

and the books of Peter and Jude in the New Testament has been less than successful.

Genesis 6.1-4, therefore, is best understood as presenting a picture of ambitious, despotic, and autocratic rulers seizing both power and women in an attempt to take everything from those within their reach. Not surprisingly, their abuse of power and of their subjects has adversely affected both the societies they ruled and their own lifestyle. From the point of view of the author of this passage the consequences of their lifestyle was one of the reasons that led to the flood of Noah's time.

In this interpretation, the second verse in Genesis 6 could be alternatively translated as:

"The despotic rulers saw that the women of common people were beautiful, and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose."

FOCUS ON TRANSLATORS

[In the following notes Dr Daud Soesilo examines how the Revised Malay Bible Alkitab Berita Baik (Bible Society of Malaysia, 1996) handles one of the most important terms in the New Testament, namely "the Kingdom of God".
- Editor]

Translating "the Kingdom of God" in the Malay Bible

"The Kingdom of God" is the common literal translation of the Greek *he basileia tou theou* that is found in New Testament texts, especially Mark, Luke, and Acts. In keeping with the Jewish-Christian character of Matthew, we find in this gospel the variant "the Kingdom of Heaven," or literally, "the Kingdom of the Heavens" (Greek *he basileia ton ouranon*). Since the Divine Name YHWH was uttered only once a year by the chief priest in the Holy of Holies, except for this very special usage it was a kind of "taboo" term. So "the Heavens" was used as a reverent round-about expression to avoid uttering or writing the Divine Name. Thus, "the Kingdom of (the) Heaven(s)" in Matthew is equivalent to "the Kingdom of God" in the other gospels.

Although the actual phrase "Kingdom of God" does not appear in the Old Testament, except for one occurrence in the form of "Kingdom of the LORD" in one of the latest books (1 Chr 28.5), it is deeply rooted in the thought of the Old Testament. The word "kingdom," however, is sometimes used in relation to God; for example, "your kingdom" (Psa 45.6; 145.11, 13), and "his kingdom" (Psa 103.19; 14.12). "My kingdom" appears on the lips of "the LORD of hosts" (1 Chr 17.14). "The kingdom" is described as "the LORD's" (Obadiah 21; Psa 22.28), and "Yours is the kingdom, O LORD" (1 Chr 29.11). In the Aramaic portion of the book of Daniel we find "his kingdom" (Dan 4.3, 34; 7.27), and "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom" (Dan 2.44).

In the New Testament "the Kingdom of God/Heaven" is the central

theme of the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Although the use of "Kingdom of Heaven" is confined to Matthew, we also find "the Kingdom of God" in this gospel (Matt 12.28; 19.24; 21.31, 43). It is possible that Jesus sometimes spoke of the "Kingdom of Heaven," but the evidence suggests that his normal expression was "Kingdom of God".

"The Kingdom of God" occurs only twice in the Gospel of John, (John 3.3, 5), along with the words "my Kingdom is not from this world" once (John 18.36). In Acts "Kingdom of God" appears six times (1.3; 8.12; 14.22; 19.8; 28.23, 31) and "the Kingdom" twice (1.6; 20.25). In the letters of Paul "Kingdom of God" is found in a number of places (Rom 14.17; 1 Cor 4.20; 6.9-10; 15.50; Gal 5.21; Col 4.11; 2 Thess 1.5). In 1 Corinthians 15.24 he speaks of Christ delivering "the Kingdom to God the Father," and Ephesians 5.5 has the phrase "the Kingdom of Christ and of God." "His own kingdom" (that is, God's) occurs in 1 Thessalonians 2.12, and "the Kingdom of his beloved Son" in Colossians 1.13. In the Pastoral letters "his Kingdom" is used twice with reference to Christ (2 Tim 4.1, 18). In Hebrews "your Kingdom" occurs in connection with "the Son" in 1.8, and "a kingdom" is found in 12.28. In the other letters "the Kingdom" appears in reference to God in James 2.5, and 2 Peter 1.11 refers to "the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." In Revelation we have references to the "persecution and the Kingdom and the patient endurance" (Rev 1.9), "the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah" (Rev 11.15), and "the Kingdom of our God" (Rev 12.10).

