



# How to Use the Reviewers' Guide

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<b>Introduction</b>	3
Statement of purpose for the Reviewers' Guide	3
Why was the Reviewers' Guide created?	3
Who will use the Reviewers' Guide?	3
Purpose for this User's Guide	4
<b>Reviewers' Guide Overview</b>	5
<b>Preparing for the Review</b>	5
Choose passages for review	5
Have access to the biblical texts	6
Read this User's Guide and the passages for that session	7
Read Positive Statements and introductory material in the Reviewers' Guide	7
Prepare the reviewers	7
<b>Performing the Review</b>	8
Step 1 - Read the passage citation and background	8
Step 2 - Read the passage from the translation	8
Step 3 - Ask the reviewers to summarize the passage	8
Step 4 - Read the Specific Questions	9
Step 5 - Read the Follow-Up Questions or Significance of Events Questions	11
Step 6 - Record information in the Comments section	11
<b>Conclusion</b>	12
<b>Quick Reference for Team Leaders</b>	13
<b>Charts for Choosing Passages</b>	13
<b>Sample completed chart</b>	17

# Introduction

## Statement of purpose for the Reviewers' Guide

The purpose of the Reviewers' Guide is to evaluate a Bible translation to ensure that doctrines and key concepts are communicated clearly and accurately. This review is done by asking questions about the meaning of the Scripture text and engaging in conversation about the text.

The Reviewers' Guide allows the translation to be evaluated from the point of view of the reader or listener. It also allows those who speak the target language a chance to verify that the text is natural and understandable and to offer suggestions for improving the text.

The Reviewers' Guide is a tool for the Christian community to affirm that their translation is readable and accurate and to build confidence that their Bible truly reflects God's message.

## Why was the Reviewers' Guide created?

In order for the translation to be used and trusted by those who will read or listen to it, there needed to be a way for those who speak the target language to check that the translation is accurate, clear, and natural.

To this end, a team of pastors, missionaries, and Bible experts created the Reviewers' Guide. This team carefully selected key passages with specific points of doctrine to include in the Reviewers' Guide. Once these passages were selected, a series of questions that move from broad to more specific were designed for each passage. The questions were arranged in the order of the biblical text, with a section for follow-up questions.

## Who will use the Reviewers' Guide?

The Reviewers' Guide is intended to be used by the team leader working with the reviewers.

*Who is the team leader?*

The team leader is the person who will lead the review process. He or she is responsible for making all necessary preparations before the review, reading the questions from the Reviewers' Guide, directing the conversation, and recording relevant information.

The person selected as the team leader for the review should be a Christian in good standing in his or her community, preferably a spiritual leader, and ideally with some biblical education or background. This person can be someone from the language community of the translation project, someone from outside that language community that has been a partner in the translation project, or even someone who is new to the project, provided he or she is invited by

the translation team. If the team leader is from the language community, he or she should not be one of the translators on the project.

### *Who are the reviewers?*

The reviewers are those people who will read or listen to the passages and answer the questions from the Reviewers' Guide. Their answers will demonstrate whether the translation is accurate, clear, and natural.

The reviewers are to be chosen carefully. Ideally they should not have participated in the translation project, specifically in the translated passages being tested. Reviewers should be Christians in good standing in their community and with a desire for a high-quality Scripture translation. Reviewers should, when possible, be selected by the translation team or other church leaders in their community.

### *Who receives the results of the Reviewers' Guide?*

If it is shown that the translation is in any way inaccurate, confusing, or unclear, then the Reviewers' Guide report will express that along with suggestions for improving the accuracy and readability of the translation. This report will be given to those church leaders and the translators who participated in the project. It will then be up to those leaders to decide how to proceed in improving or correcting their translation.

Because ownership and responsibility for the translation are maintained by the local church community, the report generated from using the Reviewers' Guide will also be their responsibility. There is no requirement that it be sent to any outside organization. However, it is strongly recommended, in the interest of continuing strong partnerships, that the reports be shared with Wycliffe Associates and other partners who have helped facilitate the Scripture translation.

