

Wycliffe Associates

Bible Translation Reviewers' Guide

Divine Familial Terms

Son of God

How is the phrase “son of God” translated?

Sample verses to check: Matt. 4:3; Mark 15:39; Luke 1:35; John 20:31; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 7:3

- The phrase should be translated as “son of God.” It should use the common way of referring to a human son.
- The phrase should not be translated as “son who comes from God”, “spiritual son”, or qualified in any way.

Comments:

Shahada

Is the beginning of the Islamic profession of faith used (there is no God but Allah)?

Sample verses to check: 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5; Jam. 2:19; Deut. 4:35,39; 2 Sam. 7:22; 22:32; 1 Chr. 17:20; Ps. 18:3; Isa. 45:14

- Use different wording from the Shahada: e.g. “God is the only true God” or “There is only one true God.”

Comments:

Children/Sons of God

Does the translation avoid the use of the phrases “children of God” or “sons of God”?

Sample verses to check: John 1:12; Rom. 8:16; Phil. 2:15; Matt. 5:9; Luke 20:36; Gal. 3:26

- The familial terms for children and sons should be used.

Comments:

Honorifics

Does the translation use honorifics with the name of a person esteemed by Islam?

Sample verses to check: Matt. 1:1; Mk. 10:47; Lk. 18:38; 1 Ki. 1:43; Num. 27:15

- Avoid Islamic honorifics unless absolutely necessary for correct meaning. E.g. using the phrase “peace be upon him” or any of the traditional honorific titles given to Jesus in the Quran.

Comments:

Missing text

Are any passages of Scripture omitted?

Sample verses to check: Luke 15; Rom. 9; Gal. 4

- These chapters should not have any verses be complete with every verse accounted for.

Comments:

Son of man

Is the phrase “son of man” translated literally?

Sample verses to check: Matt. 12:8; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 22:48

- The word “son” in the phrase “son of man” should be translated literally and in the same way as the word “son” in the phrase “son of God.”

Comments:

Ps. 2:7

How is Psalm 2:7 translated when it is quoted?

Sample verses to check: Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5

- This verse should use Son in reference to Jesus, and express God’s statement of fatherhood in a direct way.

Comments:

Quranic wording

Is the phrase “God, the merciful, the compassionate” used?

Sample verses to check: Lk. 1:78; James 5:1; Ex. 34:6; Ps. 86:15; 103:8

- This phrase from the Quran should not be present.

Comments:

The personal name of God

Is the word Allah used to translate YHWH, the name of God?

Sample verses to check: Matt. 4:7; Rom 4:8; 9:29; 10:16; Ps 32:2; Isa. 10:22-23; 53:1

- One should use a transliteration of the Hebrew word YHWH if no name for God, other than Allah, is present in the language. Allah does not adequately reflect the meaning of YHWH, the true God of the Bible.
- The phrase “in the name of Allah” should not be used.

Comments:

Translating names

Is Jesus translated as Issa?

Sample verses to check: Matt. 1:1 Mk. 1:1

- If possible, names should consistently be transliterated. This includes the name Jesus.
- Consider whether Jesus should be translated as Jesu/Yesu or a similar equivalent, not using the Islamic name for Jesus.

Comments:

Lord

Is there consistency when translating the word “kurios(lord)” when referencing Jesus and God the Father?

Sample verses to check: Compare: Matt. 11:25 and Phil. 2:11; Compare: Matt. 1:20 and 7:20

- The translation of kurios(lord) should not undermine the equality of Jesus with the Father. There should be no distinction in the way this term is translated when the only difference is whether the referent is God the Father or Jesus.

Comments: