jesus is challenging them to think about the meaning of the scriptures they have read. Alternate translation: "I know you have read about ... with him"

when he was hungry, and the men who were with him

The phrase "were hungry" is understood from the phrase "was hungry." Alternate translation: "when he was hungry and the men who were with him were hungry" or "when he and those with him were hungry"

Matthew 12:4

the house of God

During the time of David there was no temple yet. Alternate translation: "the tabernacle" or "the place for worshipping God"

bread of the presence

This is sacred bread that priests placed before God in the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "bread that the priest placed before God" or "sacred bread"

those who were with him

"the men who were with David"

but lawful only for the priests

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

Matthew 12:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

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

Jesus uses a question to respond to the criticism of the Pharisees. Jesus is challenging them to think about the meaning of what they have read in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "Surely you have read in the law of Moses that ... but are guiltless." or "You should know that the law teaches that ... but are guiltless."

profane the Sabbath

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

are guiltless

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

Matthew 12:6

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

one greater than the temple

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

Matthew 12:7

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea to rebuke the Pharisees.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

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

Here Jesus quotes scripture. Alternate translation: "The prophet Hosea wrote this long ago: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' If you had understood what this meant, you would not have condemned the guiltless"

I desire mercy and not sacrifice

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

I desire

The pronoun "I" refers to God.

the guiltless

This can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are not guilty"

Matthew 12:8

the Son of Man is

Jesus was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am"

is Lord of the Sabbath

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

Matthew 12:9

General Information:

Here the scene shifts to a later time when the Pharisees criticize Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath.

Then Jesus left from there

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

their synagogue

Possible meanings are 1) the word "their" refers to the Jews of that town. Alternate translation: "the synagogue" or 2) the word "their" refers to the Pharisees that Jesus had just spoken to, and this was the synagogue that they and other Jews in that town attended. The word "their" does not mean that the Pharisees owned the synagogue. Alternate translation: "the synagogue that they attended"

Matthew 12:10

Behold

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

a man who had a withered hand

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

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

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

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath

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

so that they might accuse him of sinning

They did not just want to accuse Jesus in front of the people. The Pharisees wanted Jesus to give an answer that contradicted the law of Moses so they could take him before a judge and legally charge him with breaking the law.

Matthew 12:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' criticism.

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

Jesus uses a question to respond to the Pharisees. He is challenging them to think about what kind of work they do on the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "Every one of you, if you only had one sheep ... would grab the sheep and raise it out."

raise
lift

Matthew 12:12

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

The phrase "how much more" adds emphasis to the statement. Alternate translation: "Obviously, a man is much more valuable than a sheep!" or "Just think about how much more important a man is than a sheep"

it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath

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

Matthew 12:13

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

This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Then Jesus commanded the man to stretch out his hand."

to the man

"to the man with the paralyzed hand" or "to the man with the crippled hand"

Stretch out your hand

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

He stretched

"The man stretched"

it was restored to health

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it was healthy again" or "it became well again"

Matthew 12:14

plotted against him

"planned to harm Jesus"

were seeking how they might destroy him

"were discussing how they might kill Jesus"

Matthew 12:15

General Information:

This account explains how the actions of Jesus fulfilled one of the prophecies of Isaiah.

Jesus, knowing this, withdrew

"Jesus was aware of what the Pharisees were planning, so he withdrew"

withdrew from

"departed from" or "left"

Matthew 12:16

not to make him known to others

"not to tell anyone else about him"

Matthew 12:17

that it might be fulfilled, what

The phrase "that it might be fulfilled" can be translated as the beginning of a new sentence. If so, the previous verse should end with a period. Alternate translation: "This was to fulfill what"

what had been said through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God had said long ago through the prophet Isaiah:"

Matthew 12:18

Connecting Statement:

Here Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's ministry fulfilled scripture.

See

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

my ... I

All occurrences of these words refer to God. Isaiah is quoting what God said to him.

my beloved one, in whom my soul is well pleased

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

in whom my soul is well pleased

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "with whom I am very pleased"

he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles

This means that God's servant will tell the Gentiles that there will be justice. It can be stated clearly that God is the one who will bring about justice, and the abstract noun "justice" can be expressed as "what is right." Alternate translation: "he will

announce to the nations that God will do for them what is right"

Matthew 12:19

Connecting Statement:

Matthew continues to quote the prophet Isaiah.

neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets

Here people not hearing his voice represents him not speaking loudly. And, "in the street" is an idiom that means "publicly." Alternate translation: "he will not he shout in the cities and towns"

He ... his

All occurrences of these words refer to God's chosen servant.

Matthew 12:20

He

All occurrences of "he" refer to God's chosen servant.

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

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They are metaphors emphasizing that God's servant will be gentle and kind. Both "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" represent weak and hurting people. If the metaphor is confusing, you could translate the literal meaning. Alternate translation: "He will be kind to weak people, and he will be gentle to those who are hurting"

bruised reed

"damaged plant"

he will not quench any smoking flax

"he will not put out any smoking flax" or "he will not stop any smoking flax from burning"

smoking flax

This refers to a lamp wick after the flame has gone out and when it is only smoking.

flax, until

This can be translated with a new sentence: "flax. This is what he will do until"

he leads justice to victory

Leading someone to victory represents causing him to be victorious. Causing justice to be victorious represents making things right that had been wrong. Alternate translation: "he makes everything right"

Matthew 12:21

in his name the Gentiles will have hope

The Gentiles will trust him to fulfill his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait" or "confidently expect." Alternate translation: "the

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

in his name

The word "his" refers to God's servant who was spoken of in [Matthew 12:18]

Matthew 12:22

General Information:

Here the scene shifts to a later time when the Pharisees accuse Jesus of healing a man by the power of Satan.

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone brought to Jesus a man who was blind and mute because a demon was controlling him"

someone blind and mute

"someone who could not see and could not talk"

Matthew 12:23

All the crowds were amazed

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

the Son of David

This is a title for the Christ or Messiah.

Son of

Here this means "descendant of."

Matthew 12:24

this miracle

This refers to the miracle of the healing of a blind, deaf, and demon-possessed man.

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

This double negative emphasizes that they think that the power of Beelzebul is the only thing that makes it possible for Jesus casts out demons. Alternate translation: "This man is only able to cast out demons because he is a servant of Beelzebul"

This man

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

the prince of the demons

"the chief of the demons"

Matthew 12:25

General Information:

Here Jesus begins to respond to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.

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

Jesus uses a proverb to respond to the Pharisees. Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize that it would not make sense for Beelzebul to use his power to fight other demons.

Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate
Here "kingdom" refers to those who live in the kingdom. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "A kingdom will not last when its people fight among themselves"

every city or house divided against itself will not stand
Here "city" refers to the people who live there, and "house" refers to a family. Being "divided against itself" represents its people fighting each other. Alternate translation: "it ruins a city or a family when the people fight each other"

Matthew 12:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.

If Satan drives out Satan

The second use of Satan refers to the demons that serve Satan. Alternate translation: "If Satan works against his own demons"

How then will his kingdom stand?

Jesus uses this question to show the Pharisees that what they were saying was illogical. Alternate translation: "His kingdom would not be able to stand!" or "His kingdom would not last!"

Matthew 12:27

Beelzebul

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

by whom do your sons drive them out?

Jesus uses another question to challenge the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "then you must say your followers also drive out demons by the power of Beelzebul. But you know this is not true."

your sons

Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees. The phrase "your sons" refers to their followers. This was a common way of referring to those who follow teachers or leaders. Alternate translation: "your followers"

For this reason they will be your judges

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

Matthew 12:28

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

But if I

Here "if" does not mean Jesus is questioning how he drives out demons. Here Jesus uses the word to introduce a true statement. Alternate translation: "But because I"

then the kingdom of God has come upon you

"then the kingdom of God has arrived among you."

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king.

Alternate translation: "this means God is establishing his rule among you"

come upon you

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

Matthew 12:29

How can anyone enter the house ... belongings from his house

Jesus uses a parable to continue his response to the Pharisees. Jesus means he can drive out demons because he is more powerful than Satan.

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

Jesus uses a question to teach the Pharisees and the crowd. Alternate translation: "No one can enter ... without tying up the strong man first." or "If a person wants to enter ... he must first tie up the strong man."

without tying up the strong man first

"without taking control of the strong man first"

Then he will steal

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

Matthew 12:30

who is not with me

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

is against me

"opposes me" or "works against me"

the one who does not gather with me scatters

Jesus is using a metaphor that refers to a person either gathering the flock of sheep to a shepherd or making them scatter away from the shepherd. Jesus means that a person is either helping to make people become disciples of Jesus or he is making people reject Jesus.

Matthew 12:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

say to you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus is speaking directly to the Pharisees, but he is also teaching the crowd.

every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive every sin that people commit and every evil thing they say" or "God will forgive every person who sins or says evil things"

blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive the person who speaks evil things about the Holy Spirit"

Matthew 12:32

Whoever speaks any word against the Son of Man

Here "word" refers to what someone says. Alternate translation: "If a person says anything bad about the Son of Man"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

that will be forgiven him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive a person for that"

that will not be forgiven him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive that person"

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

Here "this world" and "that which is to come" refer to the present life and the next life. Alternate translation: "in this life or in the next life" or "now or ever"

Matthew 12:33

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

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

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

good ... bad

"healthy ... diseased"

a tree is recognized by its fruit

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people recognize a tree by its fruit" or "people know whether a tree is good or bad by looking at its fruit"

Matthew 12:34

You offspring of vipers

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

You ... you

These are plural and refer to the Pharisees.

how can you say good things?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "you cannot say good things." or "you can only say evil things."

out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks

Here "heart" is a metonym for the thoughts in a person's mind. Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that represents a person as a whole. Alternate translation: "what a person says with his mouth reveals what is in his mind"

Matthew 12:35

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

Jesus speaks about the "heart" as if it were a container that a person fills with good or evil things. This is a metaphor that means what a person says reveals what the person is truly like. If you want to keep this imagery, see the UDB. You can also translate the literal meaning. Alternate translation: "A man who is truly good will speak good things, and the man who is truly evil will speak evil things"

Matthew 12:36

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his response to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

people will give an account for

"God will ask people about" or "people will have to explain to God"

every idle word they will have said

Here "word" refers to something that someone says. This refers to statements that do no good. This is a metonym for statements made by people who are lazy or otherwise not doing anything good. Alternate translation: "every idle thing they will said"

idle

empty, useless, careless

Matthew 12:37

you will be justified ... you will be condemned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will justify you ... God will condemn you"

Matthew 12:38

Connecting Statement:

The dialogue in these verses happens immediately after Jesus responded to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed a man by the power of Satan.

we wish

"we want"

to see a sign from you

You can make explicit why they want to see a sign. Alternate translation: "to see a sign from you that proves what you say is true"

Matthew 12:39

General Information:

Here Jesus begins to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.

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

Jesus is speaking to the Jews of his generation. Alternate translation: "You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you"

adulterous generation

Here "adulterous" is a metaphor for people who are not faithful to God. Alternate translation: "unfaithful generation" or "godless generation"

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

This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"

no sign will be given to it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"

the sign of Jonah

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

Matthew 12:40

three days and three nights

This means complete 24-hour periods. Alternate translation: "three complete days"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

in the heart of the earth

This means inside a physical grave.

Matthew 12:41

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.

The men of Nineveh

"The citizens of Nineveh"

at the judgment

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

this generation of people

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

and will condemn it

Possible meanings are 1) "condemn" here represents accusing. Alternate translation: "and will accuse this generation of people" or 2) God will condemn this generation of people because they did not repent as the people of Nineveh had. Alternate translation: "and God will condemn this generation"

and see

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

someone greater

"someone more important"

someone

Jesus is speaking about himself.

than Jonah is here

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "than Jonah is here, yet you still have not repented, which is why God will condemn you"

Matthew 12:42

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.

Queen of the South

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

will rise up at the judgment

"will stand up at the judgment"

at the judgment

"on judgment day" or "when God judges people."
See how you translated this in Matthew 12:41.

this generation

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

and condemn them

See how you translated a similar statement in [Matthew 12:41]

She came from the ends of the earth

Here "ends of the earth" is an idiom that means "far away." Alternate translation: "She came from very far away"

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

This statement explains why the Queen of the South will condemn the people of Jesus's generation.
Alternate translation: "For she came"

and see

"and look." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

someone greater

"someone more important"

someone

Jesus is speaking about himself.

than Solomon is here

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "than Solomon is here, yet you do not listen. That is why God will condemn you"

Matthew 12:43

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees. He begins to tell a parable.

waterless places

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

does not find it

Here "it" refers to rest.

Matthew 12:44

Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

This can be translated as a statement rather than a quotation. Alternate translation: "So, the unclean spirit decides to return to the house from which it came."

to my house from which I came

This is a metaphor for the person in whom the unclean spirit was living. Alternate translation: "to the place I left"

it finds the house empty

Again, "house" is a metaphor for the person in whom the unclean spirit was living. Here, "empty" suggests that no one is living in the house. There is no other spirit living in the person.

it had been swept clean and put in order.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had swept the house clean and has put everything in the house where it belongs"

Matthew 12:45

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes the parable that he began with the words "When an unclean spirit" in verse 43.

It will be just like that with this evil generation

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

Matthew 12:46

General Information:

The arrival of Jesus's mother and brothers becomes an opportunity for him to describe his spiritual family.

behold

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

his mother

This is Mary, Jesus's human mother.

his brothers

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

seeking to speak

"wanting to speak"

Matthew 12:47

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

This can be translated as an indirect quotation.

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

Matthew 12:48

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 12:1, where Matthew tells of growing opposition to Jesus's ministry.

who told him

The details of the message the person told Jesus are understood and not repeated here. Alternate translation: "who told him that his mother and brothers wanted to speak to him"

Who is my mother and who are my brothers?

Jesus uses these questions to teach the people.

Alternate translation: "I will tell you who are really my mother and brothers"

Matthew 12:49

See

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

here are my mother and my brothers

This is a metaphor that means Jesus's disciples belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family.

Matthew 12:50

whoever does

"anyone who does"

Father

This is an important title for God.

that person is my brother, and sister, and mother

This is a metaphor meaning that those who obey God belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family.

Chapter 13

Matthew 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 13:14-15, which is from the Old Testament.

This chapter begins a new section. It contains some of Jesus's parables about the kingdom of heaven.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

Jesus often says the word "heaven" when he wants his hearers to think of God, who lives in heaven (Matthew 13:11).

Implicit information

Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When Matthew wrote that Jesus "sat beside the sea"

Metaphor

Speakers often use words for things that can be touched to speak of things that cannot be touched. Jesus spoke of a bird eating a seed to describe how Satan kept people from understanding Jesus's message (Matthew 13:19).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice

Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. For example, "they were scorched"

Parables

The parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people would easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. He also told the stories so that those who did not want to believe in him would not understand the truth (Matthew 13:11-13).

Matthew 13:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Jesus begins to teach the crowds, using parables, about the kingdom of heaven.

On that day

These events happened on the same day as those in the previous chapter.

out of the house

It is not mentioned at whose house Jesus was staying.

sat beside the sea

It is implied that he sat down to teach the people.

Matthew 13:2

so he got into a boat

It is implied that Jesus got into a boat because it would make it easier to teach the people.

a boat

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

Matthew 13:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sows seeds.

Jesus said many things to them in parables

"Jesus told them many things in parables"

to them

"to the people in the crowd"

Behold

"Look" or "Listen." This word calls attention to what is to be said next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

a farmer went out to sow seed

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

Matthew 13:4

As he sowed

"As the farmer scattered the seed"

beside the road

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

devoured them

"ate all the seeds"

Matthew 13:5

rocky ground

This is ground full of rocks with just a thin layer of soil on top of the rocks.

Immediately they sprang up

"The seeds quickly sprouted and grew"

Matthew 13:6

they were scorched

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sun scorched the plants, and they became too hot"

they withered away

"the plants became dry and died"

Matthew 13:7

fell among the thorn plants

"fell where plants with thorns grew"

choked them

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

Matthew 13:8

produced a crop

"grew more seeds" or "gave fruit"

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

The words "seeds," "produced," and "crop" are understood from the previous phrase. These can be expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "some seeds produced one hundred times as much crop, some seeds produced sixty times as much crop, and some seeds produced thirty times as much crop"

one hundred ... sixty ... thirty

"100 ... 60 ... 30"

Matthew 13:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling a parable about a person who sows seeds.

He who has ears, let him 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 ears" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]

He who ... let him

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]

Matthew 13:10

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 13:11

General Information:

Jesus explains to his disciples why he teaches with parables.

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

This can be translated with the active form and with implied information expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "God has given you the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but God has not given it to these people" or "God has made you able to understand mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but he has not enabled these people to understand"

You have been given the privilege

The word "You" is plural here and refers to the disciples.

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" occurs only in the book of Matthew. If possible, try to keep it in your translation. Alternate translation: "the secrets about our God in heaven and his rule"

Matthew 13:12

has will be given more

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "has understanding, God will give him more understanding"

whoever does not have

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

even what he has will be taken away from him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take away even what he has"

Matthew 13:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to explain to his disciples why he teaches in parables.

to them ... they

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

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

Jesus uses this parallelism to tell and emphasize to the disciples that the crowd refuses to understand God's truth.

Though they are seeing

These words could refer to 1) them seeing what Jesus does. Alternate translation: "Though they see what I do" or 2) their ability to see with their eyes. Alternate translation: "Though they are able to see"

they do not see

Here "see" represents understanding. Alternate translation: "they do not understand"

though they are hearing

These words could refer to 1) them hearing what Jesus teaches. Alternate translation: "Though they hear what I say" or 2) their ability to hear with their ears. Alternate translation: "Though they are able to hear"

they do not hear

Here "hear" represents listening well. Alternate translation: "they do not listen well" or "they do not pay attention"

Matthew 13:14

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that the people's failure to understand Jesus's teaching is a fulfillment of prophecy.

To them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, that which says

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They are fulfilling what God said long ago through the prophet Isaiah"

Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand; seeing, you will see, but you will never know

This begins a quote from the prophet Isaiah about the unbelieving people of Isaiah's day. Jesus uses this quote to describe the very crowd that was listening to him. These statements are again parallel and emphasize that the people refused to understand God's truth.

Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand

"You will hear things, but you will not understand them." You can make explicit what the people will hear. Alternate translation: "You will hear what God says through the prophets, but you will not understand its true meaning"

seeing, you will see, but you will never know

You can make explicit what the people will see. Alternate translation: "you will see what God does through the prophets, but you will not understand it"

Matthew 13:15

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes quoting the prophet Isaiah.

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

God describes the people of Israel as if they had physical diseases that cause them to be unable to learn, to see, and to hear. God wants them to come to him so he will heal them. This is all a metaphor describing the people's spiritual condition. It means the people are stubborn and refuse to receive and understand God's truth. If they would, then they would repent and God would forgive them and welcome them back as his people. If the meaning is clear, keep the metaphor in your translation.

the heart of this people has become dull

Here "heart" refers to the mind. Alternate translation: "these people's minds are slow to learn" or "these people can no longer learn"

with their ears they hardly hear

They are not physically deaf. Here "hardly hear" means they refuse to listen and learn God's truth. Alternate translation: "they refuse to use their ears to listen"

they have shut their eyes

This means they refuse to understand, not that they have literally closed their eyes. Alternate translation: "they refuse to use their eyes to see"

understand with their heart

The word "heart" here is a metonym for people's innermost being. You may need to use the word in your language for the source of people's thinking and feelings. Alternate translation: "understand with their minds"

turn again

"turn back to me" or "repent"

I would heal them

"have me heal them." This means God would heal them spiritually by forgiving their sins and receiving them again as his people. Alternate translation: "have me receive them again"

Matthew 13:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes explaining to his disciples why he teaches with parables.

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

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that they have pleased God because they have believed what Jesus has said and done.