If the translation is demonstrated to be of high quality in both accuracy and readability, it is recommended that these findings also be documented and presented to the translators and church leaders, as an affirmation of their work. In turn, those leaders and translators will have discretion over sharing the results with others outside their own language community.

## **Purpose for this User's Guide**

This document was created to help people around the world use the Reviewers' Guide to check their translation. Included in this document is an explanation of the different parts of the Reviewers' Guide and a step-by-step explanation of the review process. A "Quick Reference for Team Leaders" near the end of this document summarizes what needs to be done to prepare for and perform a review.

## Reviewers' Guide Overview

The Reviewers' Guide includes the following documents:

- User's Guide (*this document*)
- [Narrative Passages](#)
- [Doctrine of God; Doctrine of Holy Spirit](#)
- [Doctrine of Jesus](#)
- [Doctrine of Man; Doctrine of Salvation; Doctrine of the Church; Doctrine of Holiness of the Believers](#)
- [Doctrine of Scripture; Doctrine of Missions; Doctrine of Family](#)
- [Philippians](#)
- [Genesis](#)
- [Exodus](#)
- [Application Guide: Narrative Passages](#)
- [Application Guide: Doctrines](#)
- [Application Guide: Philippians](#)

The Reviewers' Guide is structured to make the review process easy for the team leader and reviewers. The Reviewers' Guide includes positive statements and other introductory material to help the team leader understand the correct teaching for each doctrine and narrative section.

The Reviewers' Guide also includes for each doctrine and narrative section several sets of questions for biblical passages. These sets of questions are arranged in three columns (Question, Correct Answer, Comments) and in three sections (Summary Section, Specific Questions, Follow-up Questions).

Each part of the Reviewers' Guide will be more fully explained later in this User's Guide.

## Preparing for the Review

The team leader should do some work before the review begins. The more preparation that the team leader does, the better the review process will be for the reviewers.

### **Choose passages for review**

The team leader will need to decide what doctrines or narratives to cover. The team leader will also need to choose what passages to read for each doctrine or narrative. In the Reviewers' Guide are several passages for each section, but every one of them need not be used. It is recommended that at least three be chosen for each doctrine when possible, and two for each narrative section.

For example, if you go to the Reviewers' Guide called "Doctrine of God; Doctrine of Holy Spirit," you will see there are three doctrines. Under each doctrine are passages related to that doctrine.

- Doctrine of God (Loving/Relational Nature)
  - Matthew 11:28-30
  - Hebrews 4:14-16
- Doctrine of God (the Father)
  - Matthew 11:27
  - Luke 11:2
  - John 5:17-18
- Doctrine of Holy Spirit (Person and Work)
  - John 14:16-17
  - John 16:12-14
  - Romans 8:9-11
  - 1 Corinthians 2:9-12

The team leader will need to decide how many of the doctrines the team will cover and which passages to read for each doctrine. For example, from this list, the team leader might decide for the team to cover:

- Doctrine of God (Loving/Relational Nature)
  - Matthew 11:28-30
  - Hebrews 4:14-16
- Doctrine of Holy Spirit (Person and Work)
  - John 14:16-17
  - John 16:12-14
  - 1 Corinthians 2:9-12

If the entire New Testament has not been translated, the team leader may need to choose doctrines and passages based on what has been translated. Or, the team leader can choose doctrines and passages based on level of difficulty or based on related topics. (Click [here](#) for charts arranged by difficulty level and topic.)

### **Have access to the biblical texts**

The Reviewers' Guide does not provide the biblical texts. The team leader must provide the team. Some options are:

- Display the text on a screen or computer monitor
- Supply printed copies for the reviewers
- Someone will read the text to the reviewers.

## **Read this User's Guide and the passages for that session**

The team leader should read through this entire User's Guide and be familiar with the review process. The team leader should also read through all the passages and the questions for those passages selected in the Reviewers' Guide.

If the leader is uncertain about any part of the review process or the Reviewers' Guide questions, he or she should try to resolve this before the review begins. The goal is for the review process to go as smoothly as possible without stopping and starting.

## **Read Positive Statements and introductory material in the Reviewers' Guide**

Each doctrine and narrative section begins with a Positive Statement. The purpose of this statement is to give the team leader a simple outline of the biblical understanding of each section. Some of these doctrines are complex and have been interpreted in various ways. The Positive Statement provides what is considered the orthodox understanding and is accepted by the global Church in general.

Sometimes, there will also be other introductory material, as in the narrative section. This material is meant to define certain terms and to help the team leader understand the purpose of the section.

The Positive Statements and other introductory material are for the team leader but not necessarily for the reviewers. The team leader should be familiar with the correct understanding of the doctrines and other introductory material to be able to help the reviewers if they have any questions.

## **Prepare the reviewers**

The team leader should start by trying to make the reviewers comfortable with the review process. The team leader should ensure them that this review is not meant to test their knowledge of the Bible or to critique any of the translators involved. It is perfectly fine if they do not know an answer to a question. The purpose of the Reviewers' Guide is to make sure the text communicates clearly and accurately.

The team leader should also remind the reviewers to only give answers directly from the passage being read. They should not provide answers that rely on information from other passages, nor should they provide answers based on prior knowledge or teaching.

Finally, the team leader should guide and direct all conversations. He or she should help keep the reviewers' answers and focused on the subject that is being studied, and to limit them to a reasonable length of time. The summary section may take 1-2 minutes. Other questions should take no longer than 30-60 seconds.

## Performing the Review

### Step 1 - Read the passage citation and background

The passage citation gives the book, chapter, and verse where the passage is located in the Bible (for example: John 3:16).

There is also a background section. Its purpose is to help the reviewers understand what happened or was said prior to the passage in the Reviewers' Guide. The background section sometimes will also provide information that is not clear in the passage itself. For example, the passage may say "we" without ever explicitly identifying to whom "we" refers. The background will give the reviewers this information to help the reviewers understand the passage.

The team leader should tell the reviewers the book, chapter, and verse of the passage and read them the background information. However, the team leader should not tell them the doctrine being covered or read to them the Positive Statement.

### Step 2 - Read the passage from the translation

The team leader will need to decide before the review begins how the passage will be communicated to the reviewers. Someone could read the passage out loud, or reviewers could read it together or individually from their text, or the passage could be displayed on a screen or monitor.

### Step 3 - Ask the reviewers to summarize the passage

The Summary Section gives the reviewers a chance to speak in their own words what they remember from the passage. The question is usually worded something like "Summarize what was said in this passage." Allow them to speak without interrupting them or guiding their answer.

In the answer section for the Summary Section is a list of the points that the reviewers should mention.

Question	Correct Answer	Comments
<b>Summary Section</b>		
Summarize what was said in this passage.	<input type="checkbox"/> Point 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Point 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Point 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Point 4	



Sometimes one of the points will have part of the answer in parentheses. The first part of the answer includes the wording and figure of speech of the original language. The portion in parentheses explains the answer in a simpler way without the figures of speech. For example:

- ☐ People should take Jesus' yoke upon them and learn from him because he is gentle and humble. (People should become Jesus' disciples and learn from him because he is gentle and humble.)

The team leader will have to determine if the reviewers' responses match the meaning given in the Reviewers' Guide. Record in the Comments section any relevant information (See: Step 6).

If the reviewers cover a point adequately, put a mark in the box. If they do not cover a point adequately, you can come back to it in the Specific Questions section.

## Step 4 - Read the Specific Questions

The purpose of this section is to cover anything not mentioned in the Summary Section or to go deeper into a particular matter.

The Specific Questions are arranged in the same order as the biblical text. Read these questions from top to bottom.

However, the team leader is not required to read every question. If the team leader feels that an adequate answer was given in the Summary Section, then there is no need to cover it again in the Specific Questions. Only read the Specific Questions that are necessary to determine that the subject matter is clearly understood.

## Types of Questions

**Remembering Questions:** These are basic questions to test whether the information (what happened, what was said, who was involved, etc.) in the text can be clearly recounted by the reviewers. The answers to these questions should be found directly in the text. For example:

What did Jesus tell his listeners to do?

