'worshiping other gods' " (Osborn and Hatton, page 809). The Leviticus *Handbook* makes the same type of comment on "play the harlot" in Leviticus 17.7, where it states, "In many languages it will probably be better to drop the image and translate the meaning directly – something like 'be unfaithful' or 'deny your love' " (Péter-Contesse and Ellington, page 265). However, translators would be better advised to retain the strong negative sexual imagery of *na'af* and *zanah*, if at all possible. Using direct language should be a last resort. This sexual imagery is needed for its emotive impact and possible reference to real unlawful sex. Its widespread use in connection with the marriage metaphor for the relationship between God and his people also argues for its inclusion. If the imagery sounds a bit strange, often a footnote will help to bridge the cultural gap. The gap should not really be very great since promiscuous relationships are common to all cultures.

FOCUS ON TRANSLATORS

[The following notes have been supplied by Jan Sterk, a UBS Consultant based in Nairobi. What he describes here is an example of what can be done in a particular language following the information and advice referred to in the recent article by John Ellington, "A Calendar Table" (Practical Papers for The Bible Translator, *April 2000, pages 208–213). – Editor]*

Months and seasons

In the new Nuer Bible, recently launched in Mading, Southern Sudan, and in the Sudanese capital Khartoum, there is, towards the end, a reader's help of a type not generally found in other Bibles. It is a table that compares the biblical months and seasons with those of the traditional Nuer culture. I reproduce the table below, after translating most terms into English. Those terms that appear in English in the Nuer table are printed in italics. As for the Nuer words: my apologies to the speakers and writers of this language, because I have adapted the orthography, taking away the special characters. This does not affect the general impression of the model, it was only done to make printing easier.

To use a table like this in another language, it would have to be adapted, of course, to the local climatic conditions in the area where the language is spoken. It will give readers a clear idea, for example, as to what the terms "summer" (Proverbs 6.8, for instance; altogether 26 times) and "winter" (Song of Songs 2.11, for instance; altogether 18 times) stand for in the Bible. Or it will explain what "the first month" (Numbers 9.1, for instance) or "the fifth month" (Jeremiah 1.3, for instance) means – not the same as our January and May!

The slight overlap of solar months as compared to biblical months (the first month in the Bible corresponds to the solar months March/April) is not represented in the table.

Months and Seasons: those of the Bible compared with those in Sudan

Months			Seasons in the Bible			Seasons in Sudan		
English	Old Testament	Nuer	Rain	Heat	Name	Rain	Heat	Name
3. March	1st : Nisan (Abib)	Duong	some	some	*SPRING*	no	yes	ruel
4. April	2nd: Iyyar (Zif)	Guak	some	some		some	yes	
5. May	3rd: Sivan	Duat	no	yes	*SUMMER (harvest)*	some	yes	
6. June	4th: Tammuz	Kornyoot	no	yes		yes	no	tot (nger)
7. July	5th: Ab	Pay Yietni	no	yes		yes	no	
8. August	6th: Elul	Thoor	no	yes		yes	yes	
9. September	7th: Tishri (Ethanim)	Teer	no	yes		yes	yes	
10. October	8th: Marheshvan (Bul)	Laathbuoor	some	some		some	yes	jiom
11. November	9th: Chislev	Kur	yes	no	*WINTER*	no	some	
12. December	10th: Tebet	Tiop in Diit	yes	no		no	no	
1. January	11th: Shebat	Tiop thar Pet	yes	no		no	no	may
2. February	12th: Adar	Pet	yes	no		no	yes	

As for translation, whether it is advisable, for example in Numbers 9.1, to put "first month", "month of Nisan", or (for Nuer) *Duong*, is left to the translators and their consultant to decide. Putting *Duong* would be the equivalent of putting "March" in an English translation (or March/April) and this might convey the wrong cultural message. In some cases, the solution sometimes adopted by GNB of putting both the Hebrew number (first month) and the Babylonian name (Nisan) can be followed; see, for example, Esther 3.7. But that will still leave readers in the dark about what time of the year we are talking about, or what the weather conditions would have been at that time. In such cases, only footnotes can shed some light. This would apply equally well to a text like John 10.23, where we read that it was winter, and that Jesus was walking (up and down to keep warm, perhaps?) in Solomon's Porch in the Temple. This, the GNB study Bible says, was a sheltered colonnade on the east side of the temple, where, presumably, Jesus would have been out of the cold wind blowing from the West.

Like all helps that are provided with a Bible, it is up to the reader to profit from them – if he or she is interested to learn more. Persons who are not interested will not be bothered by the extra notes or appendices that come with their Bible. However, those who are keen on learning more, when they are preparing sermons, for example, or simply when trying to understand what they read, will be happy to find information readily available, information which they may not be able to find easily anywhere else.

NOTES

Translating the vision of Amos 7.7-8

In the third vision in Amos 7, verses 7-8, the prophet sees the Lord standing on or by a wall with something in his hand which he identifies as *'anak*. Traditionally this item has been translated as "plumb-line", or as "plummet" (or "plumb-bob" which means the same). In either case the reference is to a weight on the end of a line, with which a builder checks to see whether or not the wall he is building is perpendicular.

The Hebrew word *'anak* occurs four times in these two verses in the Bible, but it is found nowhere else. The Hebrew lexicons most commonly used by Bible translators give the meaning as "plummet", and suggest the word in related languages refers to both "lead" and "tin". Most commentators assume that the weight of the plumb-line is made of lead, and that the meaning "plummet" is derived from a metaphor in which a thing is called by the name of the material from which it is made.

Certain scholars, however, have studied words in related languages, and they state that *'anak* is derived from an Akkadian or Assyrian word *anaku*. They also believe they have proved conclusively that this word referred exclusively to "tin" and not to "lead". They conclude therefore that the word cannot refer to a plumb-line, and consequently that the