But blessed are your eyes, for they see

Here "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "You are blessed because your eyes are able to see"

your ... you

All occurrences of these words are plural and refer to the disciples.

your ears, for they hear

Here "ears" refer to the whole person. You can also make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "blessed are your ears, for they hear" "you are blessed because your ears are able to hear"

Matthew 13:17

Truly I say to you

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

you

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

the things that you see

You can make explicit what they have seen. Alternate translation: "the things you have seen me do"

the things that you hear

You can make explicit what they have heard. Alternate translation: "the things you have heard me say"

Matthew 13:18

Connecting Statement:

Here Jesus begins to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds, which he began in Matthew 13:3.

Matthew 13:19

the word of the kingdom

"the message about God's rule as king"

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

Jesus speaks of Satan causing the person to forget what he has heard as if Satan were a bird snatching the seed from the ground. Alternate translation: "The evil one causes him to forget the message that he has heard just as a bird snatches away seed from the ground"

the evil one

This refers to Satan.

snatches away

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

what has been sown in his heart

This can be translated in active form: Alternate translation: "the message that God sowed in his heart" or "the message that he heard"

in his heart

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

This is the seed that was sown beside the road

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

beside the road

See how you translated this in Matthew 13:4.

Matthew 13:20

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds.

What was sown on rocky ground

The phrase "what was sown" refers to seed that fell. Alternate translation: "The seed that fell on rocky ground"

What was sown on rocky ground is

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

the person who hears the word

In the parable, the seed represents the word.

the word

This represents God's message. Alternate translation: "the message" or "God's teaching"

receives it with joy

Believing the word is spoken of as receiving it. Alternate translation: "joyfully believes it"

Matthew 13:21

yet he has no root in himself and he endures for a while
 "yet he has shallow roots and only lasts for a little while." The root represents what makes a person continue to believe God's message. Alternate translation: "But like a plant that does not grow deep roots, he only endures for a little while"

he quickly falls away

Here "falls away" means stops believing. Alternate translation: "immediately he falls away" or "he quickly stops believing the message"

Matthew 13:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds.

What was sown

This refers to seed that was sown or that fell. Alternate translation: "The seed that was sown" or "The seed that fell"

What was sown among the thorn plants

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

this is the person

"this represents the person"

the word

"the message" or "God's teaching"

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

Jesus speaks about the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches distracting a person from obeying God's word as if they were weeds that could wind around a plant and keep it from growing. Alternate translation: "as weeds prevent good plants from growing, the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches keep this person from listening to God's word"

cares of the world

"the things in this world that people worry about"

the deceitfulness of riches

Jesus describes "riches" as if it were a person who could deceive someone. This means people think having more money will make them happy, but it will not. Alternate translation: "the love of money"

he becomes unfruitful

The person is spoken of as if he were a plant. Being unfruitful represents being unproductive. Alternate translation: "he becomes unproductive" or "he does not do what God wants"

Matthew 13:23

The seed that was sown on the good soil

You may have to consider "the seed" as a metonym for the soil on which the seed was sown. Alternate translation: "The good soil where seeds were sown"

He bears fruit and produces a crop

The person is spoken of as if he were a plant. Alternate translation: "Like a healthy plant that bears a crop of fruit, he is productive"

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

See how you translated similar phrases in [Matthew 13:8]

a hundred ... sixty ... thirty

100 ... 60 ... 30

Matthew 13:24

Connecting Statement:

Here Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.

Jesus presented another parable

This metaphor speaks of Jesus telling the people the parable as if he were putting a tangible object in front of them so they could examine it. Alternate translation: "Jesus told them another parable"

The kingdom of heaven is like a man

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

The kingdom of heaven is like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"

good seed

"good food seeds" or "good grain seeds." The audience probably thought that Jesus was talking about wheat.

Matthew 13:25

his enemy came

"his enemy came to the field"

weeds

These weeds look like food plants when they are young, but their grain is poison. Alternate translation: "bad seed" or "weed seeds"

Matthew 13:26

When the blades sprouted

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

produced their crop

"produced grain" or "produced the wheat crop"

then the weeds appeared also

"then people could see there were weeds in the field also"

Matthew 13:27

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell a parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.

the landowner

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

did you not sow good seed in your field?

The servants used a question to emphasize their surprise. Alternate translation: "you sowed good seed in your field!"

did you not sow

The landowner probably had his servants plant the seeds. Alternate translation: "did we not sow"

Matthew 13:28

He said to them

"The landowner said to the servants"

So do you want us

The word "us" refers to the servants.

Matthew 13:29

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes the parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.

The landowner said

"The landowner said to his servants"

Matthew 13:30

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

You can translate this as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "I will tell the reapers to first gather up the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, and then gather the wheat into my barn."

barn

a farm building that can be used for storing grain

Matthew 13:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a very small seed that grows into a very big plant.

The kingdom of heaven is like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

mustard seed

a very small seed that grows into a large plant

Matthew 13:32

This seed is indeed the smallest of all seeds

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

But when it has grown

"But when the plant has grown"

it is greater than

"it is larger than"

becomes a tree

A mustard plant can grow about 2 to 4 meters tall.

birds of the sky

"birds"

Matthew 13:33

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about the effect that yeast has on flour.

The kingdom of heaven is like yeast

The kingdom is not like the yeast, but the spread of the kingdom is like the spreading of the yeast.

The kingdom of heaven is like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

three measures of flour

Say "a large amount of flour" or use a term that your culture uses for measuring large amounts of flour.

until all the dough had risen

The implied information is that the yeast and the three measures of flour were made into dough for baking.

Matthew 13:34

All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; and he said nothing to them without a parable

Both sentences mean the same thing. They are combined to emphasize that Jesus taught the crowds only with parables.

All these things

This refers to what Jesus taught beginning at Matthew 13:1.

he said nothing to them without a parable

"he taught them nothing except by parables." The double negative can be expressed in a positive way. Alternate translation: "everything he taught them he said in parables"

Matthew 13:35

General Information:

Here the author quotes from the Psalms to show that Jesus's teaching in parables fulfilled prophecy.

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God told one of the prophets to write long ago might come true"

when he said

"when the prophet said"

I will open my mouth

This is an idiom that means to speak. Alternate translation: "I will speak"

things that were hidden

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "things that God has kept hidden"

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

Matthew 13:36

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to the house where Jesus and his disciples were staying. Jesus begins to explain to them the parable of the field that had both wheat and weeds, which he told beginning in Matthew 13:24.

went into the house

"went indoors" or "went into the house where he was staying"

Matthew 13:37

He who sows the good seed

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

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself.

Matthew 13:38

the sons of the kingdom

The idiom "sons of" refers to those who belong to or to have the same character as someone or something. Alternate translation: "the people who belong to the kingdom"

of the kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God the king. Alternate translation: "of God"

the sons of the evil one

The idiom "sons of" refers those who belong to or to have the same character as someone or something. Alternate translation: "the people who belong to the evil one"

Matthew 13:39

the enemy who sowed them

"the enemy who sowed the weeds"

Matthew 13:40

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes explaining to his disciples the parable of the field with both wheat and weeds.

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

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore, as people gather up weeds and burn them in the fire"

Matthew 13:41

The Son of Man will send out his angels

Here Jesus is speaking of himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will send out my angels"

all stumbling blocks

everything that causes people to sin

those who commit lawlessness

"those who are lawless" or "evil people"

Matthew 13:42

furnace of fire

This is a metaphor for the fires of hell. If the term "furnace" is not known, "oven" can be used.
Alternate translation: "fiery furnace"

weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 13:43

shine like the sun

If this simile is not understandable in your language, you can use: "be as easy to see as the sun."

Father

This is an important title for God.

He who has ears, let him 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 ears" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]

He who has ... 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 in [Matthew 11:15]

Matthew 13:44

General Information:

In this parable, Jesus uses a simile to teach his disciples what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sold his possessions to purchase something of great value.

The kingdom of heaven is like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

like a treasure hidden in a field

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a treasure that someone had hidden in a field"

treasure

a very valuable and precious thing or collection of things

hid it

"covered it up"

sells everything he possesses, and buys that field

The implied information is that the person buys the field to take possession of the hidden treasure.

Matthew 13:45

General Information:

In this parable, Jesus uses a simile to teach his disciples what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sold his possessions to purchase something of great value.

like a man who is a merchant looking for valuable pearls

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

a merchant

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

valuable pearls

A "pearl" is a smooth, hard, shiny, white or light-colored bead formed inside mollusks in the sea and highly prized as a gem or to make into valuable jewelry. Alternate translation: "fine pearls" or "beautiful pearls"

Matthew 13:46

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 13:47

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about fishermen who use a large net to catch fish.

the kingdom of heaven is like a net

The kingdom is not like the net, but the kingdom draws all kinds of people like a net catches all kinds of fish.

the kingdom of heaven is like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

like a net that was cast into the sea

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "like a net that some fishermen cast into the sea"

was cast into the sea
"was thrown into the sea"

Matthew 13:48

drew it up on the beach
"pulled the net up onto the beach" or "pulled the net ashore"

the good ones
Sometimes other creatures go into nets, but fishermen usually cast nets to catch fish, so most modern translations read, "the good fish."

the bad ones
Sometimes other creatures go into nets, but fishermen usually cast nets to catch fish, so most modern translations read, "the bad fish."

threw away
"did not keep"

Matthew 13:49

Connecting Statement:
Jesus explains the parable about fishermen who use a large net to catch fish.

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

the wicked from among the righteous
These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "the wicked people from the righteous people"

Matthew 13:50

They will throw them
"The angels will throw the wicked people"

furnace of fire
This is a metaphor for the fires of hell. If the term "furnace" is not known, "oven" can be used. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:42]

weeping and grinding of teeth
"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 13:51

Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who manages a household. This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus teaching the crowds about the kingdom of heaven through using parables.

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

If necessary, both direct quotations can be translated as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "Jesus asked them if they had understood all this, and they said that they did understand."

Matthew 13:52

has become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "has learned the truth about our God in heaven, who is king" or "has submitted himself to God's rule"

is like a man who is the owner of a house, who draws out old and new things from his treasure
Jesus speaks another parable. He compares scribes, who know very well the scriptures that Moses and the prophets wrote, and who also now accept Jesus's teachings, to a house owner who uses both old and new treasures.

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

Matthew 13:53

Then it came about that when
This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "Then when" or "After"

Matthew 13:54

General Information:
This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through Matthew 17:27, where Matthew tells of continued opposition to Jesus's ministry and teaching about the kingdom of heaven. Here, the people of Jesus's home town reject him.

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

in their synagogue
The pronoun "their" is referring to the people of the region.

they were astonished
"they were amazed"

Where does this man get his wisdom and these miraculous powers from?
The people believed that Jesus was just an ordinary man. They use this question to express their

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

Matthew 13:55

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

The crowd uses these questions to express their belief that they know who Jesus is and that he is just an ordinary man. Alternate translation: "He is just the son of a carpenter. We know his mother Mary, and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas."

the carpenter's son

A carpenter is someone who makes things with wood or stone. If "carpenter" is not known, "builder" can be used.

Matthew 13:56

Are not all his sisters with us?

The crowd uses these questions to express their belief that they know who Jesus is and that he is just an ordinary man. Alternate translation: "And all his sisters are with us, too."

Where did he get all these things?

The crowd uses this question to show their understanding that Jesus must have gotten his

abilities from somewhere. They were probably expressing their doubt that he got his abilities from God. Alternate translation: "He must have gotten his ability to do these things from somewhere!" or "We do not know where he got these abilities!"

all these things

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

Matthew 13:57

They were offended by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Jesus's hometown took offense at him" or "The people rejected Jesus"

A prophet is not without honor

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "A prophet receives honor everywhere" or "People everywhere honor a prophet"

his own country

"his own region" or "his own hometown"

in his own family

"in his own home"

Matthew 13:58

He did not do many miracles there

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

Chapter 14

Matthew 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verses 1 and 2 continue the account from chapter 13. Verses 3-12 stop the account and speak of things that happened earlier, possibly soon after Satan tempted Jesus

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice

Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. For example, the writer does not tell who brought John's head to Herodias's daughter

Matthew 14:1

General Information:

These verses explain Herod's reaction when he heard about Jesus. This event happens some time after the events that follow in the narrative.

About that time

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

heard the news about Jesus

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

Matthew 14:2

He said

"Herod said"

has risen from the dead

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

Therefore these powers are at work in him

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

Matthew 14:3

General Information:

Matthew recounts the story of John the Baptist's death in order to show why Herod reacted the way he did when he heard about Jesus.

Connecting Statement:

Here the author begins to tell about how Herod had executed John the Baptist. These events occur some time before the event in the previous verses.

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

It says that Herod did these things although he actually ordered others to do them for him.

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

Philip's wife

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

Matthew 14:4

For John ... as your wife

If needed, you can present the events of 14:3-4 in the order that they happened, as in the UDB.

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

This can be expressed as an indirect quote, if needed. Alternate translation: "For John had said to Herod that it was not lawful for Herod to have Herodias as his wife."

For John had said to him

"For John had kept saying to Herod"

It is not lawful

Philip was still alive when Herod married Herodias.

Matthew 14:5

would have killed him

"wanted to kill John"

he feared

"Herod feared"

they regarded him

"they regarded John"

Matthew 14:6

in the midst

You can make explicit the implicit information.
Alternate translation: "in the midst of the guests attending the birthday celebration"

Matthew 14:7

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 14:8

After being instructed by her mother

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After her mother instructed her"

instructed

"coached" or "told"

she said

"the daughter of Herodias said to Herod"

platter

a very large plate

Matthew 14:9

The king was grieved by her request

The abstract noun "request" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The king was grieved because she had asked him to kill John"

The king

"King Herod"

grieved

sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies

he ordered that it should be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he ordered his men to do what she said"

Matthew 14:10

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the account of how Herod executed John the Baptist.

Matthew 14:11

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl"

platter

a very large plate

girl

Use the word for a young, unmarried girl.

Matthew 14:12

his disciples

"the disciples of John"

the corpse

"the dead body"

they went and told Jesus

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the disciples of John went and told Jesus what had happened to John the Baptist"

Matthew 14:13

Now

This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Matthew returns to telling about Jesus.

heard this

"heard what happened to John" or "heard the news about John"

he withdrew

"he left" or "he went away"

from there

"from that place"

When the crowds heard of it

"When the crowds heard where Jesus had gone" or "When the crowds heard that he had left"

the crowds

"the crowds of people" or "the huge group of people" or "the people"

on foot

This means that the people in the crowd were walking.

Matthew 14:14

Then Jesus came before them and saw the large crowd

"When Jesus came ashore, he saw a large crowd"

Matthew 14:15

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus feeding five thousand people with only five small loaves of bread and two small fish.

the disciples came to him

"Jesus's disciples came to him"

the hour has already passed

Possible meanings of the words "the hour" are 1) they refer to the time for teaching. Alternate translation: "there is no more time for you to teach" Or 2) they refer to the day. Alternate translation: "the day is already over."

Matthew 14:16

They have no need

"The people in the crowd have no need"

You give them

The word "You" is plural, referring to the disciples.

Matthew 14:17

They said to him

"The disciples said to Jesus"

five loaves of bread

Loaves of bread are lumps of dough that have been shaped and baked.

Matthew 14:18

Bring them to me

"Bring the loaves and fish to me"

Matthew 14:19

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the account of Jesus feeding five thousand people.

sit down

"lie down." Use the verb for the position people in your culture usually are in when they eat.

He took

"He held in his hands." He did not steal them.

broke the loaves

"tore the loaves"

loaves

"loaves of bread" or "whole breads"

Looking up

Possible meanings are 1) "While looking up" or 2) "After looking up"

Matthew 14:20

and were filled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "until they were full" or "until they were no longer hungry"

they took up

"the disciples gathered up" or "some people gathered up"

twelve baskets full

"12 baskets full"

Matthew 14:21

Those who ate

"Those who ate the bread and the fish"

five thousand men

"5,000 men"

Matthew 14:22

Connecting Statement:

The following verses describe events that happened right after Jesus fed the five thousand people.

Immediately he

"As soon as Jesus had finished feeding all the people, he"

Matthew 14:23

When evening came

"Late in the evening" or "When it became dark"

Matthew 14:24

being tossed about by the waves

"and the disciples could not control the boat because of the large waves"

Matthew 14:25

In the fourth watch of the night

The fourth watch is between 3 a.m. and sunrise. Alternate translation: "Just before dawn"

walking on the sea

"walking on top of the water"

Matthew 14:26

they were troubled

"they were very afraid"

ghost

a spirit that has left the body of a person who has died

Matthew 14:27

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 14:28

Peter answered him

"Peter answered Jesus"

Matthew 14:29

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 14:30

when Peter saw the strong wind

Here "saw the strong wind" means he became aware of the wind. Alternate translation: "when Peter saw that the wind was tossing the waves back and forth" or "when he realized how strong the wind was"

Matthew 14:31

You of little faith, why

"You who have such little faith, why." Jesus addressed Peter this way because Peter became afraid. It can also be translated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have so little faith! Why"

why did you doubt?

Jesus uses a question to tell Peter that he should not have doubted. You can make explicit what Peter should not have doubted. Alternate translation: "you should not have doubted that I could keep you from sinking."

Matthew 14:32

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 14:33

Son of God

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

Matthew 14:34

Connecting Statement:

Matthew describes in 14:34-36 what happened after Jesus walked on the water. He summarizes how the people were responding to Jesus's ministry.

When they had crossed over

"When Jesus and his disciples had crossed over the lake"

Gennesaret

This is a small town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 14:35

they sent messages

"the men of that area sent messages"

Matthew 14:36

They begged him

"The sick people begged him"

his garment

"his robe" or "what he was wearing"

were healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "became well"

Chapter 15

Matthew 15 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 15:8-9, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The "traditions of the elders"

The "traditions of the elders" were oral laws that the Jewish religious leaders developed because they wanted to make sure that everyone obeyed the law of Moses. However, they often worked harder to obey these rules than to obey the law of Moses itself. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for this, and they became angry as a result. (See: lawofmoses)

Jews and Gentiles

The Jews of Jesus's time thought that only Jews could please God by the way they lived. Jesus healed a Canaanite Gentile woman's daughter to show his followers that he would accept both Jews and Gentiles as his people.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sheep

The Bible often speaks of people as if they were sheep because sheep need someone to take care of them. This is because they do not see well and they often go to where other animals can kill them easily.

Matthew 15:1

General Information:

The scene shifts to events that occur some time after events of the previous chapter. Here Jesus responds to the criticisms of the Pharisees.

Matthew 15:2

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders?

The Pharisees and scribes use this question to criticize Jesus and his disciples. Alternate translation: "Your disciples do not respect the rules that our ancestors have given us."

traditions of the elders

This is not the same as the law of Moses. This refers to later teachings and interpretations of the law given by religious leaders after Moses.

they do not wash their hands

This washing is not only to clean hands. This refers to a ceremonial washing according to the tradition of the elders. Alternate translation: "they do not wash their hands properly"

when they eat bread

The word "bread" here is a synecdoche for any kind of food, and the word "when" refers to what people generally do before eating meals. Alternate translation: "before they eat"

Matthew 15:3

Then why do you violate the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions?

Jesus answers with a question to criticize what the religious leaders do. Alternate translation: "And I see that you refuse to obey God's commands just so that you can follow what your ancestors taught you!"

Matthew 15:4

General Information:

Jesus quotes twice from Exodus to show how God expects people to treat their parents.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely die

"The people should execute anyone who speaks evil of his father or mother"

Matthew 15:5

But you say

Here "you" is plural and refers to the Pharisees and scribes.

Matthew 15:6

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the Pharisees.

that person does not need to honor his father

The words beginning with "But you say"

does not need to honor his father

It is implied that "his father" means "his parents." This means the religious leaders taught that a person does not need to show respect to his parents by taking care of them.

you have made void the word of God

Here "the word of God" refers specifically to God's commands. Alternate translation: "you have treated the word of God as if it were invalid" or "you have ignored God's commands"

for the sake of your traditions

"because you want to follow your traditions"

Matthew 15:7

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the Pharisees and scribes.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his response to the Pharisees and scribes.