**Understanding Questions:** These questions test whether the intended meaning of the biblical authors can be understood. The answers to these questions may not be stated in the text. Reviewers will have to think about what is implied in the text, phrase, or word. For example:

What do you think Jesus meant when he said that he would give rest to those who came to him?

What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Take my yoke upon you"?

How do you understand the phrase in your language for "in the Spirit"?

The team leader may need to reword a question or ask it in a different way so that the reviewers understand the question.

If the question in the Reviewers' Guide is about a specific word or phrase, the team leader may need to replace what is in the Reviewer's Guide with the word or phrase that is in the translation. For example:

Original question: What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Take my yoke upon you"?

Reworded question: What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "\_\_\_\_\_"? (Fill in with wording from your translation.)

The Reviewers' Guide also provides what are acceptable answers to the questions. Reviewers may give answers that are worded differently than the Reviewers' Guide. The team leader will need to determine whether the reviewers' answer has the same meaning as what is provided in the Reviewers' Guide. This may mean that the team leader will need to ask clarifying questions or ask the reviewers to explain their answer in a different way.

As the reviewers provide answers, the team leader should not indicate to the reviewers whether they gave a correct or incorrect answer. Simply record their answer, ask follow-up questions, or go to the next question. Record in the Comments section whether the reviewers gave the correct answer or not. If they did not give the correct answer, record what answer they gave and any additional questions asked (See: Step 6).

If there is confusion about one of the answers, go to the follow-up section (See: Step 5) before proceeding to next Specific Question.

## **Step 5 - Read the Follow-Up Questions or Significance of Events Questions**

Each Doctrine Reviewers' Guide has a Follow-Up section. Follow-up questions are only used if there is a misunderstanding regarding the specific questions. This section is especially important to use if something about the doctrine is unclear in the passage being covered.

The Reviewers' Guide provides some sample follow-up questions. However, the team leader will need to listen to the reviewers' answers and then determine what other questions would be appropriate.

If possible, try to determine if the misunderstanding or confusion is caused by one of these three situations:

- Is there a key word or phrase that was not translated clearly or accurately?
- Is there something else in the passage that is causing the confusion?
- Is the text translated clearly and accurately, but the reviewers simply do not understand the concept?

The team leader should record in the Comments section anything that may be causing the confusion (See: Step 6). The team leader should not try to teach or correct the readers.

However, the team leader should not feel that it is completely necessary or entirely his or her responsibility to determine what is causing the reviewers' misunderstanding or confusion. If asking the follow-up questions does not seem to help or if they make the reviewers uncomfortable, this section can be skipped. The team leader should simply record their answers and go to the next question or passage.

The Narrative Reviewers' Guide has a Significance of Events section. The purpose of this section is to determine if the reviewer understands the doctrines supported by the stories. Record any relevant information in the Comments section (See: Step 6).

## **Step 6 - Record information in the Comments section**

This section is for the team leader to record anything relevant from the conversation with the reviewers, such as:

- Whether or not they gave the correct answer
- The answer they did give, if they did not give the correct one
- Any clarifying questions or follow-up questions the team leader asked
- Any other relevant information mentioned in the conversation.

The team leader should be documenting the conversation throughout the entire review. At the end of each passage, the team leader should take a few minutes to record his or her final thoughts about how understandable he or she thinks the passage is.

## Conclusion

When the team leader has completed this process for all sections to be tested, the process is complete. The comments should then be shared with the translators, so they can determine what (if any) edits need to be made.

Additionally, we would request that you send us feedback. Email us at: [translation\\_services@wycliffeassociates.org](mailto:translation_services@wycliffeassociates.org). Please feel free to ask questions, make requests or summarize your experience with the reviewer's guide process.

## Quick Reference for Team Leaders

### Prepare the reviewers for the review process:

- Give the reviewers a quick overview of the steps of the review process.
- Remind reviewers that this is a review of the translation, not of their biblical knowledge.
- Remind them to answer only from the text, not from other teachings or other passages.
- Remind them to try and keep answers on topic and to keep answers to about 30-60 seconds.

### Step 1: Tell reviewers the passage being reviewed and read to them the background information.

### Step 2: Read the passage from the translation being reviewed.

### Step 3: Ask reviewers to summarize the passage.

- Let reviewers answer in their own words.
- If they cover a point adequately, put a mark in the box beside the point.
- If they miss a point, return to it in the Specific Questions section.
- Record relevant information in the Comments section.

### Step 4: Read the Specific Questions (and significance of events questions for narrative passages).

- If the point was covered adequately in the Summary Section, repeating the question is not necessary.
- You may need to reword the questions if they are unclear to the reviewers.
- For questions referring to specific words or phrases, you may need to replace the wording in the Reviewers' Guide with the wording in the translation.
- If the reviewers do not provide an adequate answer to a Specific Questions, go to the follow-up section before proceeding to next question.
- Record relevant information in the Comments section.

### Step 5: Read the Follow-Up Questions for doctrine passages.

- This section is used if there is misunderstanding regarding a specific question.
- Try to determine if the confusion or misunderstanding is caused by:
  - A key word or phrase not translated clearly or accurately
  - Something else in the passage not translated clearly or accurately
  - The reviewers' unfamiliarity with the idea or concept
- It is not absolutely necessary for you to identify the problem. You can skip this section if it is not helping or if it is making the reviewers uncomfortable
- Record all relevant information in the Comments section.

### Step 6: Write information in the Comments section.

- Did the reviewers give the correct answer or not?
- What answer did they give if they did not give the correct answer?
- What clarifying questions or follow-up questions did you need to ask the reviewers?
- Is there any other relevant information useful for assessing the quality of the translation?

## Charts for Choosing Passages

When choosing what doctrines/narratives or passages to review, it may be helpful to consider the level of difficulty of the section. If you are using the Reviewers' Guide for the first time, you may want to choose material from the easier section.

When you are selecting doctrines and passages, you can choose them any way you want. But if you want to go through them in some kind of order, here are a couple of suggestions.

### By Level of Difficulty:

Easier	
Narratives	<p>In general, narratives are easier to translate and understand than the doctrines. Narratives would be the best place to start when beginning the Reviewers' Guide. For the most part, the passages are in the order that they appear in the Bible. You may find it natural to go from beginning to end in the narrative document.</p> <p>The last narrative category, "Apocalyptic/Prophetic Narratives," is the most difficult section.</p>
Doctrine of God (Loving/Relational Nature)	<p>Matthew 11:28-30 Hebrews 4:14-16</p>
Doctrine of Man	<p>Acts 17:24-28 Romans 3:9-18 Romans 5:12-14 Ephesians 2:1-3</p>
Doctrine of Missions	<p>Matthew 28:18-20 Acts 1:8 Romans 10:13-15</p>
Doctrine of the Christian Family	<p>Ephesians 5:21-33 Ephesians 6:1-4 1 Timothy 5:1-5</p>
Moderate	

Doctrine of God (the Father)	Matthew 11:27 Luke 11:2 John 5:17-18 Ephesians 1:3
Doctrine of Jesus (Son of God)	John 3:16-18 Mark 1:1 Matthew 3:16-17 Romans 1:1-4 Hebrews 4:14
Doctrine of Jesus (Savior)	1 John 4:14-15 Luke 2:8-14 1 Timothy 1:15-16
Doctrine of Salvation	John 3:16-18 Ephesians 2:8-9 Romans 3:23-26 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
Doctrine of Word of God (inspiration)	2 Timothy 3:14-17 Hebrews 4:12 2 Peter 1:20-21
<b>More Difficult</b>	
Doctrine of Holy Spirit (Person and Work)	John 14:16-17; John 16:12-14 1 Corinthians 2:9-12 Romans 8:9-11
Doctrine of Jesus (Resurrection)	Matthew 28:5-7 Acts 2:22-32 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Romans 6:8-10
Doctrine of Jesus (Deity)	John 1:1-4; 14-18 John 20:26-29 Philippians 2:5-8 Colossians 1:15-20
Doctrine of Church	Romans 12:4-8 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 Ephesians 1:22-23

More Difficult (Continued)	
Doctrine of Holiness of Believers	Romans 12:1-2 Ephesians 4:17-24 Colossians 3:12-14
Book of Philippians	In general, reviewing an entire book will be more difficult than reviewing narratives and doctrines. It is suggested that review teams gain some experience first with the biblical narratives (like the Book of Acts as it relates to the epistles) and an understanding of primary doctrines before attempting to review an entire book.