In the New Testament "the Kingdom of God/Heaven" does not refer primarily to a region, or place, or to a political or national territory. The meaning of "kingdom" is fundamentally that of "sovereignty" or "rule." Since the primary idea is that of kingship, kingly rule, or sovereignty of God, rather than of the sphere or realm in which his rule operates, the sense of this term should be expressed in translation as "kingly rule," "reign," or "sovereignty," rather than by the literal "kingdom."

Translating "Kingdom of God"

The most common literal translation of the term "Kingdom of God" in Malay is *Kerajaan Allah*. And *Kerajaan Syurga* is used for its variant "Kingdom of Heaven." However, careful linguistic analysis of the meaning and usage of the term *kerajaan* "kingdom" shows that when it is unmarked it carries the following components:

- a) a territory
- b) in which a king rules
- c) his people.

Thus the expressions *Kerajaan Allah* and *Kerajaan Syurga* have primarily a territorial sense, rather than expressing the idea of "kingly rule." This means, then, that we should consider replacing the literal renderings *Kerajaan Allah/Syurga* with expressions that are better able to give the New Testament meaning of *he basileia tou theou*, as expressed in the following components:

- a) God's kingly rule, including his activity in bringing about his rule in this world
- b) the people God rules over, in particular those who accept his rule in their lives,
- c) the situation in which God rules completely, which is the consummation of God's activity of bringing about God's rule. This is the situation which the German Common Language Bible *Die Gute Nachricht* translates as "God's New World."

From one point of view, however, this use of the expression is the one that relates most closely to the "territory" sense mentioned above.

The Malay translation team has tried to render the expression *he basileia tou theou* faithfully and meaningfully according to the main focus in each context in which it occurs. However, to help readers who are looking for the formal features of the term, we have added footnotes that give a literal rendering. In the next section is a list of the renderings finally decided on for the Malay Bible (the English formal translations are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version*):

God's kingly rule

Matthew 6.33 But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

utamakanlah Pemerintahan Allah, dan lakukanlah kehendak-Nya; lalu Allah akan memberikan semua itu kepada kamu:

["put God's rule first and do what he requires, and God will provide you all these things."]

Mark 4.26 The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground.

Apabila Allah memerintah keadaannya dapat diumpamakan seperti seorang yang menabur benih di ladangnya:

["When God rules the condition is like a person who scatter seed in his field."]

Luke 4.43 I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also.

Berita Baik tentang bagaimana Allah memerintah harus Aku khabarkan juga di kota-kota lain:

["I must also proclaim the Good News about how God rules to other towns."]

Acts 1.3 ... he presented himself alive ... and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Yesus menunjukkan diri ... bahawa Dia benar-benar hidup ... dan Dia berkata-kata dengan mereka tentang Pemerintahan Allah:

["Jesus presented himself ... that he was truly alive ... and he talked with them about God's rule."]

Matthew 12.28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

Roh Allah memberi Aku kuasa untuk mengusir roh jahat. Hal ini membuktikan bahawa Allah sudah mula memerintah di kalangan kamu:
 ["The Spirit of God has given me power to drive out demons. It proves that God has begun to rule among you."]

John 18.36 My kingdom is not from this world.

Pemerintahan-Ku bukan dari dunia ini:
 ["My rule is not from this world."]

Matthew 25.1 Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this.

Pada masa itu Pemerintahan Allah seperti perumpamaan berikut:
 ["At that time God's rule is like the following parable."]

Matthew 9.35 Jesus ... teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom.

Dia mengajar di rumah ibadat dan mengkhabarkan Berita Baik bahawa Allah akan memerintah:
 ["He taught in the synagogues and preached the Good News that God would rule."]

Matthew 3.2 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.

Bertaubatalah daripada dosa kamu ... kerana tidak lama lagi Allah akan memerintah!
 ["Turn away from your sins ... shortly God will rule."]

Luke 19.11 He was near Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

Pada waktu itu Dia hampir tiba di Yerusalem dan orang ramai menyangka bahawa Allah segera akan memerintah:
 ["At that time he was near Jerusalem and many of them thought that God would soon rule."]

Luke 22.18 I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

Ketahuilah, mulai sekarang Aku tidak akan minum wain ini lagi sehingga Allah memerintah dengan sepenuhnya:
 ["I tell you that from now on I will not drink this wine till God would fully rule."]

Colossians 1.13 He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.