Well did Isaiah prophesy about you

"Isaiah told the truth in this prophecy about you"

when he said

It is implied that Isaiah is speaking what God told him. Alternate translation: "when he told what God said"

Matthew 15:8

General Information:

Jesus continues to quote the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the Pharisees and scribes.

This people honors me with their lips

Here "lips" refers to speaking. Alternate translation: "These people say all the right things to me"

me

All occurrences of this word refer to God.

but their heart is far from me

Here "heart" refers to a person's thoughts or emotions. This phrase is a way of saying the people are not truly devoted to God. Alternate translation: "but they do not really love me"

Matthew 15:9

They worship me in vain

"Their worship means nothing to me" or "They only pretend to worship me"

the commandments of people

"the rules that people make up"

Matthew 15:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach the crowd and his disciples about what defiles a person and why the Pharisees and scribes were wrong to criticize him.

Matthew 15:11

enters into the mouth ... comes out of the mouth

Jesus is contrasting what a person eats to what a person says. Jesus means that God is concerned with what a person says rather than what a person eats.

Matthew 15:12

the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this statement made the Pharisees angry" or "this statement offended the Pharisees"

Matthew 15:13

Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up

This is a metaphor. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not actually belong to God, so God will remove them.

my heavenly Father

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

will be rooted up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my Father will uproot" or "he will take out of the ground" or "he will remove"

Matthew 15:14

Let them alone

The word "them" refers to the Pharisees.

blind guides ... both will fall into a pit

Jesus uses another metaphor to describe the Pharisees. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not understand God's commands or how to please him. Therefore, they cannot teach others how to please God.

Matthew 15:15

Connecting Statement:

Peter wants Jesus to explain the parable that Jesus told in Matthew 15:13-14.

to us

"to us disciples"

Matthew 15:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus explains the parable that he told in Matthew 15:13-14.

Are you also still without understanding?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the disciples for not understanding the parable. Also, the word "you" is emphasized. Jesus cannot believe his own disciples do not understand. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you, my disciples, still do not understand what I teach!"

Matthew 15:17

Do you not understand ... into the latrine?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the disciples for not understanding the parable. Alternate translation: "Surely you understand ... into the latrine."

passes into the stomach

"goes into the stomach"

latrine

This is a polite term for the place where people bury body waste.

Matthew 15:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to explain the parable that he told in Matthew 15:13-14.

things that come out of the mouth

This refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: "words that a person says"

from the heart

Here "heart" refers to a person's mind or innermost being. Alternate translation: "from inside the person" or "from a person's mind"

Matthew 15:19

murder

the act of killing innocent people

Matthew 15:20

to eat with unwashed hands

This refers to eating without first ceremonially washing one's hands according to the traditions of

the elders. Alternate translation: "eating without first washing one's hands"

Matthew 15:21

General Information:

This begins an account of Jesus healing the daughter of a Canaanite woman.

Jesus went away

It is implied that the disciples went with Jesus. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his disciples went away"

Matthew 15:22

Behold, a Canaanite woman came

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a Canaanite woman who came"

a Canaanite woman came out from that region

"a woman who was from that region and who belonged to the group of people called Canaanites came." The country of Canaan no longer existed by this time. She was a part of a people group that lived near the cities of Tyre and Sidon.

Have mercy on me

This phrase implies that she is requesting that Jesus heal her daughter. Alternate translation: "Have mercy and heal my daughter"

Son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the woman may have been calling Jesus by this title.

My daughter is severely demon-possessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A demon is controlling my daughter terribly" or "A demon is tormenting my daughter severely"

Matthew 15:23

answered her not a word

Here "word" refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: "said nothing to her"

Matthew 15:24

I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep ... Israel

This double negative emphasizes that the lost sheep are the only ones to whom Jesus was sent. Alternate translation: "I was sent only to the lost sheep ... Israel"

I was not sent to anyone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not send me to anyone"

to the lost sheep of the house of Israel

This is a metaphor comparing the entire nation of Israel to sheep who have gone away from their shepherd. See how you translated this in [Matthew 10:6]

Matthew 15:25

she came

"the Canaanite woman came"

bowed down before him

This shows that the woman humbled herself before Jesus.

Matthew 15:26

It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs

Jesus responds to the woman with a proverb. The basic meaning is that it is not right to take what is supposed to belong to Jews and give it to non-Jews.

the children's bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "the children's food"

the little dogs

The Jews considered dogs to be unclean animals. Here they are used as an image for non-Jews.

Matthew 15:27

even the little dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables

The woman responds by using the same imagery as Jesus used in the proverb he just spoke. She means non-Jews should be able to have a small amount of the good things Jews are throwing away.

little dogs

Use words here for dogs of any size that people keep as pets. See how you translated this in Matthew 15:26.

Matthew 15:28

let it be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will do"

Her daughter was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed her daughter" or "Her daughter became well"

from that hour

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "at exactly the same time" or "immediately"

Matthew 15:29

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 15:30

lame, blind, mute, and crippled people

"those who could not walk, those who could not see, those who could not talk, and those whose arms or legs did not function"

They presented them at Jesus' feet

Apparently some of these sick or crippled people were unable to stand up, so when their friends brought them to Jesus, they placed them on the ground in front of him. Alternate translation: "The crowds placed the sick people on the ground in front of Jesus"

Matthew 15:31

the crippled made well

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the crippled become well"

the crippled ... the lame ... the blind

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "the crippled persons ... the lame persons ... the blind persons"

Matthew 15:32

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus feeding four thousand people with seven loaves of bread and a few small fish.

without eating, or they may faint on the way

"without eating because they might faint on the way"

Matthew 15:33

Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy so large a crowd?

The disciples use a question to state that there is nowhere to get food for the crowd. Alternate translation: "There is nowhere nearby that we can get enough bread for such a large crowd."

Matthew 15:34

Seven, and a few small fish

The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "We have seven loaves of bread, and we also have a few small fish"

Matthew 15:35

sit down on the ground

Use your language's word for how people customarily eat when there is no table, whether sitting or lying down.

Matthew 15:36

He took the seven loaves and the fish

"Jesus held the seven loaves and the fish in his hands"

he broke the loaves

"he tore the loaves"

gave them

"gave the bread and the fish"

Matthew 15:37

they gathered

"the disciples gathered" or "some people gathered"

Matthew 15:38

Those who ate

"The people who ate"

four thousand men

"4,000 men"

Matthew 15:39

the region

"the area"

Magadan

This region is sometimes called "Magdala."

Chapter 16

Matthew 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yeast

Jesus spoke of the way people thought about God as if it were bread, and he spoke of what people taught about God as if it were the yeast that makes bread dough become larger and the baked bread taste good. He did not want his followers to listen to what the Pharisees and Sadducees taught. This was because if they did listen, they would not understand who God is and how he wants his people to live.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Jesus told his people to obey his commands. He did this by telling them to "follow" him. It is as if he were walking on a path and they were walking after him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Background information

Matthew continues his account from chapter 15 in verses 1-20. The account stops in verse 21 so Matthew can tell the reader that Jesus told his disciples again and again that people would kill him after he arrived in Jerusalem. Then the account continues in verses 22-27 with what happened the first time Jesus told the disciples that he would die.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus uses a paradox when he says, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25).

Matthew 16:1

General Information:

This begins an encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees.

tested him

Here "tested" is used in a negative sense. Alternate translation: "challenged him" or "wanted to trap him"

Matthew 16:2

When it is evening

The situation can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "If the sky is red in the evening" or "If the sky is red when the sun is setting"

When it is evening

"When the sun is setting"

fair weather

This means clear, calm, and pleasant weather.

for the sky is red

As the sun is setting, Jews knew that if the color of the sky changes to red, it is a sign the next day will be clear and calm.

Matthew 16:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues his response to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

When it is morning

The situation can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "If the sky is red in the morning" or "If the sky is red when the sun is rising"

foul weather

"cloudy, stormy weather"

red and overcast

"red and cloudy"

You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky

"You know how to look at the sky and understand what kind of weather you will have"

but you cannot interpret the signs of the times

"but you do not know how to look at what is happening right now and understand what it means"

Matthew 16:4

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

Jesus is speaking to his present generation.
Alternate translation: "You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you" See how you translated this in [Matthew 12:39]

An evil and adulterous generation

Here "adulterous" is a metaphor for people who are not faithful to God. See how you translated this in [Matthew 12:39]

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

This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"

no sign will be given to it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"

the sign of Jonah

"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah." See how you translated this in Matthew 12:39.

Matthew 16:5

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time. Jesus uses an opportunity to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

the other side

You can make clear the understood information.
Alternate translation: "the other side of the lake" or "the other side of the Sea of Galilee"

Matthew 16:6

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Here "yeast" is a metaphor that refers to evil ideas and wrong teaching. Translate as "yeast" here and do not explain its meaning in your translation. This meaning will be made clear in 16:12.

Matthew 16:7

reasoned among themselves

"discussed this with each other" or "thought about this"

Matthew 16:8

You of little faith

"You who have such little faith." Jesus addresses his disciples this way because their concern about not bringing bread shows they have little faith in Jesus

to provide for them. See how you translated this in Matthew 6:30.

why do you reason ... taken no bread?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke his disciples for not understanding what he just said. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you think it was because you forgot to bring bread that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Matthew 16:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Do you not understand? Do you not remember ... you gathered up?

Jesus use questions to rebuke the disciples.
Alternate translation: "Surely you understand and remember ... you gathered up!" or "You should understand. You should remember ... you gathered up."

five thousand

"5,000"

Matthew 16:10

four thousand

"4,000"

Or the seven loaves ... you took up?

"Do you also not remember the seven loaves ... you took up?" Jesus uses a question to rebuke his disciples. Alternate translation: "Surely you also remember the seven loaves ... you took up!"

Matthew 16:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread?

Jesus uses this question to rebuke the disciples.
Alternate translation: "You should have understood that I was not really speaking about bread."

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Here "yeast" represents evil ideas and wrong teaching. Translate as "yeast" and do not explain the meaning in your translation. In 16:12 the disciples will understand the meaning.

Matthew 16:12

they ... them

These refer to the disciples.

Matthew 16:13

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time. Jesus asks his disciples if they understand who he is.

Now

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

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself.

Matthew 16:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 16:15

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 16:16

the Son of the living God

This is an important title for Jesus that shows his relationship to God.

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act.

Matthew 16:17

flesh and blood have not revealed

Here "flesh and blood" refers to a human being. Alternate translation: "a human did not reveal"

this to you

Here "this" refers to Peter's statement that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of the Living God.

but my Father who is in heaven

The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but it was my Father in heaven who revealed this to you"

my Father

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

Matthew 16:18

I also say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

you are Peter

The name Peter means "rock."

upon this rock I will build my church

Here "build my church" is a metaphor for uniting the people who believe in Jesus into a community. Possible meanings are 1) "this rock" represents Peter, or 2) "this rock" represents the truth that Peter had just said in [Matthew 16:16]

The gates of Hades will not prevail against it

Here "Hades" is spoken of as if it were a city surrounded by walls with gates that keep dead people in and other people out. Here "Hades" represents death, and its "gates" represent its power. Possible meanings are 1) "the powers of death will not overcome my church" or 2) "my church will break down the power of death the way an army breaks into a city."

Matthew 16:19

I will give to you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Peter.

the keys of the kingdom of heaven

Keys are objects that are used to lock or unlock doors. Here they represent authority.

the kingdom of heaven

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

Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven

Here "bind" is a metaphor meaning to forbid something, and "loose" is a metaphor meaning to allow something. Also, "in heaven" is a metonym that represents God himself. Alternate translation: "God in heaven will approve whenever you forbid or allow something on earth"

Matthew 16:20

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 16:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells his disciples for the first time that he will die soon.

suffer many things at the hand of the elders ... scribes

Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "suffer many things because of the elders ... scribes"

scribes, be killed, and be raised back to life on the third day

Here to raise back to life is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. The elders and chief priests would accuse Jesus so that others would kill

him. Alternate translation: "scribes. People will then kill him, and on the third day God will make him become alive again"

third day

"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."

Matthew 16:22

Then Peter took him aside

Jesus tells them for the first time that he will die soon

Peter took him aside

"Peter spoke to Jesus when no one else could hear them"

May this be far from you

This is an idiom that means "may this never happen." Alternate translation: "No" or "Never" or "May God forbid this"

Matthew 16:23

Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me
Jesus means that Peter is acting like Satan because Peter is trying to prevent Jesus from accomplishing what God sent him to do. Alternate translation: "Get behind me, because you are acting like Satan! You are a stumbling block to me" or "Get behind me, Satan! I call you Satan because you are a stumbling block to me"

Get behind me

"Get away from me"

you do not think about the things of God, but about the things of people

"you do not think about what God thinks is important; instead, you only think about the things that people think are important"

Matthew 16:24

to follow me

Following Jesus here represents being one of his disciples. Alternate translation: "to be my disciple" or "to be one of my disciples"

must deny himself

"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"

take up his cross, and follow me

"carry his cross, and follow me." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "and obey me even to the point of suffering and dying" or "and he must obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"

and follow me

Following Jesus here represents obeying him. Alternate translation: "and obey me"

Matthew 16:25

For whoever wants

"For anyone who wants"

will lose it

This does not mean the person must necessarily die. It is a metaphor that means the person will consider obeying Jesus as being more important than his own life.

for my sake

"because he trusts me" or "on my account" or "because of me"

will find it

This metaphor means the person will experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will find true life"

Matthew 16:26

For what does it profit a person ... his life?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "It does not profit a person ... his life."

if he gains the whole world

The words "the whole world" are an exaggeration for great riches. Alternate translation: "if he gains everything he desires"

but forfeits his life

"but he loses his life"

What can a person give in exchange for his life?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that a person can give to regain his life."

Matthew 16:27

the Son of Man ... his Father ... Then he

Here Jesus refers to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of man ... my Father ... Then I"

will come in the glory of his Father

"will come, having the same glory as his Father." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "will come, having the same glory as my Father"

with his angels

Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "with his Father's angels" or "with my Father's angels" or 2) Alternate translation: "with the Son of Man's angels" or "with my angels." You do not have to specify in your translations to whom the angels belong. Alternate translation: "and the angels will be with him" or "and the angels will be with me"

his Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and the Son of Man, Jesus.

according to his deeds

"according to what that person has done"

Matthew 16:28

Truly I say to you

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

you

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

will not taste death

Here "taste" means to experience. Alternate translation: "will not experience death" or "will not die"

until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom

Here "his kingdom" represents him being King. Alternate translation: "until they see the Son of Man coming as King" or "until they see the evidence that the Son of Man is King"

Chapter 17

Matthew 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Elijah

The Old Testament prophet Malachi lived many years before Jesus was born. Malachi had said that before the Messiah came a prophet named Elijah would return. Jesus explained that Malachi had been talking about John the Baptist. Jesus said this because John the Baptist had done what Malachi had said that Elijah would do. (See: prophet and christ)

"transfigured"

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. Matthew says in this chapter that Jesus's body shone with this glorious light so that his followers could see that Jesus truly was God's Son. At the same time, God told them that Jesus was his Son. (See: glory and fear)

Matthew 17:1

General Information:

This begins the account of Jesus's transfiguration.

Peter, James, and John his brother

"Peter, James, and James's brother John"

Matthew 17:2

He was transfigured before them

When they looked at him, his appearance was different from what it had been.

He was transfigured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His appearance had changed" or "He appeared very different"

before them

"in front of them" or "so they could clearly him"

His face shone like the sun, and his garments became as brilliant as the light

These are similes that emphasize how bright Jesus's appearance became.

his garments

"what he was wearing"

Matthew 17:3

Behold

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

to them

This refers to Peter, James, and John.

with him

"with Jesus"

Matthew 17:4

answered and said

"said." Peter is not responding to a question.

it is good for us to be here

It is not clear whether "us" refers only to Peter, James, and John, or if it refers to everyone there, including Jesus, Elijah, and Moses. If you can translate so that both options are possible, do so.

Matthew 17:5

behold

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

overshadowed them

"came over them"

there was a voice out of the cloud

Here "voice" refers to God speaking. Alternate translation: "God spoke to them from out of the cloud"

Matthew 17:6

the disciples heard it

"the disciples heard God speak"

Matthew 17:7

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 17:8

they ... saw no one except Jesus only

This double negative emphasizes that Jesus was the only thing that they saw. Alternate translation: "they ... saw only Jesus"

Matthew 17:9

Connecting Statement:

The following events happen immediately after the three disciples witness Jesus's transfiguration.

As they

"As Jesus and the disciples"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 17:10

Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

The disciples are referring to the belief that Elijah will come back to life and return to the people of Israel before the Messiah comes.

Matthew 17:11

restore all things

"put things in order" or "get the people ready to receive the Messiah"

Matthew 17:12

But I tell you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

they ... their

All occurrences of these words may mean either 1) the Jewish leaders or 2) all the Jewish people.

the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands

Here "hands" refers to power. Alternate translation: "they will make the Son of Man suffer"

the Son of Man will

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"

Matthew 17:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 17:14

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus healing a boy who had an evil spirit. These events happen immediately after Jesus and his disciples descend from the mountain.

Matthew 17:15

have mercy on my son

It is implied that the man wants Jesus to heal his son. Alternate translation: "have mercy on my son and heal him"

is epileptic

This means that he sometimes had seizures. He would become unconscious and move uncontrollably. Alternate translation: "has seizures"

Matthew 17:16

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 17:17

Unbelieving and perverse generation, how

"This generation does not believe in God and loves to do evil rather than good. How"

how long will I have to stay with you? How long must I bear with you?

These questions show Jesus is unhappy with the people. Alternate translation: "I am tired of being with you! I am tired of your unbelief and corruption!"

Matthew 17:18

the boy was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the boy became well"

from that hour

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "immediately" or "at that moment"

Matthew 17:19

we

Here "we" refers to the disciples and does not include Jesus.

Why could we not cast it out?

"Why could we not make the demon come out of the boy?"

Matthew 17:20

For I truly say to you

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

if you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed

Jesus compares the size of a mustard seed to the amount of faith needed to do a miracle. A mustard seed is very small, but it grows into a large plant. Jesus means it only takes a small amount of faith to do a great miracle.

nothing will be impossible for you

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "you will be able to do anything"

Matthew 17:21

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 17:22

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts momentarily, and Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a second time.

they stayed

"Jesus and his disciples stayed"

The Son of Man will be given over

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone will deliver the Son of Man"

given over into the hands of people

The word "hands" here is a metonym for the power that people use hands to exercise. Alternate translation: "taken and put under the power of people" or "taken and given to people who will control him"

The Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

into the hands of people

Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "to the control of the people" or "to the people"

Matthew 17:23

him ... he

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

third day

"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."

he will be raised up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will raise him up" or "God will cause him to become alive again"

deeply grieved

very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies. See how you translated "grieved" in Matthew 14:9.

Matthew 17:24

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts again to a later time when Jesus teaches Peter about paying the temple tax.

When they

"When Jesus and his disciples"

the two-drachma tax

This was a tax that Jewish men paid to support the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the temple tax"

Matthew 17:25

the house

"the place where Jesus was staying"

What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tolls or taxes? From their sons or from others?

Jesus asks these questions to teach Simon, not to gain information for himself. Alternate translation: ""Listen, Simon. When kings collect taxes, they collect it from people who are not members of their own family. Do you agree that this is true?"

their sons

Possible meanings are that this word 1) is a synecdoche that refers to any members of the kings' family or 2) is a metaphor for the people of the kings' own country. Alternate translation: "their own family" or "the people of their own country"

Matthew 17:26

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 13:54, where Matthew tells of continued opposition to Jesus's ministry and teaching about the kingdom of heaven.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach Peter about paying the temple tax.

"From others," Peter answered

If you translated Jesus's questions as statements in [Matthew 17:25]

From others

"From people who are not members of their own family." See how you translated these words in Matthew 17:25.

the sons

Possible meanings are that this word 1) is a synecdoche that refers to any members of the kings' family or 2) is a metaphor for the people of the kings' own country. See how you translated these words in [Matthew 17:25]

Matthew 17:27

But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to stumble, go

Causing people to stumble is a metaphor for offending them. Possible meanings are 1) Jesus was concerned that the tax collectors would think he had done something very wrong. Alternate translation: "so that we do not cause the tax

collectors to think that we do something that is very bad" or 2) Jesus was concerned that the tax collectors might think that he was a sinner and so could not be the Messiah. Alternate translation: "so that we do not cause the tax collectors to reject me"

throw in a hook

Fishermen tied hooks to the end of a line, then threw it in the water to catch fish.

its mouth

"the fish's mouth"

a shekel

a silver coin worth four days' wages

Take it

"Take the shekel"

for me and you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Peter. Each man had to pay a half shekel tax. So one shekel would be enough for Jesus and Peter to pay their taxes.

Chapter 18

Matthew 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

What should Jesus's followers do when other followers sin against them?

Jesus taught that his followers must treat each other well and not be angry with each other. They should forgive anyone who is sorry for his sin, even if he has committed the same sin before. If he is not sorry for his sin, Jesus's followers should speak with him alone or in a small group. If he is still not sorry after that, then Jesus's followers can treat him as guilty. (See: repent and sin)

Matthew 18:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through Matthew 18:35, where Jesus teaches about life in the kingdom of heaven. Here, Jesus uses a little child to teach the disciples.

At that time

Very soon after the events described in the previous verse.

Who is greatest

"Who is the most important" or "Who among us will be the most important"

in the kingdom of heaven

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 18:3

Truly I say to you

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

unless you turn ... children, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you will enter the kingdom of heaven only if you turn ... children"

become like little children

Jesus uses a simile to teach the disciples that they should not be concerned with who is most important. They should be concerned with becoming humble like a child.

enter the kingdom of heaven

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "enter God's kingdom" or "belong to our God in heaven when he establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:4

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching the disciples that they need to be humble like a child if they want to be important in God's kingdom.

is the greatest

"is the most important" or "will be the most important"

in the kingdom of heaven

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"

Matthew 18:5

in my name

Here "my name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because he is my disciple"

Whoever ... in my name receives me

Jesus means that it is the same as welcoming him. Alternate translation: "When someone ... in my name, it is like he is welcoming me" or "When someone ... in my name, it is as if he were welcoming me"

Matthew 18:6

that a large millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should be sunk into the depths of the sea

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone put a large millstone around his neck and threw him into the deep sea"

millstone

This is a large, heavy, circular stone used for grinding wheat grain into flour. Alternate translation: "a heavy stone"

Matthew 18:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to use a little child to teach the disciples and warns against the terrible consequences of causing children to sin.

to the world

Here "world" refers to people. Alternate translation: "to the people of the world"

stumbling blocks ... those stumbling blocks come ... the person through whom those stumbling blocks come
Here "stumbling" is a metaphor for sin. Alternate translation: "things that cause people to sin ... things come that cause people to sin ... any person who causes others to sin"

Matthew 18:8

If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you

Jesus exaggerates here to emphasize that people must do anything necessary to remove from their lives what causes them to sin.

your ... you

All occurrences of these words are singular. Jesus is speaking to all people in general. It may be more natural for your language to translate with a plural "you."

into life

"into eternal life"

than to be thrown into the eternal fire having two hands or two feet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than to have both hands and feet when God throws you into the eternal fire"

Matthew 18:9

If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you

The command to destroy the eye, perhaps the most important part of the body, is probably an exaggeration for his hearers to do anything necessary to remove from their lives anything that causes them to sin.

causes you to stumble

Here "stumble" is a metaphor for sin. Alternate translation: "causes you to sin"

your ... you

All occurrences of these words are singular. Jesus is speaking to all people in general. It may be more

natural for your language to translate with a plural "you."

into life

"into eternal life"

than to be thrown into the fiery hell having both eyes

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than to have both eyes when God throws you into the fiery hell"

the fiery hell

"hell, which is full of fire" or "the fire of hell"

Matthew 18:10

See that

"Be careful that" or "Be sure that"

you do not despise any of these little ones

"you do not think of these little ones as being unimportant." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you show respect to these little ones"

For I say to you

This add emphasis to what Jesus says next.

that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven

Jewish teachers taught that only the most important angels could be in God's presence. Jesus means that the most important angels speak to God about these little ones.

always look on the face of my Father

This is an idiom that means they are in God's presence. Alternate translation: "are always close to my Father" or "are always in the presence of my Father"

my Father

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

Matthew 18:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 18:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to use a little child to teach the disciples and tells a parable to explain God's care for people.

What do you think?

Jesus uses this question to get people's attention. Alternate translation: "Think about how people act." or "Think about this."

you

This word is plural.

a hundred ... ninety-nine
"100 ... 99"

does he not leave ... astray?
Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples.
Alternate translation: "he will always leave ... astray."

Matthew 18:13

If he finds it ... that did not go astray
This is the end of the parable that begins with the words "If anyone" in verse 12.

truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next. The word "you" is plural.

Matthew 18:14

it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish
"your Father in heaven does not want any of these little ones to die" or "your Father in heaven does not want even one of these little ones to die"

your
This word is plural.

Father
This is an important title for God.

Matthew 18:15

Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to teach his disciples about forgiveness and reconciliation.

your brother
This refers to a fellow believer in God, not a physical brother. Alternate translation: "your fellow believer"

you will have gained your brother
"you will have made your relationship with your brother good again"

Matthew 18:16

so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be confirmed
Here "mouth" and "word" refer to what a person says. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that two or three witnesses may say that what you say about your brother is true"

Matthew 18:17

if he refuses to listen to them
"if your fellow believer refuses to listen to the witnesses who came with you"

to the church
"to the whole community of believers"

let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector
"treat him as you would treat a pagan or tax collector." This implies that they should remove him from the community of believers.

Matthew 18:18

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

you
All occurrences of this word are plural.

whatever things you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven
Here "bind" is a metaphor meaning to forbid something, and "loose" is a metaphor meaning to allow something. Also, "in heaven" is a metonym that represents God himself. See how you translated similar phrases in [Matthew 16:19]

Matthew 18:19

if two of you
It is implied that Jesus means "if at least two of you" or "if two or more of you."

they ... them
These refer to the "two of you." Alternate translation: "you ... you"

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

Matthew 18:20

two or three
It is implied that Jesus means "two or more" or "at least two."

are gathered
"meet"

in my name
Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because they are my disciples"

Matthew 18:21

seven times
"7 times"

Matthew 18:22

seventy times seven

Possible meanings are 1) "70 times 7" or 2) "77 times." If using a number would be confusing, you can translate it as "more times than you can count" or "you must always forgive him."

Matthew 18:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus uses a parable to teach about forgiveness and reconciliation.

the kingdom of heaven is similar

This introduces a parable. See how you translated a similar parable introduction in [Matthew 13:24]

to settle accounts with his servants

"his servants to pay him what they owed him" or "to have his servants tell him what they had done with the goods he had entrusted to them"

Matthew 18:24

the settling

This abstract noun can be stated as a verb.
Alternate translation: "to settle accounts"

one servant was brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought one of the king's servants"

ten thousand talents

"10,000 talents" or "more money than the servant could ever repay"

Matthew 18:25

his master commanded him to be sold ... and payment to be made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king commanded his servants to sell the man ... and to pay the debt with the money from the sale"

Matthew 18:26

fell down, bowed down

This shows that the servant approached the king in the most humble way possible.

before him

"before the king"

Matthew 18:27

he was moved with compassion

"he felt compassion for the servant"

released him

"let him go"

Matthew 18:28

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciples.

one hundred denarii

"100 denarii" or "one hundred days' wages"

He took hold of him

"The first servant took hold of his fellow servant"

Matthew 18:29

fell down

This shows that the fellow servant approached the first servant in the most humble way possible. See how you translated this in [Matthew 18:26]

and pleaded with him

"and begged him"

Matthew 18:30

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciples.

he went and threw him into prison

"the first servant went and threw his fellow servant into prison"

Matthew 18:31

his fellow servants

"other servants"

told their master

"told the king"

deeply grieved

very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies. See how you translated this phrase in Matthew 17:23.

Matthew 18:32

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciple.

Then that servant's master called him

"Then the king called the first servant"

you pleaded with me

"you begged me"

Matthew 18:33

Should you not have ... you?

The king uses a question to scold the first servant.
Alternate translation: "You should have ... you!"

Matthew 18:34

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 18:1, where Jesus teaches about life in the kingdom of heaven.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his parable about forgiveness and reconciliation.

His master

"The king"

handed him over

"gave him over." Most likely the king himself did not take the first servant to the torturers. Alternate translation: "he ordered his servants to give him over"

to the torturers

"to those who would torture him"

that was owed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the first servant owed the king"

Matthew 18:35

my heavenly Father

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

you ... your

All occurrences of these words are plural. Jesus is speaking to his disciples, but this parable teaches a general truth that applies to all believers.

from your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "from your heart" is an idiom that means "sincerely." Alternate translation: "sincerely" or "completely"

Chapter 19

Matthew 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Divorce

Jesus taught about divorce because the Pharisees wanted people to think Jesus's teachings about divorce were wrong (Matthew 19:3-12). Jesus talked about what God had first said about marriage when he created it.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

Jesus often says the word "heaven" when he wants his hearers to think of God, who lives in heaven (Matthew 19:12).

Matthew 19:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through [Matthew 22:46]

It came about that when

This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "When" or "After"

had finished these words

Here "words" refers to what Jesus taught starting in [Matthew 18:1]

departed from

"walked away from" or "left"

Matthew 19:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about marriage and divorce.

came to him

"came to Jesus"

testing him, saying to him

Here "tested" is used in a negative sense. Alternate translation: "and challenged him by asking him" or "and wanted to trap him by asking him"

Matthew 19:4

Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female?

Jesus uses this question to remind the Pharisees of what the scripture says about men, women, and marriage. Alternate translation: "Surely you have

read that in the beginning when God created people he made them male and female."

Matthew 19:5

General Information:

Jesus quotes from Genesis to show that a husband and wife should not divorce.

He who made them also said, 'For this reason ... flesh.'

This is part of what Jesus expected the Pharisees to have understood from the scripture. The direct quotation can be expressed as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "And surely you know that God also said that for this reason ... flesh."

For this reason

This is a part of the quotation from Genesis story about Adam and Eve. In that context the reason a man will leave his father and mother is because God created a woman to be the man's companion.

join to his wife

"stay close to his wife" or "live with his wife"

the two will become one flesh

This is a metaphor that emphasizes the unity of a husband and a wife. Alternate translation: "they will become like one person"

Matthew 19:6

So they are no longer two, but one flesh

This is a metaphor that emphasizes the unity of a husband and a wife. Alternate translation: "So a husband and wife are no longer like two persons, but they are like one person"

Matthew 19:7

They said to him

"The Pharisees said to Jesus"

command us
"command us Jews"

certificate of divorce
This is a document that legally ends the marriage.

Matthew 19:8

For your hardness of heart
The phrase "hardness of heart" is a metaphor that means "stubbornness." Alternate translation: "Because of your stubbornness" or "Because you are stubborn"

your hardness ... allowed you ... your wives
Here "you" and "your" are plural. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees, but Moses gave this command many years earlier to their ancestors. Moses's command applied to all Jewish men in general.

from the beginning
Here "beginning" refers to when God first created man and woman.

Matthew 19:9

I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

marries another
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "marries another woman"

Matthew 19:10

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:11

to whom it is given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom God gives it" or "whom God enables to follow it"

Matthew 19:12

there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there are men whom other men have made eunuchs"

eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs
Possible meanings are 1) "men who have made themselves eunuchs by removing their private parts" or 2) "men who choose to remain unmarried and sexually pure."

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

translation. Alternate translation: "so they can better serve our God in heaven"

Matthew 19:13

Connecting Statement:
Jesus receives and blesses little children.

some little children were brought to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some people brought little children to Jesus"

Matthew 19:14

Permit
allow

do not forbid them to come to me
"do not stop them from coming to me"

for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such ones
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "for when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth, he will be king over such as these" or "for God will allow such as these into his kingdom"

belongs to such ones
"belongs to those who are like children." This is a simile that means those who are humble like children will enter God's kingdom.

Matthew 19:15

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:16

Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to a different time when Jesus explains to a rich man what it will cost to follow him.

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

good thing
This means a thing that pleases God.

Matthew 19:17

Why do you ask me about what is good?
Jesus uses this rhetorical question to encourage the man to think about his reason for asking Jesus about what is good. Alternate translation: "You ask me about what is good" or "Think about why you ask me about what is good."

Only one is good
"God alone is completely good"

to enter into life
"to receive eternal life"

Matthew 19:18

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:19

love your neighbor as yourself
The Jewish people believed that their neighbors were only other Jews. Jesus is extending that definition to include all people. Alternate translation: "love every other person as much as you love yourself"

Matthew 19:20

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:21

If you wish
"If you want"

to the poor
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to those who are poor"

you will have treasure in heaven
The phrase "treasure in heaven" is a metaphor that refers to a reward from God. Alternate translation: "God will reward you in heaven"

Matthew 19:22

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:23

Connecting Statement:
Jesus explains to his disciples the rewards of giving up material possessions and relationships to follow him.

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

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

God in heaven as their king" or "to enter God's kingdom"

Matthew 19:24

it is easier ... kingdom of God
Jesus uses an exaggeration to illustrate how very difficult it is for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.

the eye of a needle
the hole near one end of a needle, through which thread is passed

Matthew 19:25

they were very astonished
"the disciples were amazed." It is implied that they were astonished because they believed having riches was proof that God approved of someone.

Who then can be saved?
The disciples use a question to emphasize their surprise. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then there is no one whom God will save!" or "Then there is no one who will receive eternal life!"

Matthew 19:26

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 19:27

we have left everything
"we have left all our wealth" or "we have given up all our possessions"

What then will we have?
"What good thing will God give us?"

Matthew 19:28

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

in the new age
"in the new time." This refers to when God restores all things. Alternate translation: "at the time when God makes all things new"

the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.

sits on his glorious throne
Sitting on his throne represents ruling as a king. His throne being glorious represents his rule being glorious. Alternate translation: "sits as king on his glorious throne" or "rules gloriously as king"

sit upon twelve thrones

Here sitting on thrones refers to ruling as kings. The disciples will not be equal to Jesus who is also on a throne. They will receive authority from him. Alternate translation: "sit as kings on 12 thrones"

the twelve tribes of Israel

Here "tribes" refers to people from those tribes. Alternate translation: "the people of the 12 tribes of Israel"

Matthew 19:29

for my name's sake

Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because he believes in me"

receive one hundred times as much

"receive from God 100 times as many good things as they gave up"

will inherit eternal life

This is an idiom that means "God will bless them with eternal life" or "God will cause them to live forever."

Matthew 19:30

But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first

Here "first" and "last" refer to people's status or importance. Jesus is contrasting people's status now with their status in the kingdom of heaven. Alternate translation: "But many who seem to be important now will be the least important, and many who seem to be unimportant now will be very important"

Chapter 20

Matthew 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The parable of the landowner and his vineyard

Jesus tells this parable (Matthew 20:1-16) to teach his disciples that what God says is right is different from what people say is right.

Matthew 20:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable about a landowner who hires workers, to illustrate how God will reward those who belong to the kingdom of heaven.

For the kingdom of heaven is like

This is the beginning of a parable. See how you translated the introduction to the parable in [Matthew 13:24]

Matthew 20:2

After he had agreed

"After the landowner had agreed"

one denarius

This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"

he sent them into his vineyard

"he sent them to work in his vineyard"

Matthew 20:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

He went out again

"The landowner went out again"

the third hour

The third hour is around nine in the morning.

standing idle in the marketplace

"standing in the marketplace not doing anything" or "standing in the marketplace with no work to do"

marketplace

a large, open-air area where people buy and sell food and other items

Matthew 20:4

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 20:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

Again he went out

"Again the landowner went out"

the sixth hour and again the ninth hour

The sixth hour is around noon. The ninth hour is around three in the afternoon.

did the same

This means the landowner went to the marketplace and hired workers.

Matthew 20:6

the eleventh hour

This is about five in the afternoon.

standing idle

"not doing anything" or "not having any work"

Matthew 20:7

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 20:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

beginning from the last to the first

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "beginning with the workers who started working last, then the workers who started working earlier, and finally the workers who started working first" or "first paying the workers I hired last, then paying the workers I hired earlier in the day, and finally paying the workers I hired first"

Matthew 20:9

who had been hired

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the landowner hired"

Matthew 20:10

one denarius

This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"

Matthew 20:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

When they received

"When the workers who had worked the longest received"

the landowner

"the vineyard owner"

Matthew 20:12

you have made them equal to us

"you have paid them the same amount of money as you paid us"

we who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat

The phrase "borne the burden of the day" is an idiom that means "worked the entire day." Alternate translation: "we who have worked the entire day, even during the hottest part"

Matthew 20:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

one of them

"one of the workers who had worked the longest"

Friend

Use a word that one man would use to address another man whom he is politely rebuking.

Did you not agree with me for one denarius?

The landowner uses a question to rebuke the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "We already agreed that I would give you one denarius."

one denarius

This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"

Matthew 20:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 20:15

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his parable about a landowner who hires workers.

Is it not lawful for me to do as I want with what belongs to me?

The landowner uses a question to correct the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "It is lawful for me to do what I want with my own possessions."

Is it not lawful for me

"Do I not have the right" or "Is it not proper." The landowner is reminding the laborers that everyone allows people to do what they wish with their own property. He is not asking if there is a law against what he is doing.

Or are you envious because I am good?

The landowner uses a question to rebuke the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "You should not be envious because I am good."

I am good

In the context here, the reader should understand the landowner being "good" as "generous," the opposite of the laborers being "evil," which is "envious."

Matthew 20:16

So the last will be first, and the first last

Here "first" and "last" refer to people's status or importance. Jesus is contrasting people's status now with their status in the kingdom of heaven. See how you translated a similar statement in Matthew 19:30. Alternate translation: "So those who seem to be unimportant now will be the most important, and those who seem to be the most important now will be the least important"

So the last will be first

Here the parable has ended and Jesus is speaking. Alternate translation: "Then Jesus said, 'So the last will be first'"

Matthew 20:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a third time as he and his disciples travel to Jerusalem.

going up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was on top of a hill, so people had to travel up to get there.

Matthew 20:18

See, we are going

Jesus uses the word "See" to tell the disciples the must pay attention to what he is about to tell them.

we are going

Here "we" refers to Jesus and the disciples.

the Son of Man will be given over

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will give the Son of Man over"

Son of Man ... him

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate these in the first person.

They will condemn

The chief priests and scribes will condemn Jesus.

Matthew 20:19

and will deliver him to the Gentiles for them to mock

The chief priests and scribes will deliver Jesus to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles will mock him.

to flog

"to whip him" or "to beat him with whips"

third day

"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."

him ... him ... he

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate these in the first person.

he will be raised up

The words "be raised up" are an idiom for "be made alive again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will raise him up" or "God will make him alive again"

Matthew 20:20

Connecting Statement:

In response to the question that the mother of two of the disciples asks, Jesus teaches his disciples about authority and serving others in the kingdom of heaven.

the sons of Zebedee

This refers to James and John.

Matthew 20:21

at your right hand ... at your left hand

These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor.

in your kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to Jesus ruling as king. Alternate translation: "when you are king"

Matthew 20:22

You do not know

Here "you" is plural and refers to the mother and the sons.

Are you able

Here "you" is plural, but Jesus is only talking to the two sons.

drink the cup that I am about to drink

To "drink the cup" or "drink from the cup" is an idiom that means to experience suffering. Alternate translation: "suffer what I am about to suffer"

They said

"The sons of Zebedee said" or "James and John said"

Matthew 20:23

My cup you will indeed drink

To "drink a cup" or "drink from a cup" is an idiom that means to experience suffering. Alternate translation: "You will indeed suffer as I will suffer"

right hand ... left hand

These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor. See how you translated this in [Matthew 20:21]

but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for my Father has prepared those places, and he will give them to whom he chooses"

my Father

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

Matthew 20:24

heard this

"heard what James and John had asked Jesus"

they were very angry with the two brothers

If necessary, you can make explicit why the ten disciples were angry. Alternate translation: "they were very angry with the two brothers because each of them also wanted to sit in a place of honor next to Jesus"

Matthew 20:25

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching his disciples about authority and serving others.

called them

"called the twelve disciples"

the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them

"the Gentile kings forcefully rule over their people"

their important men

"the important men among the Gentiles"

exercise authority over them

"have control over the people"

Matthew 20:26

whoever wishes

"whoever wants" or "whoever desires"

Matthew 20:27

to be first

"to be important"

Matthew 20:28

the Son of Man ... his life

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate this in the first person.

did not come to be served

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did not come so that other people would serve him" or "did not come so that other people would serve me"

but to serve

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "but to serve other people"

to give his life as a ransom for many

Jesus's life being a "ransom" is a metaphor for his being punished in order to set people free from being punished for their own sins. Alternate translation: "to give his life as a substitute for many" or "to give his life as a substitute to set many free"

to give his life

To give one's life is an idiom meaning to die voluntarily, usually in order to help others. Alternate translation: "to die"

for many

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "for many people"

Matthew 20:29

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus healing two blind men.

As they went

This refers to the disciples and Jesus.

followed him

"followed Jesus"

Matthew 20:30

There were two blind men sitting

This is sometimes translated as "Behold, there were two blind men sitting." Matthew is alerting us to a new people in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

When they heard

"When the two blind men heard"

was passing by

"was walking by them"

Son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of King David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the men were probably calling Jesus by this title.

Matthew 20:31

General Information:

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Matthew 20:32

called to them

"called to the blind men"

do you wish

"do you want"

Matthew 20:33

that our eyes may be opened

The men speak of becoming able to see as if there eyes were to be opened. Because of Jesus's previous question, we understand that they were expressing their desire. Alternate translation: "we want you to open our eyes" or "we want to be able to see"

Matthew 20:34

being moved with compassion

"having compassion" or "feeling compassion for them"

Chapter 21

Matthew 21 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 21:5,16 and 42, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey and a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

Hosanna

This is what the people shouted to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. This word means "save us," but people used it to praise God.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of God will be taken away from you"

No one knows for sure what this phrase means. No one knows if Jesus meant that God would someday give the kingdom back or not.

Matthew 21:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. Here he gives his disciples instructions about what they are to do.

Bethphage

This is a village near Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:2

a donkey tied up

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "a donkey that someone has tied up"

tied up there

You can make explicit how the donkey is tied. Alternate translation: "tied up there to a post" or "tied up there to a tree"

colt

young male donkey

Matthew 21:3

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:4

General Information:

Here the author quotes the prophet Zechariah to show that Jesus fulfilled prophecy by riding a donkey into Jerusalem.

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus's actions fulfilled scripture.

all this happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this happened so that Jesus would fulfill what God spoke through the prophet long ago"

through the prophet

There were many prophets. Matthew was speaking of Zechariah. Alternate translation: "the prophet Zechariah"

Matthew 21:5

the daughter of Zion

The "daughter" of a city means the people of the city. Alternate translation: "the people of Zion" or "the people who live in Zion"

Zion

This is another name for Jerusalem.

on a donkey—on a colt, the foal of a donkey

The phrase "on a colt, the foal of a donkey" is explaining that the donkey is a young animal. Alternate translation: "on a young, male donkey"

Matthew 21:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:7

cloaks

These were outer clothing or long coats.

Matthew 21:8

crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches off the trees and spread them in the road

These are ways to show honor to Jesus as he was entering Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:9

Hosanna

This word means "save us," but it can also mean "praise God!"

the son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "descendant of king David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the crowd was probably calling Jesus by this title.

in the name of the Lord

Here "in the name" means "in the power" or "as a representative." Alternate translation: "in the power of the Lord" or "as the representative of the Lord"

Hosanna in the highest

Here "highest" refers to God who rules from the highest heaven. Alternate translation: "Praise God, who is in the highest heaven" or "Praise be to God"

Matthew 21:10

all the city was stirred

Here "city" refers to the people living there. Alternate translation: "many people from all over the city were stirred"

stirred

"excited"

Matthew 21:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:12

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus entering into the temple.

Jesus entered the temple

Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.

who bought and sold

Merchants were selling animals and other items that travelers bought to offer the proper sacrifices at the temple.

Matthew 21:13

General Information:

Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the vendors and money changers.

He said to them

"Jesus said to those who were changing money and buying and selling things"

It is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The prophets wrote long ago" or "God said long ago"

My house will be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My house will be"

My house

Here "My" refers to God and "house" refers to the temple.

a house of prayer

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "a place where people pray"

a den of robbers

Jesus uses a metaphor to scold the people for buying and selling items in the temple. Alternate translation: "like a place where robbers hide"

Matthew 21:14

the blind and the lame

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who were blind and those who were lame"

lame

those who have an injured foot or leg that makes walking difficult

Matthew 21:15

the marvelous things

"the wonderful things" or "the miracles." This refers to Jesus healing the blind and lame people in Matthew 21:14.

Hosanna

This word means "save us" but can also mean "praise God!" See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.

the Son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "descendant of king David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the children were probably calling Jesus by this title. See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.

they became very angry

It is implied that they were angry because they did not believe Jesus was the Christ and they did not want other people praising him. Alternate translation: "they became very angry because people were praising him"

Matthew 21:16

General Information:

Jesus quotes from the Psalms to justify how the people had responded to him.

Do you hear what they are saying?

The chief priests and scribes ask this question to rebuke Jesus because they are angry with him. Alternate translation: "You should not allow them to say these things about you!"

But have you never read ... praise'?

Jesus asks this question to remind the chief priests and scribes of what they have studied in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "Yes, I hear them, but you should remember what you read in the scriptures ... praise."

Out of the mouths of little children and nursing infants you have prepared praise

The phrase "out of the mouths" refers to speaking, and "prepared praise" is a metonym for preparing the children and infants to praise. Alternate translation: "You prepared little children and nursing infants to give praise to God"

Matthew 21:17

Jesus left them

"Jesus left the chief priests and scribes"

Matthew 21:18

Connecting Statement:

In verses 18 through 22, Jesus uses a fig tree to teach his disciples about faith and prayer.

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus is hungry and that is why he stops at the fig tree.

Matthew 21:19

he ... found nothing on it except leaves

This double negative emphasizes that leaves were the only things that he found. Alternate translation: "he ... found only leaves on it"

withered

died and dried up

Matthew 21:20

How did the fig tree immediately wither away?

The disciples use a question to emphasize how surprised they are. Alternate translation: "We are astonished that the fig tree has dried up so quickly!"

wither away

"dry up and die"

Matthew 21:21

Truly I say to you

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

if you have faith and do not doubt

Jesus expresses the same idea both positively and negatively to emphasize that this faith must be genuine. Alternate translation: "if you truly believe"

you will even say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,'

You can translate this direct quotation as an indirect quotation. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will even be able to tell this mountain to get up and throw itself into the sea,"

it will be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will happen"

Matthew 21:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:23

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the religious leaders questioning Jesus's authority.

had come into the temple

It is implied that Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.

these things

This refers to Jesus teaching and healing in the temple. It probably also refers to Jesus driving out the buyers and sellers the previous day.

Matthew 21:24

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:25

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the religious leaders.

from where did it come?

"where did he get the authority to do that?"

If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

This has quotes within a quote. You could translate the direct quotations as an indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "If we say that we believe John received his authority from heaven, then Jesus will ask us why we did not believe John."

From heaven

Here "heaven" refers to God. Alternate translation: "from God in heaven"

Why then did you not believe him?

The religious leaders know that Jesus could scold them with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "Then you should have believed John the Baptist"

Matthew 21:26

But if we say, 'From men,'

This is a quote within a quote. You could translate the direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "But if we say that we believe John received his authority from men,"

we fear the crowd

"we fear what the crowd would think or even do to us"

they all view John as a prophet

"they believe John is a prophet"

Matthew 21:27

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:28

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable about two sons to rebuke the religious leaders and to illustrate their unbelief.

But what do you think?

Jesus uses a question to challenge the religious leaders to think deeply about the parable he will tell them. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you think about what I am about to tell you."

Matthew 21:29

he changed his mind

This refers to the son reconsidering his thoughts and deciding to act differently from how he had said he would act.

Matthew 21:30

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:31

They said

"The chief priests and elders said"

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to the chief priests and elders"

Truly I say to you

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

the tax collectors and the prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God before you do

Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "when God establishes his rule on earth, he will agree to bless the tax collectors and prostitutes by ruling over them before he agrees to do that for you"

before you do

Possible meanings are 1) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes sooner than he will accept the Jewish religious leaders, or 2) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes instead of the Jewish religious leaders.

Matthew 21:32

John came to you

Here "you" is plural and refers to all the people of Israel, not just the religious leaders. Alternate translation: "John came to the people of Israel"

in the way of righteousness

This is an idiom that means John showed the people the right way to live. Alternate translation: "and told you the way God wants you to live"

you did not believe him

Here "you" is plural and refers to the religious leaders.

Matthew 21:33

Connecting Statement:

To rebuke the religious leaders and illustrate their unbelief, Jesus tells a parable about rebellious servants.

a landowner

"a person who owned a piece of property"

a hedge

"a wall" or "a fence"

dug a winepress in it

"dug a hole in the vineyard in which to press the grapes"

rented it out to vine growers

The owner still owned the vineyard, but he allowed the vine growers to take care of it. When the grapes became ripe, they were to give some of them to the owner and keep the rest.

vine growers

These were people who knew how to take care of vines and grapes.

Matthew 21:34

to collect his fruit

The landowner expected the vine growers pay him for allowing them to use the vineyard by giving him some of the fruit they had grown.

Matthew 21:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

his servants

"the landowner's servants"

Matthew 21:36

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:37

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:38

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

Matthew 21:39

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 21:40

Now

The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but it is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Matthew 21:41

They said to him

Matthew does not make clear who answered Jesus. If you need to specify an audience you can translate as "The people said to Jesus."

He will violently destroy those wicked people

"He will bring those wicked people to a miserable end" or "He will make those evil people die in misery"

Matthew 21:42

General Information:

Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that God will honor the one whom the religious leaders reject.

Connecting Statement:

Here Jesus begins to explain the parable of the rebellious servants.

Jesus said to them

It is unclear to whom Jesus asks the following question. If you need to make "them" specific, use the same audience as you did in Matthew 21:41.

Did you never read ... eyes'?

Jesus uses a question to make his audience think deeply about what this scripture means. Alternate translation: "Think about what you have read ... eyes."

The stone which the builders rejected has been made the cornerstone

Jesus is quoting from the Psalms. This is a metaphor that means the religious leaders, like builders, will reject Jesus, but God will make him the most important in his kingdom, like the cornerstone in a building.

has been made the cornerstone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has become the cornerstone"

This was from the Lord

"The Lord has caused this great change"

it is marvelous in our eyes

Here "in our eyes" refers to seeing. Alternate translation: "it is wonderful to see"

Matthew 21:43

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

to you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders who had rejected him.

the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that produces its fruits

Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take his kingdom away from you and will give it to a nation that produces the kingdom's fruits" or "God will reject you, and he will be king over people from other nations that produce the kingdom's fruits"

that produces its fruits

"Fruits" here is a metaphor for "results" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "that produces good results"

Matthew 21:44

Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces

Here, "this stone" is the same stone as in [Matthew 21:42]

But anyone on whom it falls will be crushed

This means basically the same thing as the previous sentence. It is a metaphor that means the Christ will have the final judgment and will destroy everyone who rebels against him.

Matthew 21:45

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders react to the parable that Jesus told.

his parables

"Jesus's parables"

Matthew 21:46

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Chapter 22

Matthew 22 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 44, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wedding Feast

In the parable of the wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14), Jesus taught that when God offers to save a person, that person needs to accept the offer. Jesus spoke of life with God as a feast that a king prepares for his son, who has just gotten married. In addition, Jesus emphasized that not everyone whom God invites will properly prepare themselves to come to the feast. God will throw these people out from the feast.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When the king in the parable said, "My oxen and fattened calves have been killed" (Matthew 22:4), he assumed that the hearers would understand that those who had killed the animals had also cooked them.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. To the Jews, the ancestors were the masters of the descendants, but in one psalm David calls one of his descendants "Lord." Jesus tells the Jewish leaders that this is a paradox, saying, "If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?" (Matthew 22:45).

Matthew 22:1

Connecting Statement:

To rebuke the religious leaders and to illustrate their unbelief, Jesus tells a parable about a marriage feast.

to them

"to the people"

Matthew 22:2

The kingdom of heaven is like

This is the beginning of a parable. See how you translated this in Matthew 13:24.

Matthew 22:3

those who had been invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people the king had invited"

Matthew 22:4

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

servants, saying, "Tell them who are invited, "See ... feast."

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "servants, ordering them to tell those whom he invited, 'See ... feast.'"

See

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

My oxen and fattened cattle have been killed

It is implied that the animals are cooked and ready to eat. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My servants have killed and cooked my oxen and my fattened cattle"

My oxen and fattened cattle

"My best oxen and calves for eating"

Matthew 22:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

But they paid no attention

"But the guests the king invited ignored the invitation"

Matthew 22:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 22:7

they destroyed those murderers

"they killed those murderers." If your language has a strong word for "killed," you might want to use it here.

Matthew 22:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

those who were invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom I invited"

Matthew 22:9

the highway crossings

"where the main roads of the city cross." The king is sending the servants to the place where they are most likely to find people.

Matthew 22:10

both bad and good

"both the good people and the bad people"

So the wedding hall was filled with guests

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the guests filled the wedding hall"

hall

a large room

Matthew 22:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

Matthew 22:12

how did you come in here without wedding clothes?

The king uses a question to scold the guest. Alternate translation: "you are not wearing proper clothes for a wedding. You should not be here."

the man was speechless

"the man was silent"

Matthew 22:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his parable about a marriage feast.

Bind this man hand and foot

"Tie him up so that he cannot move his hands or feet"

the outer darkness

Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

weeping and the grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" is symbolic action, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 22:14

For many people are called, but few are chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God invites many people, but he only chooses a few"

For

This marks a transition. Jesus has ended the parable and now explains the point of the parable.

Matthew 22:15

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of the religious leaders trying to trap Jesus with several difficult questions. Here the Pharisees ask him about paying taxes to Caesar.

how they might entrap Jesus in his own talk

"how they could cause Jesus to say something wrong so they could arrest him"

Matthew 22:16

their disciples ... Herodians

The disciples of the Pharisees supported paying taxes only to Jewish authorities. The Herodians supported paying taxes to the Roman authorities. It is implied that the Pharisees believed that no matter what Jesus said, he would offend one of these groups.

Herodians

These were officials and followers of the Jewish king Herod. He was friends with Roman authorities.

you do not show partiality between people

"you do not show special honor to anyone" or "you do not consider anyone more important than anyone else"

Matthew 22:17

to pay taxes to Caesar

People did not pay taxes directly to Caesar but to one of his tax collectors. Alternate translation: "to pay the taxes that Caesar requires"

Matthew 22:18

Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?

Jesus uses a question to scold those who were trying to trap him. Alternate translation: "Do not test me, you hypocrites!" or "I know that you hypocrites are only trying to test me!"

Matthew 22:19

denarius

This was a Roman coin worth one day's wages.

Matthew 22:20

to them

Here "them" refers to the Herodians and the disciples of the Pharisees.

Whose image and name are these?

Jesus uses a question to get the people to think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "Tell me whose image and name you see on this coin."

Matthew 22:21

Caesar's

You can make clear the understood information in their response. Alternate translation: "The coin has Caesar's image and name on it"

things that are Caesar's

"things that belong to Caesar"

things that are God's

"things that belong to God"

Matthew 22:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 22:23

Connecting Statement:

The Sadducees try to trap Jesus by asking him a difficult question about marriage and the resurrection of the dead.

Matthew 22:24

Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies ... brother.'

The religious leaders were asking Jesus about what Moses had written in the scriptures. If your

language does not allow quotes within quotes, this could be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies ...brother."

his brother ... his wife ... his brother

Here "his" refers to the dead man.

Matthew 22:25

Connecting Statement:

The Sadducees continue asking Jesus a question.

The first

"The oldest"

Matthew 22:26

the second ... the third ... the seventh

"the next oldest ... the next oldest ... the youngest" or "his oldest younger brother ... that brother's oldest younger brother ... the youngest"

Matthew 22:27

After them all

"After every brother had died"

Matthew 22:28

Now

Here the Sadducees shift from the story about the seven brothers to their actual question.

in the resurrection

"when dead people come back to life"

Matthew 22:29

You are mistaken

It is implied that Jesus means that they are mistaken about what they think about the resurrection. Alternate translation: "You are mistaken about the resurrection"

the power of God

"what God is able to do"

Matthew 22:30

in the resurrection

"when dead people rise back to life"

they neither marry

"people will not marry"

nor are given in marriage

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor will people give their children in marriage"

Matthew 22:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins asking a question to show that people who have died will live again. He is scolding the Sadducees by asking this question. He is not looking for an answer.

have you not read

This is the beginning of a question that end with the words "the God of Jacob" in verse 32. Jesus asks this question to remind the religious leaders of what they know from scripture. If this rhetorical question is translated as a statement, the question mark in verse 32 would be changed to a period.

Alternate translation: "you have read"

what was spoken to you by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God spoke to you"

Matthew 22:32

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes asking the question he began in verse 31.

the God of Jacob'

This question begins in verse 31 and ends in verse 32. Jesus uses this question to remind the Sadducees of what is in the scripture and to rebuke them for not understanding it. If you translated the rhetorical question as a statement in verse 31, then the question mark here would be changed to a period. Alternate translation: "the God of Jacob."

'I am the God of ... Jacob'

You can translate the direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "that he is the God of ... Jacob"

of the dead, but of the living

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "of dead people, but he is the God of living people"

Matthew 22:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 22:34

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 22:35

Connecting Statement:

A Pharisee who was an expert in the law tries to trap Jesus by asking him a difficult question about the greatest commandment.

Matthew 22:36

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 22:37

General Information:

Jesus quotes a verse from Deuteronomy as the greatest commandment.

with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind

These three phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being.

Matthew 22:38

the great and first commandment

Here "great" and "first" mean the same thing. They emphasize that this is the most important commandment.

Matthew 22:39

General Information:

Jesus quotes a verse from Leviticus as the second greatest commandment.

your neighbor

Here "neighbor" means more than just those who live nearby. Jesus means a person must love all people.

Matthew 22:40

On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets

Here the phrase "the whole law and the prophets" refers to all of scripture. Alternate translation: "Everything that Moses and the prophets wrote in the scriptures is based on these two commandments"

Matthew 22:41

Connecting Statement:

Jesus asks the Pharisees a difficult question in order to stop their attempts to trap him.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story in which Jesus asks the religious leaders a question.

Matthew 22:42

son ... son of David

In both of these "son" means "descendant."

Matthew 22:43

General Information:

Jesus quotes from the Psalms to show that the Christ is more than just "the son of David."

How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord

Jesus uses a question to make the religious leaders think deeply about the Psalm he is about to quote. Alternate translation: "Then, tell me why David in the Spirit calls him Lord"

David in the Spirit

"David, whom the Holy Spirit is inspiring." This means the Holy Spirit is influencing what David says.

call him

Here "him" refers to the Christ, who is also the descendant of David.

Matthew 22:44

The Lord said

Here "Lord" refers to God the Father.

to my Lord

Here "Lord" refers to the Christ. Also, "my" refers to David. This means the Christ is superior to David.

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

until I make your enemies your footstool

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "until I conquer your enemies" or "until I make your enemies bow down before you"

Matthew 22:45

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 19:1, that tells of Jesus ministering in Judea.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the account of the religious leaders trying to trap Jesus with several difficult questions.