### By Related Topics:

Topics	Doctrines
Character and person of God	God is loving, God is the Father
Character, person, and work of Jesus	Jesus, Son of God, Deity of Christ
Jesus' work of salvation	Jesus, Savior, Resurrection
Fall and redemption of humans	Man, Salvation
Person and work of Holy Spirit	Holy Spirit, Holiness of Believers
Bible	Word of God (Inspiration)
Character and work of God's people	Church, Missions
Christian home and relationships	Family
Stories about Jesus	Birth of Jesus narratives, Miracles of Jesus narratives, Parables of Jesus narratives
Stories about the early Church	Early Church narratives
End times	Apocalyptic/Prophetic narratives
Book review	Philippians



## Sample completed chart

### Matthew 11:28-30

**Background:** Jesus addressed a group who had followed him and they had been listening to his teaching. Here he spoke to the crowd as he finished his sermon.

Question	Correct Answer	Comments
<b>Summary Section</b>		
Summarize what Jesus said.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Christ invited the tired and burdened to come to him for rest.</li> <li>✓ People should take Jesus' yoke upon them and learn from him because he is gentle and humble. (People should become Jesus' disciples and learn from him because he is gentle and humble.)</li> <li>✓ Christ said that his way is easy and his burden is light.</li> <li>✓ Christ said that he gives rest for soul.</li> </ul>	<p>Answer included all four points, but did not know the word used for "yoke".</p> <p>It did seem clear that the metaphor was about carrying something heavy and Jesus offering a lighter burden instead.</p>
<b>Specific Questions</b>		
What did Jesus tell his listeners to do? [11:28]	He told them to come to him, and learn from him. (He also said to take up his yoke.)	Answer was just "come to him"; did not mention "learn from him" at first. When prompted: anything else? Then answer was "listen to his teachings."
What had Jesus offered to give to anyone who came to him? [11:28]	He offered to give them rest.	Answered exactly correct.
What do you think Jesus meant when he said that he would give rest to those who came to him?	Jesus gives them spiritual rest. That means he causes them to have peace in their bodies, minds and spirits.	Answered that it was spiritual rest, because we will know that we have eternal life. Also mentioned the rest of a peaceful mind.
What do you think Jesus meant when he said "take my yoke upon you"?	It means they should become his disciple by obeying his teachings.	Not sure how to answer because didn't know what the word in text used for "yoke" meant. But did say it seemed like it meant to come and follow him and obey what he said.

Question	Correct Answer	Comments
What did Jesus say about his nature? [11:29]	He said that he is gentle and humble.	Answered correctly
What do you think Jesus meant when he described himself as “gentle and humble”?	Any answer that demonstrates an understanding of Jesus’ kindness and caring nature is adequate.	Answered that he is caring and always wants to help.
What does Jesus want them to know about what God is like?	Jesus tells them about how God cares about his people and he wants them to trust him, and that God gives them his peace.	Answered that he wanted them to know that God wants the best for them, and loves them.
Follow-up (Use if there is a misunderstanding concerning a specific question.)		
<p>Example follow-up questions:</p> <p>How would you use this word/phrase “gentle and humble” in everyday language?</p> <p>Is there another word/phrase in your language that could be used to mean “to be gentle and humble”?</p>	<p>If possible, determine whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word or phrase was not translated accurately.</li> <li>• There is something else in the passage that is confusing the reader.</li> <li>• The translation is correct, but the reader does not understand the term or concept.</li> </ul>	This was well understood, so didn't ask this question.