Allah sudah menyelamatkan kita daripada kuasa kegelapan, dan memindahkan kita ke bawah pemerintahan Anak-Nya yang dikasihi-Nya:
 ["God has rescued us from the power of darkness, and brought us under the rule of his dear Son."]

Accepting God's rule

Matthew 5.3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Berbahagiaalah orang yang sedar bahawa mereka memerlukan Allah, merekalah yang menikmati Pemerintahan Allah:

[“Happy are those who realise that they need God, they are the ones who enjoy God’s rule.”]

John 3.3 ... no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again. *tidak seorang pun dapat menikmati Pemerintahan Allah kecuali dia dilahirkan semula:*

[“no one can enjoy God’s rule unless that person is born again.”]

Luke 18.24 How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!

Alangkah susahnyanya bagi seorang kaya menikmati Pemerintahan Allah!

[“How hard it is for a rich man to enjoy God’s rule.”]

Matthew 19.12 ... who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

ada pula yang tidak berkahwin supaya dapat mengabdikan diri kepada Allah:

[“others do not get married in order to serve God.”]

Luke 18.29 there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God.

sesiapa yang meninggalkan rumah, atau isteri, atau saudara, atau ibu bapa, atau anak-anak kerana mengabdikan diri kepada Allah:

[“anyone who leaves home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of serving God.”]

Colossians 4.11 among my co-workers for the kingdom of God.

yang bekerja bersama-sama aku untuk mewujudkan Pemerintahan Allah:

[“those who have worked with me to make God’s rule a reality.”]

Ephesians 5.5 no fornicator ... has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

orang yang melakukan perbuatan cabul ... tidak akan menikmati Pemerintahan Kristus dan Allah:

[“the one who is immoral ... will not enjoy the rule of Christ and of God.”]

The consummation of God’s rule

Mark 9.47 It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye.

Lebih baik kamu menikmati Dunia Baru Allah dengan hanya sebelah mata:

[“It’s better to enjoy God’s New World only with one eye.”]

Matthew 8.11 Many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Banyak orang akan datang dari timur dan dari barat, lalu menikmati perjamuan di Dunia Baru Allah:

[“Many will come from east and west and will enjoy the feast in God’s New World.”]

Luke 13.28 and all the prophets in the kingdom of God.

semua nabi bersukacita di Dunia Baru Allah:

["all prophets will rejoice in God's New World."]

1 Corinthians 15.50 Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Tubuh yang dijadikan daripada daging dan darah, tidak dapat masuk ke Dunia Baru Allah:

["Our bodies made of flesh and blood cannot enter God's New World."]

1 Thessalonians 2.12 God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Dialah yang memanggil kamu untuk menikmati Dunia Baru Allah:

["He has called you to enjoy God's New World."]

1 Corinthians 15.24 Christ's delivering the Kingdom to God the Father.

Kristus akan menyerahkan kekuasaan-Nya sebagai raja kepada Allah, Bapa kita:

["Christ will surrender his power as king to God, our Father."]

2 Peter 1.11 into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

untuk menikmati Pemerintahan kekal daripada Tuhan dan Penyelamat kita Yesus Kristus:

["to enjoy the eternal rule of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."]

Revelation 1.9 the persecution and the Kingdom and the patient endurance.

Kita menantikan Pemerintahan-Nya dan harus menanggung penderitaan dengan tabah hati:

["We wait for his rule and have to suffer with courage."]

Revelation 11.15 the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah.

Tuhan kita dan Penyelamat yang diutus-Nya mempunyai kuasa untuk memerintah dunia:

["Our Lord and Savior whom he has sent has the power to rule the world."]

Revelation 12.10 Now have come ... the Kingdom of our God.

Sekaranglah masanya Allah ... menunjukkan kuasa-Nya sebagai Raja:

["Now God has shown his power as king."]

Conclusion

To produce a faithful and readable Bible translation in a language such as Malay requires adequate interpretation that involves the total cultural background of both the source texts and the language of the readers. And that's what the Malay translation team has tried to do. They have analysed the original meaning and function of "Kingdom of God/Heaven" and have rendered these terms using the most natural and readable equivalents in Malay according to the focus in each context; that is, they have tried to focus on God's kingly rule, or on the people's acceptance of God's rule, or on God's New World.