If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?

Jesus uses a question to make the religious leaders think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "David calls him 'Lord,' so the Christ has to be more than just a descendant of David."

If David then calls the Christ

David referred to Jesus as "Lord" because Jesus was not only a descendant of David, but he was also superior to him.

Matthew 22:46

to answer him a word

Here "word" refers to what people say. Alternate translation: "to answer him anything" or "to answer him"

any more questions

It is implied that no one asked him the kind of questions that were intended to make him say something wrong so the religious leaders could arrest him.

Chapter 23

Matthew 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Hypocrites

Jesus calls the Pharisees hypocrites many times (Matthew 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29) and carefully tells what he means by doing that. The Pharisees made rules that no one could actually obey, and then they persuaded the ordinary people that they were guilty because they could not obey the rules. Also, the Pharisees obeyed their own rules instead of obeying God's original commands in the law of Moses.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Name calling

In most cultures, it is wrong to insult people. The Pharisees took many of the words in this chapter as insults. Jesus called them "hypocrites," "blind guides," "fools," and "serpents" (Matthew 23:16-17). Jesus uses these words to say that God would surely punish them because they were doing wrong.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus uses a paradox when he says, "He who is greatest among you will be your servant" (Matthew 23:11-12).

Matthew 23:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story, in which Jesus teaches about salvation and the final judgment. Here he begins to warn the people about the scribes and Pharisees.

Matthew 23:2

sit in Moses' seat

Here "seat" represents the authority to rule and make judgments. Alternate translation: "have authority as Moses had" or "have authority to say what the law of Moses means"

Matthew 23:3

whatever ... do these things and observe them

"all the things ... do them and observe them" or "everything ... do it and observe it"

Matthew 23:4

they bind heavy burdens that are difficult to carry, and then they put them on people's shoulders. But they themselves will not move a finger to carry them

Here "bind heavy burdens ... put them on people's shoulders" is a metaphor for the religious leaders making many difficult rules and making the people obey them. And "will not move a finger" is an idiom that means the religious leaders will not help the people. Alternate translation: "they make you obey many rules that are difficult to follow. But they do nothing at all to help you follow the rules"

Matthew 23:5

They do all their deeds to be seen by people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They do all their deeds so that people can see what they do"

For they make their phylacteries wide, and they enlarge the edges of their garments

Both of these are things the Pharisees do to appear as if they honor God more than other people.

phylacteries

small leather boxes containing paper with scripture written on it

they enlarge the edges of their garments

The Pharisees made the tassels on the bottom of their robes especially long to show their devotion to God.

Matthew 23:6

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the crowds and disciples about the Pharisees.

places of honor ... chief seats

Both of these are the places where the most important people sit.

Matthew 23:7

marketplaces

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

to be called 'Rabbi' by people.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for people to call them 'Rabbi.'"

Matthew 23:8

But you must not be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But you must not let anyone call you"

you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to all of Jesus's followers.

all of you are brothers

Here "brothers" means "fellow believers."

Matthew 23:9

call no man on earth your father

Jesus is using hyperbole to tell his hearers that they must not allow even the most important people to be more important to them than God is. Alternate translation: "do not call any man on earth your father" or "do not say that any man on earth is your father"

you have only one Father

"Father" here is an important title for God.

Matthew 23:10

Neither must you be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Also, do not let anyone call you"

you have only one teacher, the Christ

When Jesus said "the Christ," he was speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Christ, am your only teacher"

Matthew 23:11

he who is greatest among you

"the person who is most important among you"

among you

Here "you" is plural and refers to Jesus's followers.

Matthew 23:12

exalts himself

"makes himself important"

will be humbled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"

will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make important" or "God will honor"

Matthew 23:13

General Information:

Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven as if it were a house, the door into which the Pharisees have shut from the outside so that neither they nor anyone else can enter the house. If you do not keep the metaphor of the house, be sure to change all instances of "shut" and "enter." Also, since the words "kingdom of heaven," which refer to God, who lives in heaven, occur only in Matthew, try to use your language's word for "heaven" in your translation.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to rebuke the religious leaders because of their hypocrisy.

But woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.

You shut the kingdom of heaven against people ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so

Jesus is speaking of the kingdom of heaven, which is God ruling over his people, as if it were a house, the door into which the Pharisees have shut from the outside so that neither they nor anyone else can enter the house. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use your language's word for "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "You make it impossible for people to enter the kingdom of heaven ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so" or "You prevent people from accepting God, who lives in heaven, as king ... you do not accept him as king ... and you make it impossible for those about to accept him as king to do so"

Matthew 23:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 23:15

you go over sea and land

This is an idiom that means they go to distant places. Alternate translation: "you travel great distances"

to make one convert

"to make one person accept your religion"

son of hell

Here "son of" is an idiom that means "one belonging to." Alternate translation: "person who belongs in hell" or "person who should go to hell"

Matthew 23:16

blind guides

The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth. See how you translated "blind guides" in [Matthew 15:14]

by the temple, it is nothing

"by the temple does not have to keep his oath"

is bound to his oath

"is tied to his oath." The phrase "bound to his oath" is a metaphor for being required to do what one has said he would do in an oath. Alternate translation: "must do what he promised to do"

Matthew 23:17

blind fools

The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.

Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy?

Jesus uses this question to rebuke the Pharisees because they treated the gold as if it were more important than the temple. Alternate translation: "The temple that has dedicated the gold to God is more important than the gold!"

the temple that makes the gold holy

"the temple that makes the gold belong to God alone"

Matthew 23:18

And

The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "And you also say"

it is nothing

"he does not have to do what he has sworn to do" or "he does not have to keep his oath"

the gift

This is an animal or grain that a person would bring to God by putting it on God's altar.

is bound to his oath

"is tied to his oath." Being required to do what one has said he would do in an oath is spoken of as if he is tied to the oath. Alternate translation: "must do what he promised to do"

Matthew 23:19

blind people

The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.

Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy?

Jesus uses this question to rebuke the Pharisees for treating the gift as if it were more important than the altar. Alternate translation: "The altar that makes the gift holy is greater than the gift!"

the altar that makes the gift holy

"the altar that makes the gift special to God"

Matthew 23:20

by everything on it

"by all the gifts that people have placed on it"

Matthew 23:21

the one who lives in it

God the Father

Matthew 23:22

him who sits on it

God the Father

Matthew 23:23

Woe to you ... hypocrites!

"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.

mint and dill and cumin

These are various leaves and seeds people used to make food taste good.

you have left undone

"you have not obeyed"

the weightier matters

"the more important matters"

But these you ought to have done

"You ought to have obeyed these more important laws"

and not to have left the other undone

This can be stated in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "and to make sure the other is done" or "and to make sure to do the other"

Matthew 23:24

You blind guides

Jesus uses this metaphor to describe the Pharisees. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not understand God's commands or how to please him. Therefore, they cannot teach others how to please God. See how you translated this metaphor in [Matthew 15:14]

you who strain out a gnat but swallow a camel

Being careful to follow the less important laws and ignoring the more important laws is as foolish as being careful not to swallow the smallest unclean animal but eating the meat of the largest unclean animal. Alternate translation: "you are as foolish as a person who strains out a gnat that falls into his drink but swallows a camel!"

strain out a gnat

This means to pour a liquid through a cloth to remove a gnat from a drink.

gnat

a small flying insect

Matthew 23:25

Woe to you ... hypocrites!

"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.

For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence

This is a metaphor that means the scribes and Pharisees appear pure on the outside to others, but on the inside they are wicked.

they are full of robbery and self-indulgence

"they take what belongs to others, and they do almost everything to benefit themselves"

Matthew 23:26

You blind Pharisee

The Pharisees were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.

Clean first the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may become clean also

This is a metaphor that means that if they would become pure in their inner being, then the result is that they would be pure on the outside as well.

Matthew 23:27

you are like whitewashed tombs ... unclean

This is a simile that means the scribes and Pharisees may appear to be pure on the outside, but they are wicked on the inside.

whitewashed tombs

"tombs that someone has painted white." The Jews would paint tombs white so that people would easily see them and avoid touching them. Touching a tomb would make a person ceremonially unclean.

Matthew 23:28

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 23:29

of the righteous

This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "of the righteous people"

Matthew 23:30

in the days of our fathers

"during the time of our forefathers"

we would not have been partners with them

"we would not have joined with them"

shedding the blood of

Here "blood" refers to life. To shed blood means to kill. Alternate translation: "killing" or "murdering"

Matthew 23:31

sons of those who murdered the prophets

Possible meanings are 1) the word "sons" is a metonym for "descendants." Alternate translation: "descendants of those who murdered the prophets" or 2) the word "sons" is a metaphor for people who are like others. Alternate translation: "just like those who murdered the prophets."

Matthew 23:32

You also fill up the measure of your fathers

Jesus uses this as a metaphor meaning the Pharisees will complete the wicked behavior that their forefathers started when they killed the prophets. Alternate translation: "You also finish the sins your ancestors began"

Matthew 23:33

You serpents, you offspring of vipers

Serpents are snakes, and vipers are poisonous snakes. They are dangerous and often symbols of evil. Alternate translation: "You who are as evil and dangerous as poisonous snakes"

offspring of vipers

Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." See how you translated a similar phrase in Matthew 3:7.

how will you escape the judgment of hell?

Jesus uses this question as a rebuke. Alternate translation: "there is no way for you to escape the judgment of hell!"

Matthew 23:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the religious leaders because of their hypocrisy.

I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes
Sometimes the present tense is used to show that someone will do something very soon. Alternate translation: "I will send prophets, wise men, and scribes to you"

chase from city to city
You may need to make explicit that the purpose of chasing is to persecute. Alternate translation: "chase from city to city and persecute them" or "persecute them in city after city"

Matthew 23:35

upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth ... blood ... blood
The phrase "upon you will come" is an idiom that means to receive punishment. To shed blood is a metonym meaning to kill people, so "righteous blood that has been shed on the earth" represents righteous people who have been killed. Alternate translation: "God will punish you for the murders of all the righteous people ... murder .. murder"

Abel ... Zechariah
Abel was the first righteous victim of murder, and Zechariah, who was murdered by Jews in the temple, was probably thought to be the last. These two men represent all the righteous people who have been murdered.

Zechariah
This Zechariah is unknown. He was not the father of John the Baptist.

whom you murdered
Jesus does not mean the people to whom he is speaking actually murdered Zechariah. He means their ancestors did.

Matthew 23:36

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

Matthew 23:37

Connecting Statement:
Jesus mourns over the people of Jerusalem because they reject every messenger that God sends to them.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem
Jesus speaks to the people of Jerusalem as though they were the city itself.

those who are sent to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God sends to you"

your children
Jesus is speaking to Jerusalem as if it is a woman and the people are her children. Alternate translation: "your people" or "your inhabitants"

just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings
This is a simile that emphasizes Jesus's love for the people and how he wanted to take care of them.

hen
a female chicken. You can translate with any bird that protects her children under her wing.

Matthew 23:38

your house is left to you desolate
"God will leave your house, and it will be empty"

your house
Possible meanings are 1) "the city of Jerusalem" or 2) "the temple."

Matthew 23:39

I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
Here "in the name" means "in the power" or "as a representative." See how you translated this in [Matthew 21:9]

Chapter 24

Matthew 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Jesus begins to prophesy about the future from that time until he returns as king of everything. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

"The end of the age"

In this chapter, Jesus gives an answer to his disciples when they ask how they will know when he will come again.

The example of Noah

In the time of Noah, God sent a great flood to punish people for their sins. He warned them many times about this coming flood, but it actually began suddenly. In this chapter, Jesus draws a comparison between that flood and the last days. (See: sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Let"

The ULB uses this word to begin several commands of Jesus, such as "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (24:16), "let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house" (24:17), and "let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak" (24:18). There are many different ways to form a command. Translators must select the most natural ways in their own languages. Note that this word does not mean "permit."

Matthew 24:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to describe events that will happen before he comes again during the end times.

from the temple

It is implied that Jesus was not in the temple itself. He was in the courtyard around the temple.

Matthew 24:2

Do you not see all these things?

Jesus uses a question to make the disciples think deeply about what he will tell them. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you something about all these buildings."

Truly I say to you

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

not one stone will be left on another that will not be torn down

It is implied that enemy soldiers will tear down the stones. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the enemy soldiers come, they will tear down every stone in these buildings"

Matthew 24:3

What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age

Here "your coming" refers to when Jesus will come in power, establishing God's reign on earth and bringing this age to an end. Alternate translation: "What will be the sign that you are about to come and that the world is about to end"

Matthew 24:4

Be careful that no one leads you astray

Here "leads you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "Be careful that no one deceives you"

Matthew 24:5

many will come in my name

The name here is the name of Messiah or Christ, not of Jesus and seems to be a metonym for the authority of the Christ. Alternate translation: "many will claim to have my authority as Christ"

will lead many astray

Here "leads you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "will deceive many people"

Matthew 24:6

See that you are not troubled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let these things trouble you"

Matthew 24:7

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom

Both of these mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that people everywhere will fight each other.

Matthew 24:8

the beginning of birth pains

This refers to the pains a woman feels before giving birth to a child. This metaphor means these wars, famines, and earthquakes are just the beginning of the events that will lead to the end of the age.

Matthew 24:9

they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you

"people will give you over to the authorities, who will make you suffer and will kill you."

You will be hated by all the nations

Here "nations" is a metonym, referring to the people of nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People from every nation will hate you"

for my name's sake

Here "name" refers to the complete person. Alternate translation: "because you believe in me"

Matthew 24:10

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:11

will rise up

"Rise" here is an idiom for "become established." Alternate translation: "will come"

and lead many astray

Here "lead ... astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "and deceive many people"

Matthew 24:12

lawlessness will increase

The abstract noun "lawlessness" can be translated with the phrase "disobeying the law." Alternate translation: "disobeying the law will increase" or "people will disobey God's law more and more"

the love of many will grow cold

Possible meanings are 1) "many people will no longer love other people" or 2) "many people will no longer love God."

Matthew 24:13

the one who endures to the end will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will save the person who endures to the end"

the one who endures

"the person who stays faithful"

to the end

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

the end

"the end of the world" or "the end of the age"

Matthew 24:14

This good news of the kingdom will be preached

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will tell the good news that God will rule"

all the nations

Here, "nations" stands for people. Alternate translation: "all people in all places"

Matthew 24:15

the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the shameful one who defiles the things of God, about whom Daniel the prophet wrote"

let the reader understand

This is not Jesus speaking. Matthew added this to alert the reader that Jesus was using words that they would need to think about and interpret.

Matthew 24:16

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:17

let him who is on the housetop

Housetops where Jesus lived were flat, and people could stand on them.

Matthew 24:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:19

in those days

"at that time"

Matthew 24:20

that your flight will not occur

"that you will not have to flee" or "that you will not have to run away"

the winter

"the cold season"

Matthew 24:21

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:22

Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved

This can be stated in positive and active form.

Alternate translation: "If God had not shortened the time of suffering, everyone would have died" or "Because God shortened those days, some people lived"

no flesh

"nobody" or "no one." Here, "flesh" is poetic way of referring to people.

those days will be shortened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will shorten the time of suffering"

Matthew 24:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.

do not believe it

"do not believe the false thing they have said to you"

Matthew 24:24

so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect

Here "lead astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. This can be translated as two sentences. Alternate translation: "so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect" or "so as to deceive people. If possible, they would even deceive the elect"

Matthew 24:25

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:26

if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do

This can be stated as an indirect quotation.

Alternate translation: "if someone tells you that the Christ is in the wilderness, do"

Or, 'See, he is in the inner rooms,'

This can be stated as an indirect quotation.

Alternate translation: "Or, if someone tells you that the Christ is in the inner room,"

in the inner rooms

"in a secret room" or "in secret places"

Matthew 24:27

as the lightning shines ... so will be the coming

This means that the Son of Man will come very quickly and will be easy to see.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 24:28

Wherever a dead animal is, there the vultures will gather

This is probably a proverb that the people of Jesus's time understood. Possible meanings are 1) when the Son of Man comes, everyone will see him and know that he has come, or 2) wherever spiritually dead people are, false prophets will be there to tell them lies.

vultures

birds that eat the bodies of dead or dying creatures

Matthew 24:29

immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun

"as soon as the tribulation of those days has finished, the sun"

the tribulation of those days

"that time of suffering"

the sun will be darkened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make the sun dark"

the powers of the heavens will be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will shake things in the sky and above the sky"

Matthew 24:30

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

all the tribes

Here "tribes" refers to people. Alternate translation: "all the people of the tribes" or "all the people"

Matthew 24:31

He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet

"He will have a trumpet sounded and send his angels" or "He will have an angel blow a trumpet, and he will send his angels"

He ... his

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

they will gather

"his angels will gather"

his elect

These are the people whom the Son of Man has chosen.

from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other

Both of these mean the same thing. They are idioms that mean "from everywhere." Alternate translation: "from all over the world"

Matthew 24:32

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:33

he is near, at the very gates

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person and using the imagery of a king or important official getting close to the gates of a walled city. This metaphor means the time for Jesus to come is soon. Alternate translation: "I am near and will soon appear"

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you

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

this generation will not pass away

Here "pass away" is a polite way of saying "die." Alternate translation: "the people of this generation will not all die"

this generation

Possible interpretations are 1) "all people alive today," referring to the people alive when Jesus was

speaking, or 2) "all people alive when these things I have just told you about happen." Try to translate so that both interpretations are possible.

until all of these things will have happened

"until God causes all these things to happen"

Matthew 24:35

Heaven and the earth will pass away

The words "heaven" and "earth" are a synecdoche that includes everything that God has created, especially those things that seem permanent. Jesus is saying that his word, unlike these things, is permanent. Alternate translation: "Even heaven and the earth will pass away"

my words will never pass away

Here "words" refers to what Jesus has said. Alternate translation: "what I say will always be true"

Matthew 24:36

that day and hour

Here "day" and "hour" refer to the exact time that the Son of Man will return.

nor the Son

"not even the Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 24:37

As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man

"At the time when the Son of Man comes, it will be like the time of Noah."

so will be the coming of the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "so will it be when I, the Son of Man, come"

Matthew 24:38

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:39

away—so will be the coming of the Son of Man

This can be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "away. This is how it will be when the Son of Man comes"

Matthew 24:40

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell his disciples to be ready for his return.

Then

This is when the Son of Man comes.

one will be taken, and one will be left

Possible meanings are 1) the Son of Man will take one away to heaven and will leave the other on earth for punishment or 2) the angels will take one away for punishment and leave the other for blessing.

Matthew 24:41

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:42

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true"

be on your guard

"pay attention"

Matthew 24:43

that if the master of the house ... broken into

Jesus uses a parable of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

the thief

Jesus is saying he will come when people are not expecting him, not that he will come to steal.

he would have been on guard

"he would have guarded his house"

would not have allowed his house to be broken into

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "would not have allowed anyone to get into his house to steal things"

Matthew 24:44

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 24:45

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues his proverb of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

So who is the faithful and wise servant whom his master ... time?

Jesus uses this question to make his disciples think. Alternate translation: "So who is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master ... time." or "Be like the faithful and wise servant, whom his master ... time."

give them their food

"give the people in the master's home their food"

Matthew 24:46

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:47

Truly I say to you

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

Matthew 24:48

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his proverb of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

says in his heart

Here "heart" refers to the mind. Alternate translation: "thinks in his mind"

My master has been delayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My master is slow to return" or "My master will not return for a long time"

Matthew 24:49

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 24:50

on a day that the servant does not expect and at an hour that he does not know

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize that the master will come when the servant is not expecting him.

Matthew 24:51

cut him in pieces

This is an idiom that means to make the person suffer terribly.

assign him a place with the hypocrites

"put him with the hypocrites" or "send him to the place where hypocrites are sent"

there will be weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Chapter 25

Matthew 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the teaching of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The parable of the ten virgins

Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13) to tell his followers to be ready for him to return. His hearers could understand the parable because they knew Jewish wedding customs.

When the Jews arranged marriages, they would plan for the wedding to take place weeks or months later. At the proper time, the young man would go to his bride's house, where she would be waiting for him. The wedding ceremony would take place, and then the man and his bride would travel to his home, where there would be a feast.

Matthew 25:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable about wise and foolish virgins to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

the kingdom of heaven will be like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

lamps

These could have been 1) lamps or 2) torches made by putting cloth around the end of a stick and wetting the cloth with oil.

Matthew 25:2

Five of them

"Five of the virgins"

Matthew 25:3

did not take any oil with them

"had with them only the oil in their lamps"

Matthew 25:4

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:5

Now

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

while the bridegroom was delayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "while the bridegroom was taking a long time to arrive"

they all got sleepy

"all ten virgins got sleepy"

Matthew 25:6

there was a cry

"someone shouted"

Matthew 25:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

trimmed their lamps

"adjusted their lamps so they would burn brightly"

Matthew 25:8

The foolish said to the wise

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "The foolish virgins said to the wise virgins"

our lamps are going out

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the fire in our lamps is about to burn out"

Matthew 25:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:10

they went away

"the five foolish virgins went away"

to buy

The understood information can be stated clearly.
Alternate translation: "to buy more oil"

those who were ready

These are the virgins who had extra oil.

the door was shut

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the servants shut the door"

Matthew 25:11

open for us

This implicit information can be stated explicitly.
Alternate translation: "open the door for us so we can come inside"

Matthew 25:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes the parable about the ten virgins.

Truly I say to you

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

I do not know you

"I do not know who you are." This is the end of the parable.

Matthew 25:13

you do not know the day or the hour

Here "day" and "hour" refer to an exact time. The implied information can be stated explicitly.
Alternate translation: "you do not know the exact time when the Son of Man will return"

Matthew 25:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable about faithful and unfaithful servants to illustrate that his disciples should remain faithful during his absence and be prepared for his return.

it is like

The word "it" here refers to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:24).

was about to go

"was ready to go" or "was to go soon"

entrusted his possessions to them

"put them in charge of his possessions"

his possessions

"what he owned"

Matthew 25:15

five talents

"five talents of gold." Avoid translating this into modern money. A "talent" of gold was worth twenty years' wages. The parable is contrasting the relative amounts of five, two, and one, as well as the large amount of wealth involved. Alternate translation: "five bags of gold" or "five bags of gold, each worth 20 years' wages"

to another he gave two ... gave one talent

The word "talents" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "to another he gave two talents of gold ... gave one talent of gold" or "to another he gave two bags of gold ... gave one bag of gold"

according to his own ability

The implicit information can be stated explicitly.
Alternate translation: "according to each servant's skill in managing wealth"

Matthew 25:16

worked with them

"invested the talents" or "used them in business" or "traded with them"

gained another five talents

"out of his investments he earned another five talents"

Matthew 25:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable about the servants and the talents.

gained another two

"earned another two talents"

Matthew 25:18

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:19

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.

Now

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

Matthew 25:20

I have gained five talents more

"I have earned five more talents"

talents

A "talent" was worth twenty years' wages. Avoid translating this into modern money. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:15]

Matthew 25:21

Well done

"You have done well" or "You have done right." Your culture might have an expression that a master (or someone in authority) would use to show that he approves of what his servant (or someone under him) has done.

Enter into the joy of your master

The phrase "Enter into the joy" is an idiom. Also, the master is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Come and be happy with me"

Matthew 25:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.

I have gained two more talents

"I have earned two more talents"

Matthew 25:23

Well done

"You have done well" or "You have done right." Your culture might have an expression that a master (or someone in authority) would use to show that he approves of what his servant (or someone under him) has done. See how you translated this in Matthew 25:21.

Enter into the joy of your master

The phrase "Enter into the joy" is an idiom. Also, the master is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Come and be happy with me" See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:21]

Matthew 25:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.

a hard man

Possible meanings are 1) a man who demands much from other people or 2) a man who does not treat others well.

You reap where you did not sow, and you harvest where you did not scatter

The words "reap where you did not sow" and "harvest where you did not scatter" mean the same thing. They refer to a farmer who gathers crops that other people have planted. The servant uses

this metaphor to accuse the master of taking what rightfully belongs to others.

scatter

"scatter seed." This refers to sowing seed by gently throwing handfuls of it onto the soil.

Matthew 25:25

See, you have here what belongs to you

"Look, here is what is yours"

Matthew 25:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable about the servants and the talents.

You wicked and lazy servant, you knew

"You are a wicked servant who does not want to work. You knew"

I reap where I have not sowed and harvest where I have not scattered

The words "reap where I have not sowed" and "harvest where I have not scattered" mean the same thing. They refer to a farmer who gathers crops that people who work for him have planted. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:24]

Matthew 25:27

received back my own

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "received back my own money"

interest

payment from the banker for the temporary use of the master's money

Matthew 25:28

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes the parable about the servants and the talents.

take away the talent

The master is speaking to other servants.

talent

A "talent" was worth twenty years' wages. Avoid translating this into modern money. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:15]

Matthew 25:29

who possesses

It is implied that the person who possesses something also uses it wisely. Alternate translation: "who uses well what he has"

he will have an abundance
"he will have much more"

from anyone who does not possess anything
It is implied that the person does possess something but he does not use it wisely. Alternate translation: "from anyone does not use well what he has"

will be taken away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take away" or "I will take away"

Matthew 25:30

the outer darkness
Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

weeping and grinding of teeth
"Grinding of teeth" is symbolic action, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 25:31

Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to tell his disciples how he will judge people when he returns at the end time.

the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 25:32

Before him will be gathered all the nations
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will gather all the nations before him"

Before him
"In front of him"

all the nations
Here "nations" refers to people. Alternate translation: "all people from every country"

as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats
Jesus uses a simile to describe how he will separate the people.

Matthew 25:33

He will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left
This is a metaphor that means the Son of Man will separate all people. He will put the righteous people at his right side, and he will put the sinners at his left side.

Matthew 25:34

the King ... his right hand
Here, "the King" is another title for the Son of Man. Jesus was referring to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the King, ... my right hand"

Come, you who have been blessed by my Father
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Come, you whom my Father has blessed"

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

inherit the kingdom prepared for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "inherit the kingdom that God has made ready for you"

inherit the kingdom prepared for you
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "receive the blessings of God's rule that he has planned to give you"

from the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since he first created the world"

Matthew 25:35

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:36

General Information:
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Matthew 25:37

the righteous
This can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"

Or thirsty
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Or when did we see you thirsty"

Matthew 25:38

Or naked
This is the end of a series of questions that begins in verse 37. The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Or when did we see you naked"

Matthew 25:39

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:40

the King

This is another title for the Son of Man. Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

say to them

"say to those at his right hand"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This emphasizes what the King says next.

one of the least

"one of the least important"

these brothers of mine

Here "brothers" refers to anyone, male or female, who obeys the King. Alternate translation: "my brothers and sisters here" or "these who are like my brothers and sisters"

you did it for me

"I consider that you did it for me"

Matthew 25:41

Then he will

"Then the King will." Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

you cursed

"you people whom God has cursed"

the eternal fire that has been prepared

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the eternal fire that God has prepared"

his angels

the devil's helpers

Matthew 25:42

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 25:43

naked, but you did not clothe me

The words "I was" preceding "naked" are understood. Alternate translation: "I was naked, but you did not give me clothes"

sick and in prison

The words "I was" preceding "sick" are understood. Alternate translation: "I was sick and in prison"

Matthew 25:44

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling his disciples how he will judge people when he returns at the end time.

they will also answer

"those on his left will also answer"

Matthew 25:45

for one of the least of these

"for any of the least important ones of my people"

you did not do for me

"I consider that you did not do it for me" or "I was really the one whom you did not help"

Matthew 25:46

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 23:1, where Jesus teaches about salvation and the final judgment.

These will go away into eternal punishment

"The King will send these to a place where they will receive punishment that never ends"

but the righteous into eternal life

The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but the King will send the righteous to the place where they will live forever with God"

the righteous

This nominative adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"

Chapter 26

Matthew 26 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 26:31, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sheep

Sheep are a common image used in Scripture to refer to the people of Israel. In Matthew 26:31, however, Jesus used the words "the sheep" to refer to his disciples and to say that they would run away when he was arrested.

Passover

The Passover festival was when the Jews would celebrate the day God killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians but "passed over" the Israelites and let them live.

The eating of the body and blood

Matthew 26:26-28 describes Jesus's last meal with his followers. At this time, Jesus told them that what they were eating and drinking were his body and his blood. Nearly all Christian churches celebrate "the Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist", or "Holy Communion" to remember this meal.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Judas's kiss for Jesus

Matthew 26:49 describes how Judas kissed Jesus so the soldiers would know whom to arrest. The Jews would kiss each other when they greeted each other.

"I am able to destroy the temple of God"

Two men accused Jesus of saying that he could destroy the temple in Jerusalem and then rebuild it "in three days" (Matthew 26:61). They were accusing him of insulting God by claiming that God had given him the authority to destroy the temple and the power to rebuild it. What Jesus actually said was that if the Jewish authorities were to destroy this temple, he would certainly raise it up in three days (John 2:19).

Matthew 26:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that tells of Jesus's crucifixion, death, and resurrection. Here he tells his disciples how he will suffer and die.

It came about that when

"After" or "Then, after." This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next.

all these words

This refers to all that Jesus taught starting in Matthew 24:3.

Matthew 26:2

the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some men will give the Son of Man to other people who will crucify him"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 26:3

Connecting Statement:

These verses give background information about the Jewish leaders' plot to arrest and kill Jesus.

were gathered together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "came together" or "met together"

Matthew 26:4

Jesus stealthily

"Jesus secretly"

Matthew 26:5

Not during the festival

What the leaders did not want to do during the festival can be made clearer. Alternate translation: "We should not kill Jesus during the festival"

the festival

This is the yearly Passover festival.

Matthew 26:6

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of a woman pouring expensive oil on Jesus before his death.

Now

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

Simon the leper

It is implied that this is a man whom Jesus had healed from leprosy.

Matthew 26:7

he was reclining

"Jesus was lying on his side." You can use your language's word for the position people usually are in when they eat.

a woman came to him

"a woman came to Jesus"

alabaster jar

This is a costly container made of soft stone.

ointment

oil that has a pleasing smell

she poured it upon his head

The woman did this to honor Jesus.

Matthew 26:8

What is the reason for this waste?

The disciples ask this question out of their anger over the woman's actions. Alternate translation: "This woman has done a bad thing by wasting this ointment!"

Matthew 26:9

This could have been sold for a large amount and given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "She could have sold this for a large amount of money and given the money"

to the poor

Here "the poor" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to poor people"

Matthew 26:10

Why are you causing trouble for this woman?

Jesus asks this question as a rebuke of his disciples. Alternate translation: "You should not be causing trouble for this woman!"

Why are you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to the disciples.

Matthew 26:11

the poor

This can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Matthew 26:12

ointment

This is oil that has a pleasing smell. See how you translated this in Matthew 26:7.

Matthew 26:13

Truly I say to you

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

wherever this good news is preached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "wherever people preach this good news"

what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her" or "people will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her"

Matthew 26:14

Connecting Statement:

Judas Iscariot agrees to help the Jewish leaders arrest and kill Jesus.

Matthew 26:15

to turn him over to you

"to bring Jesus to you"

thirty pieces of silver

Since these words are the same as those in an Old Testament prophecy, keep this form instead of changing it to modern money.

thirty pieces

"30 pieces"

Matthew 26:16

to turn him over to them
"to enable them to seize him"

Matthew 26:17

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus celebrating the Passover with his disciples.

Now

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

Matthew 26:18

He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."'"
This has quotations within quotations. You can state some of the direct quotations as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and tell him that the Teacher says to him, 'My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" or "He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and say to him that the Teacher's time is at hand and he will keep the Passover with his disciples at that man's house."

My time

Possible meanings are 1) "The time that I told you about" or 2) "The time God has set for me."

is at hand

Possible meanings are 1) "is near" or 2) "has come."

keep the Passover

"eat the Passover meal" or "celebrate the Passover by eating the special meal"

Matthew 26:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 26:20

he sat down to eat

Use the word for the position people in your culture usually are in when they eat.

Matthew 26:21

Truly I say to you

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

Matthew 26:22

Surely not I, Lord?

"I am surely not the one, am I, Lord?" Possible meanings are 1) this is a rhetorical question since the apostles were sure they would not betray Jesus. Alternate translation: "Lord, I would never betray you!" or 2) this was a sincere question since Jesus's statement probably troubled and confused them.

Matthew 26:23

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 26:24

The Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

will go

Here "go" is a polite way to refer to dying. Alternate translation: "will go to his death" or "will die"

just as it is written about him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as the prophets wrote about him in the scriptures"

that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man who betrays the Son of Man"

Matthew 26:25

Is it I, Rabbi?

"Rabbi, am I the one who will betray you?" Judas may be using a rhetorical question to deny that he is the one who will betray Jesus. Alternate translation: "Rabbi, surely I am not the one who will betray you."

You have said it yourself

This is an idiom that Jesus uses to mean "yes" without being completely clear about what he means. Alternate translation: "You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"

Matthew 26:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper as he celebrates the Passover with his disciples.

took ... blessed ... broke

See how you translated these words in Matthew 14:19.

Matthew 26:27

He took

Translate "took" as you did in Matthew 14:19.

a cup

Here "cup" refers to the cup and the wine in it.

gave it to them

"gave it to the disciples"

Drink it

"Drink the wine from this cup"

Matthew 26:28

For this is my blood

"For this wine is my blood"

blood of the covenant

"blood that shows that the covenant is in effect" or
"blood that makes the covenant possible"

is poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will soon flow out of my body" or "will flow out of my wounds when I die"

Matthew 26:29

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

fruit of the vine

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "wine"

in my Father's kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king.
Alternate translation: "when my Father establishes his rule on earth"

my Father's

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

Matthew 26:30

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples as they walk to the Mount of Olives.

hymn

a song of praise to God

Matthew 26:31

General Information:

Jesus quotes the prophet Zechariah to show that in order to fulfill prophecy, all of his disciples will leave him.

fall away

"leave me"

for it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the prophet Zechariah wrote long ago in the scriptures"

I will strike

Here "I" refers to God. It is implied that God will cause or allow people to harm and kill Jesus.

the shepherd ... sheep of the flock

These are metaphors that refer to Jesus and the disciples.

the sheep of the flock will be scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will scatter all the sheep of the flock" or "the sheep of the flock will run off in all directions"

Matthew 26:32

after I am raised up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after God raises me up" or "after God brings me back to life"

Matthew 26:33

fall away

See how you translated this in Matthew 26:31.

Matthew 26:34

Truly I say to you

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

before the rooster crows

Roosters often crow about the time the sun comes up, so the hearers might have understood these words as a metonym for the sun coming up. However, the actual crowing of a rooster is an important part of the story later on, so keep the word "rooster" in the translation.

rooster

a male chicken, a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up

crows

This is the common English word for what a rooster does to make his loud call.

you will deny me three times

"you will say three times that you are not my follower"

Matthew 26:35

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 26:36

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus praying in Gethsemane.

Matthew 26:37

began to become sorrowful

"he became very sad"

Matthew 26:38

My soul is deeply sorrowful

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am very sad"

even to death

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "and I feel as if I could even die"

Matthew 26:39

fell on his face

He purposely lay face down on the ground to pray.

My Father

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

let this cup pass from me

Jesus speaks of the work that he must do, including dying on the cross, as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink from a cup. The word "cup" is an important word in the New Testament, so try to use an equivalent for that in your translation.

this cup

Here "cup" is a metonym that stands for the cup and the contents within it. The contents in the cup are a metaphor for the suffering that Jesus will have to endure. Jesus is asking the Father if it is possible for him not to have to experience the death and suffering that Jesus knows will soon happen.

Yet, not as I will, but as you will

This can be expressed as a full sentence. Alternate translation: "But do not do what I want; instead, do what you want"

Matthew 26:40

he said to Peter, "What, could you not watch

Jesus is speaking to Peter, but the "you" is plural, referring to Peter, James, and John.

What, could you not watch with me for one hour?

Jesus uses a question to scold Peter, James, and John. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you could not stay awake with me for one hour!"

Matthew 26:41

you do not enter into temptation

Here the abstract noun "temptation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "no one tempts you to sin"

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak

Here "spirit" is a metonym that stands for a person's desires to do good. "Flesh" stands for the needs and desires of a person's body. Jesus means that the disciples may have the desire to do what God wants, but as humans they are weak and often fail.

Matthew 26:42

He went away

"Jesus went away"

a second time

The first time is described in [Matthew 26:39]

My Father

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

if this cannot pass away unless I drink it

"if the only way this can pass away is if I drink it." Jesus speaks of the work that he must do as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink.

if this

Here "this" refers to the cup and the contents within it, a metaphor for suffering, as in Matthew 26:39).

unless I drink it

"unless I drink from it" or "unless I drink from this cup of suffering." Here "it" refers to the cup and the contents within it, a metaphor for suffering, as in Matthew 26:39).

your will be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may what you want happen" or "do what you want to do"

Matthew 26:43

their eyes were heavy

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they were very sleepy"

Matthew 26:44

third time

The first time is described in [Matthew 26:39]

Matthew 26:45

Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?

Jesus uses a question to scold the disciples for going to sleep. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you are still sleeping and resting!"

the hour is at hand

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the time has come"

the Son of Man is being betrayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone is betraying the Son of Man"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

betrayed into the hands of sinners

Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "betrayed into the power of sinners" or "betrayed so that sinners will have power over him"

Look

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

Matthew 26:46

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 26:47

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of when Judas betrayed Jesus and the religious leaders arrested him.

While he was still speaking

"While Jesus was still speaking"

clubs

large pieces of hard wood for hitting people

Matthew 26:48

Now ... Seize him

Here "Now" is used to mark a pause in the main story. Here Matthew tells background information about Judas and the signal he planned to use to betray Jesus.

saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him."

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "saying that the one he kissed was the one they should seize."

kiss

This was a respectful way to greet one's teacher.

Matthew 26:49

he came up to Jesus

"Judas came up to Jesus"

kissed him

"met him with a kiss." Good friends would kiss each other on the cheek, but a disciple would probably kiss his master on the hand to show respect. No one knows for sure how Judas kissed Jesus.

Matthew 26:50

Then they came

Here "they" refers to the people with clubs and swords that came with Judas and the religious leaders.

laid hands on Jesus, and seized him

"grabbed Jesus, and arrested him"

Matthew 26:51

Behold

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

Matthew 26:52

who take up the sword

The word "sword" is a metonym for the act of killing someone with a sword. The implied information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "who pick up a sword to kill others" or "who want to kill other people"

sword will perish by the sword

"sword will die by means of the sword" or "sword—it is with the sword that someone will kill them"

Matthew 26:53

Do you think that I could not call ... angels?

Jesus uses a question to remind the person with the sword that Jesus could stop those who are arresting him. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that I could call ... angels."

Do you think

Here "you" is singular and refers to the person with the sword.

my Father

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

more than twelve legions of angels

The word "legion" is a military term that refers to a group of about 6,000 soldiers. Jesus means God

would send enough angels to easily stop those who are arresting Jesus. The exact number of angels is not important. Alternate translation: "more than 12 really large groups of angels"

Matthew 26:54

But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, that this must happen?

Jesus uses a question to explain why he is letting these people arrest him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if I did that, I would not be able to fulfill what God said in the scriptures must happen"

Matthew 26:55

Have you come out with swords and clubs to seize me like a robber?

Jesus is using this question to point out the wrong actions of those arresting him. Alternate translation: "You know that I am not a robber, so it is wrong for you to come out to me bringing swords and clubs"

clubs

large pieces of hard wood for hitting people

in the temple

It is implied that Jesus was not in the actual temple. He was in the courtyard around the temple.

Matthew 26:56

the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would fulfill all that the prophets wrote in the scriptures"

abandoned him

"left him." If your language has a word that means they left him when they should have stayed with him, use it here.

Matthew 26:57

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's trial before the council of Jewish religious leaders.

Matthew 26:58

Peter followed him

"Peter followed Jesus"

courtyard of the high priest

an open area near the high priest's house

He went inside

"Peter went inside"

the officers

These were probably the servants of the "scribes and elders" (Matthew 26:57).

Matthew 26:59

Now

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

so that they

Here "they" refers to the chief priests and the members of the council.

might put him to death

"might have a reason to execute him"

Matthew 26:60

two came forward

"two men came forward" or "two witnesses came forward"

Matthew 26:61

This man said, 'I am able to destroy ... days.'

If your language does not allow quotes within quotes you can rewrite it as a single quote.

Alternate translation: "This man said that he is able to destroy ... days."

This man said

"This man Jesus said"

in three days

"within three days," before the sun goes down three times, not "after three days," after the sun has gone down the third time

Matthew 26:62

What is it that they are testifying against you?

The chief priest is not asking Jesus for information about what the witnesses said. He is asking Jesus to prove what the witnesses said is wrong. Alternate translation: "What is your response to what the witnesses are testifying against you?"

Matthew 26:63

Son of God

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

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act. See how you translated this in Matthew 16:16.

Matthew 26:64

You have said it yourself

This is an idiom that Jesus uses to mean "yes" without being completely clear about what he

means. Alternate translation: "You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"

But I tell you, from now on you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus is speaking to the high priest and to the other persons there.

from now on you will see the Son of Man

Possible meanings are 1) the phrase "from now on" is an idiom that means they will see the Son of Man in his power at some time in the future or 2) the phrase "from now on" means that from the time of Jesus's trial and onward, Jesus is showing himself to be the Messiah who is powerful and victorious.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in third person.

sitting at the right hand of Power

Here "Power" is metonym that represents God. To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "sitting in the place of honor beside the all-powerful God"

coming on the clouds of heaven

"riding to earth on the clouds of heaven"

Matthew 26:65

the high priest tore his clothes

Tearing clothing was a sign of anger and sadness.

He has spoken blasphemy

The reason the high priest called Jesus's statement blasphemy is probably that he understood Jesus's words in [Matthew 26:64]

Why do we still need witnesses?

The high priest uses this question to emphasize that he and the members of the council do not need to hear from any more witnesses. Alternate translation: "We do not need to hear from any more witnesses!"

now you have heard

Here "you" is plural and refers to the members of the council.

Matthew 26:66

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 26:67

Then they

Possible meanings are 1) "Then some of the men" or 2) "Then the soldiers."

spit in his face

This was done as an insult.

slapped him

hit him in the face with the palms of their hands

Matthew 26:68

Prophecy to us

Here "Prophecy to us" means to tell by means of God's power. It does not mean to tell what will happen in the future.

you Christ

Those hitting Jesus do not really think he is the Christ. They call him this to mock him.

Matthew 26:69

General Information:

These events happen at the same time as Jesus's trial before the religious leaders.

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of how Peter denies three times that he knows Jesus, as Jesus said he would do.

Now

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

Matthew 26:70

I do not know what you are talking about

Peter was able to understand what the servant girl was saying. He used these words to deny that he had been with Jesus.

Matthew 26:71

When he went out

"When Peter went out"

gateway

opening in the wall around a courtyard

said to those there

"said to the people who were sitting there"

Matthew 26:72

He again denied it with an oath

"He denied it again by swearing"

Matthew 26:73

one of them

"one of those who were with Jesus"

one of them, for the way you speak gives you away

This can be translated with a new sentence. "one of them. We can tell you are from Galilee because you speak like a Galilean"

Matthew 26:74

to curse

"to call down a curse on himself"

rooster crowed

A rooster is a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up. A rooster that has called out is said to have "crowed." See how you translated this in Matthew 26:34.

Matthew 26:75

Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said,

"Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times."

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Peter remembered that Jesus told him that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Jesus three times."

Chapter 27

Matthew 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Delivered him to Pilate the governor"

The Jewish leaders needed to get permission from Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, before they could kill Jesus. This was because Roman law did not allow them to kill Jesus themselves. Pilate was going to set one prisoner free, and he wanted to set Jesus free, but they wanted him to free a very bad prisoner named Barabbas instead.

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Matthew 27:60) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Sarcasm

The soldiers said, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Matthew 27:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's trial before Pilate.

Now

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

plotted against Jesus to put him to death

The Jewish leaders were planning how they could convince the Roman leaders to kill Jesus.

Matthew 27:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:3

General Information:

This event happened after Jesus's trial in front of the council of Jewish religious leaders, but we do not know if it happened before or during Jesus's trial before Pilate.

Connecting Statement:

The author has stopped telling the story of Jesus's trial so he can tell the story of how Judas killed himself.

Then when Judas

If your language has a way of showing that a new story is starting, you may want to use that here.

that Jesus had been condemned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus"

the thirty pieces of silver

This was the money that the chief priests had given Judas to betray Jesus. See how you translated it in Matthew 26:15.

Matthew 27:4

innocent blood

This is an idiom that refers to the death of an innocent person. Alternate translation: "a person who does not deserve to die"

What is that to us?

The Jewish leaders use this question to emphasize that they do not care about what Judas said. Alternate translation: "That is not our problem!" or "That is your problem!"

Matthew 27:5

threw down the pieces of silver in the temple

Possible meanings are 1) he threw the pieces of silver while in the temple courtyard, or 2) he was standing in the temple courtyard, and he threw the pieces of silver into the temple.

Matthew 27:6

It is not lawful to put this

"Our laws do not allow us to put this"

put this

"put this silver"

the treasury

This is the place they kept the money they used to provide for things needed for the temple and the priests.

price of blood

This is an idiom that means money paid to a person who helped kill someone. Alternate translation: "money paid for a man to die"

Matthew 27:7

potter's field

This was a field that was bought to bury strangers who died in Jerusalem.

Matthew 27:8

that field has been called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people call that field"

to this day

This means to the time that Matthew is writing this book.

Matthew 27:9

General Information:

The author quotes Old Testament scripture to show that Judas's suicide was a fulfillment of prophecy.

Then that which had been spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled what the prophet Jeremiah spoke"

the price set on him by the sons of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the price the sons of Israel set on him"

the sons of Israel

This refers to those among the people of Israel who paid to kill Jesus and speaks of them as though they were doing what all the people of Israel wanted them to do. Alternate translation: "some of the descendants of Israel" or "the leaders of Israel"

Matthew 27:10

directed me

Here "me" refers to Jeremiah.

Matthew 27:11

Connecting Statement:

This continues the story of Jesus's trial before Pilate, which began in Matthew 27:2.

Now

The word "Now" is used here to mark a return to the main events of the story.

the governor

"Pilate"

You say so

Possible meanings are 1) by saying this, Jesus implied that he is the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said" or 2) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "You yourself have said so"

Matthew 27:12

But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But when the chief priests and elders accused him"

Matthew 27:13

Do you not hear how many things they accuse you of?

Pilate asks this question because he is surprised that Jesus remains silent. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you do not answer these people who accuse you of doing so many bad things!"

how many things they accuse you of

"how many things they testify against you about"

Matthew 27:14

did not answer even one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed

"did not say even one word; this greatly amazed the governor." This is an emphatic way of saying that Jesus was completely silent.

Matthew 27:15

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story so Matthew can give information to help the reader understand what happens beginning in [Matthew 27:17]

the festival

This is the Passover celebration.

prisoner chosen by the crowd

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "prisoner whom the crowd would choose"

Matthew 27:16

they had a notorious prisoner

"there was a notorious prisoner"

notorious

well known for doing something bad

Matthew 27:17

they were gathered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the crowd gathered"

Jesus who is called Christ

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom some people call the Christ"

Matthew 27:18

they had handed Jesus over to him

"the Jewish leaders had brought Jesus to him." They had done this so that Pilate would judge Jesus.

Matthew 27:19

While he was sitting

"While Pilate was sitting"

sitting on the judgment seat

"sitting on the judge's seat." This is where a judge would sit while making a decision.

sent word

"sent a message"

I have suffered much today

"I have been very upset today"

Matthew 27:20

Now ... destroy Jesus

Here "Now" is used to mark a pause in the story. Matthew tells background information about why the crowd chose Barabbas.

they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus

The phrase "ask for Barabbas" is an ellipsis for "ask Pilate to release Barabbas." The phrase "destroy Jesus" here is a euphemism for "kill Jesus," and because the people in the crowd would not kill Jesus themselves, it is a metonym or ellipsis for the crowd telling Pilate to have his soldiers kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "they should ask Pilate to release Jesus and tell him to have his soldiers kill Jesus"

Matthew 27:21

asked them

"asked the crowd"

Matthew 27:22

who is called Christ

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom some people call the Christ"

Matthew 27:23

has he done

"has Jesus done"

they cried out

"the crowd cried out"

Matthew 27:24

he was gaining nothing

"he was doing no good" or "he was unable to convince the people"

washed his hands in front of the crowd

Pilate does this as a sign that he is not responsible for Jesus's death.

the blood

Here "blood" refers to a person's death. Alternate translation: "the death"

You see to it

This is an idiom that means "This is your responsibility."

Matthew 27:25

May his blood be on us and our children

Here "blood" is a metonym that stands for a person's death. The phrase "be on us and our children" is an idiom that means they accept the responsibility of what is happening. Alternate translation: "Yes! We and our descendants will be responsible for executing him"

Matthew 27:26

Then he set Barabbas free for them

Possible meanings are 1) Pilate set Barabbas free because the crowd had asked him to or 2) Pilate released Barabbas and put him under the control of the crowd.

he scourged Jesus and handed him over to be crucified

It is implied that Pilate ordered his soldiers to scourge Jesus. Handing Jesus over to be crucified is a metaphor for ordering his soldiers to crucify Jesus. Alternate translation: "he ordered his soldiers to scourge Jesus and to crucify him" (See: and)

scourged Jesus

"beat Jesus with a whip" or "whipped Jesus"

Matthew 27:27

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's crucifixion and death.

company of soldiers
"group of soldiers"

Matthew 27:28

stripped him
"pulled off his clothes"

scarlet
bright red

Matthew 27:29

a crown of thorns
"a crown from thorny branches" or "a crown from branches with thorns on them"

a staff in his right hand
They gave Jesus a stick to hold to represent a scepter that a king holds. They did this to mock Jesus.

Hail, King of the Jews
They were saying this to mock Jesus. They were calling Jesus "King of the Jews," but they did not really believe he was a king. And yet what they were saying was true.

Hail
"We honor you" or "May you live a long time"

Matthew 27:30

They spat on him
The past tense of the verb "spit" can be either "spit" or "spat."

Matthew 27:31

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:32

As they came out
This means Jesus and the soldiers came out of the city. Alternate translation: "As they came out of Jerusalem"

they found a man
"the soldiers saw a man"

whom they forced to go with them so that he might carry his cross
"whom the soldiers forced to go with them so that he could carry Jesus's cross"

Matthew 27:33

place called Golgotha
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "place that people called Golgotha"

Matthew 27:34

him wine to drink mixed with gall
Wine alone might have reduced the pain of crucifixion. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "him wine, which they had mixed with gall"

gall
Gall is the bitter yellow liquid that bodies use in digestion. The people were mocking Jesus by mixing it with the wine and so making the wine undrinkable.

Matthew 27:35

his garments
These were the clothes Jesus had been wearing.

Matthew 27:36

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:37

the charge against him
"a written explanation of why he was being crucified"

Matthew 27:38

Two robbers were crucified with him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers crucified two robbers with Jesus"

Matthew 27:39

shaking their heads
They did this to make fun of Jesus.

Matthew 27:40

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross
They did not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so they wanted him to prove it if it was true. Alternate translation: "If you are the Son of God, prove it by coming down from the cross"

the Son of God
This is an important title for the Christ that describes his relationship to God.

Matthew 27:41

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:42

He saved others, but he cannot save himself

Possible meanings are 1) the Jewish leaders do not believe that Jesus saved others or that he can save himself, or 2) they believe he did save others but are laughing at him because now he cannot save himself.

He is the King of Israel

The leaders are mocking Jesus. They call him "King of Israel," but they do not really believe he is king. Alternate translation: "He says that he is the King of Israel"

Matthew 27:43

Connecting Statement:

The Jewish leaders continue mocking Jesus.

For he even said, 'I am the Son of God.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "For Jesus even said that he is the Son of God."

Son of God

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

Matthew 27:44

the robbers who were crucified with him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the robbers that the soldiers crucified with Jesus"

Matthew 27:45

Now

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

from the sixth hour ... until the ninth hour

"from about noon ... for three hours" or "from about twelve o'clock midday ... until about three o'clock in the afternoon"

darkness came over the whole land

The word "darkness" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "it became dark over the whole land"

Matthew 27:46

Jesus cried

"Jesus called out" or "Jesus shouted"

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani

These words are what Jesus cried out in his own language. Translators usually leave these words as they are.

Matthew 27:47

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:48

one of them

Possible meanings are 1) one of the soldiers or 2) one of those who stood by and watched.

sponge

This is a sea animal that is harvested and used to take up and hold liquids. These liquids can later be pushed out.

gave it to him

"gave it to Jesus"

Matthew 27:49

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:50

gave up his spirit

Here "spirit" refers to that which gives life to a person. This phrase is a way of saying that Jesus died. Alternate translation: "he died, giving his spirit over to God" or "he breathed his last breath"

Matthew 27:51

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the events that happened when Jesus died.

Behold

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

the curtain of the temple was split in two

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the curtain of the temple tore in two" or "God caused the curtain of the temple to tear in two"

Matthew 27:52

The tombs were opened, and the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God opened the tombs and made many godly people who had died become alive again"

the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised

Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation:

"God put life back into to the dead bodies of many godly people who had fallen asleep"

fallen asleep

This is a polite way of referring to dying. Alternate translation: "died"

Matthew 27:53

They came out ... appeared to many

The order of the events that Matthew describes (beginning with the words "The tombs were opened" in verse 52) is unclear. After the earthquake when Jesus died and the tombs were opened 1) the holy people came back to life, and then, after Jesus came back to life, the holy people entered Jerusalem, where many people saw them, or 2) Jesus came back to life, and then the holy ones came back to life and entered the city, where many people saw them.

Matthew 27:54

Now

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

those who were watching Jesus

"those who were guarding Jesus." This refers to the other soldiers who were guarding Jesus with the centurion. Alternate translation: "the other soldiers with him who were guarding Jesus"

Son of God

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

Matthew 27:55

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Matthew 27:56

the mother of the sons of Zebedee

"the mother of James and John" or "the wife of Zebedee"

Matthew 27:57

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's burial.

Arimathea

This is the name of a city in Israel.

Matthew 27:58

Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then Pilate ordered the soldiers to give the body of Jesus to Joseph"

Matthew 27:59

linen

a fine, costly cloth

Matthew 27:60

that he had cut into the rock

It is implied that Joseph had workers who cut the tomb into the rock.

Then he rolled a large stone

Most likely Joseph had other people there to help him roll the stone.

Matthew 27:61

opposite the tomb

"across from the tomb"

Matthew 27:62

the Preparation

This is the day that people got everything ready for the Sabbath.

were gathered together with Pilate

"met with Pilate"

Matthew 27:63

when that deceiver was alive

"when Jesus, the deceiver, was alive"

he said, 'After three days will I rise again.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "he said that after three days he will rise again." or "he said that after three day he would rise again."

Matthew 27:64

command that the tomb be made secure

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "command your soldiers to guard the tomb"

the third day

"day number three." This refers to the day after two nights have passed.

his disciples may come and steal him

"his disciples may come and steal his body"

his disciples may ... say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "his disciples may ... tell the people that he has risen from the dead, and"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

and the last deception will be worse than the first

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and if they deceive people by saying that, it will be worse than the way he deceived people before when he said that he was the Christ"

Matthew 27:65

a guard

This consisted of four to sixteen Roman soldiers.

Matthew 27:66

sealing the stone

Possible meanings are 1) they put a cord around the stone and attached it with seals to the rock wall on either side of the entrance to the tomb or 2) they put seals between the stone and the wall.

placing the guard

"telling the soldiers to stand where they could keep people from tampering with the tomb"

Chapter 28

Matthew 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Matthew 28:1) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

"Make disciples"

The last two verses (Matthew 28:19-20) are commonly known as "The Great Commission" because they contain a very important command given to all Christians. Christians are to "make disciples" by going to people, sharing the gospel with them and training them to live as Christians.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

An angel of the Lord

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels looked human. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

Matthew 28:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week

"After the Sabbath, as the sun began to come up Sunday morning"

Now

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

the other Mary

"the other woman named Mary." This is Mary the mother of James and Joseph (Matthew 27:56).

Matthew 28:2

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Your language may have a way of doing this.

there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended ... and rolled away the stone

Possible meanings are 1) the earthquake happened because the angel came down and rolled away the stone or 2) all these events happened at the same time .

earthquake

a sudden and violent shaking of the ground

Matthew 28:3

His appearance

"The angel's appearance"

was like lightning

This is a simile that emphasizes how bright in appearance the angel was. Alternate translation: "was bright like lightning"

his clothing as white as snow

This is a simile that emphasizes how bright and white the angel's clothes were. The verb "was" from the previous phrase can be repeated. Alternate translation: "his clothing was very white, like snow"

Matthew 28:4

became like dead men

This is a simile that means the soldiers fell down and did not move. Alternate translation: "fell to the ground and lay there like dead men"

Matthew 28:5

the women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

who has been crucified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the people and the soldiers crucified" or "whom they crucified"

Matthew 28:6

was lying

This means that Jesus's body was lying on the flat surface inside the tomb, not that Jesus was saying things that were not true.

Matthew 28:7

tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. See, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead and that Jesus has gone ahead of you to Galilee, where you will see him."

He has risen

"He has come back to life"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

going ahead of you ... you will see him

Here "you" is plural. It refers to the women and the disciples.

I have told you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the women.

Matthew 28:8

The women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

Matthew 28:9

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Greetings

This is an ordinary greeting, much like "Hello" in English.

took hold of his feet

"got down on their knees and held onto his feet"

Matthew 28:10

my brothers

This refers to Jesus's disciples.

Matthew 28:11

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the reaction of the Jewish religious leaders when they heard of Jesus's resurrection.

Now

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

the women

Here this refers to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.

behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Matthew 28:12

discussed the matter with them

"decided on a plan among themselves." The priests and elders decided to give the money to the soldiers.

Matthew 28:13

Say to others, 'The disciples of Jesus came ... while we were sleeping.'

If your language does not allow quotations within quotations you may translate this as a single quote. Alternate translation: "Tell others that Jesus' disciples came ... while you were sleeping."

Matthew 28:14

If this report reaches the governor

"If the governor hears that you were asleep when Jesus's disciples took his body"

the governor

"Pilate" (Matthew 27:2)

we will persuade him and take any worries away from you

"do not worry. We will talk to him so that he does not punish you."

Matthew 28:15

did as they had been instructed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "did what the priests had told them to do"

This report spread widely among the Jews and continues even today

"Many Jews heard this report and continue to tell others about it even today"

even today

This refers to the time Matthew wrote the book.

Matthew 28:16

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus meeting with his disciples after his resurrection.

Matthew 28:17

they worshiped him, but some doubted

Possible meanings are 1) they all worshiped Jesus even though some of them doubted, or 2) some of them worshiped Jesus, but others did not worship him because they doubted.

but some doubted

It can be stated explicitly what the disciples doubted. Alternate translation: "some doubted that he was really Jesus and that he had become alive again"

Matthew 28:18

All authority has been given to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has given me all authority"

in heaven and on earth

Here "heaven" and "earth" are used together to mean everyone and everything in heaven and earth. The words "in heaven and on earth" can be translated as "over everyone and everything in heaven and on earth."

Matthew 28:19

of all the nations

Here "nations" refers to the people, and the saying is probably a hyperbole. Alternate translation: "of the people in every nation"

into the name

Here "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "by the authority"

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

Matthew 28:20

See

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

even to the end of the age

"until the end of this age" or "until the end of the world"