

translation of "temple" in these books.

1. If it is possible, translators should use as the general term or expression an equivalent which suggests a place or site rather than a building. Some extra component could then be added, or a different term be used, for those few passages where the reference is actually to the temple building. (This suggestion would also provide another element of clear distinction between "temple" and "synagogue".)
2. If, because of established usage, it is necessary to continue using a basic term or expression which refers primarily to a building, this term or expression should be modified so that it covers the temple site as a whole, for all those passages where the focus is clearly not on the temple building alone.
3. It is possibly not necessary, in most passages, to name or describe the particular part of the temple site which is in focus. This should only be done where it is required to make the meaning of a passage clear, for instance Acts 21.26-30. (It is good for the translator, however, to have a clear picture of the particular part of the temple site which is being referred to, since this will help him to present the right perspective in his translation of the passage as a whole.)
4. Translators should seriously consider providing a plan of the temple site as a help for readers, with translations of the gospels and Acts. Also, if notes or footnotes are being included, these could refer to the plan as required; and they could also give more information than the text about the particular part of the temple site which is in focus in a given passage, where this would be helpful.

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(Information about the Temple, such as I have given in this article, can be found in most Bible dictionaries and Bible handbooks.)

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WHERE IS THE OTHER SIDE?

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The Greek adverb of place meaning "the shore or land on the other side" is found twenty-three times in the New Testament. It always refers to the other side of a body of water such as a lake, a river or a stream. In all but one of the cases, the body of water is either the Jordan River (eight times) or Lake Galilee (fourteen times). The only other occurrence of this adverb is used of the gully to the east of Jerusalem where the stream called Kidron flowed during the rainy season.

The related verb *diaperao* meaning "to cross over to other side" is also used in Mt 9.1 and 14.34, Mk 5.21 and 6.53 as well as Luke 16.26. In English and many other languages it is necessary to translate this by a

verb plus an adverbial expression. So it will also be treated here. And in Lk 8.26 the related adverb *antiperan* is used with essentially the same meaning, "the opposite side".

When adverbs of place are used in a written text, there are at least two possible perspectives. They may be seen from the point of view of the writer or from that of the participant(s). In some languages the translator must be careful that such references are not understood from the vantage point of the reader. While this is a theoretically possible perspective in some texts, the biblical writers could not possibly have imagined the points of view of all the Bible's modern readers.

When the perspective is that of the biblical characters and not of the writer, the references frequently imply the movement of the participants from one side of the body of water to the other. In most cases it is quite clear where the participants involved in the story are located, so that there is no question about where the "opposite side" would be. But there are some cases where this is not so clear. The purpose of this article is to examine all the cases where this particular adverb and the related verb occur in the New Testament and to clarify for the translator the meaning of each of these texts. Since a number of these references are found in parallel passages, they will be dealt with together. Those instances in the Gospel of John will be dealt with separately and then the more difficult passages will be considered at the end of the article. Finally, a summary chart of all these passages will be given as a kind of conclusion.

Synoptic passages

Mt 4.25 = Mk 3.8

In Mk 3.8 the phrase "beyond the Jordan" is a part of a description of the various areas from which people came to Jesus. The meaning of these words is clearly translated by GNB "from the territory on the east side of the Jordan". The passage in Mt 4.25 is very similar to this but for some reason is not translated in the same way by GNB. However, neither of these passages should present any particular difficulty for other translators.

Mt 8, 9 = Mk 4, 5 = Lk 8

In Mt 8 Jesus and his disciples had been in the village of Capernaum which is located on the north-west of Lake Galilee. The disciples then crossed to the east side (Mt 8.18). The other two synoptic gospels (Mk 4.35 and Lk 8.22) likewise indicate the beginning of a trip to the east side of Lake Galilee. After they arrive, Jesus joins the disciples on the east side in the territory of Gadara (Mt 8.28) which is mentioned in Mark (5.1) and Luke (8.26) with reference to a town called Gerasa rather than Gadara. The names of these two towns seem to be used interchangeably. In Mk 5.21 where both the verb ("to cross over") and the adverb ("the other side") are used, the crossing is from east to west since Jesus had been in the area of the Ten Towns (Mk 5.20) located to the east of Lake

Galilee. This corresponds to Mt 9.1 where the verb "cross over" is used and to Lk 8.40 where "the other side" is only implied by the use of the verb "return".

Mt 14.22 = Mk 6.45

***Mt 14.34 = *Mk 6.53**

Later in Matthew's account Jesus goes to an unidentified "lonely place" (Mt 14.13). From that point he made his disciples start out for "the other side" of the lake (14.22) and eventually met them as he was walking on the water. Mark (6.45) adds an important detail to his account indicating that the name of the town toward which the disciples were heading was Bethsaida. This clearly shows that the movement is to the east. At the beginning of the next section both Matthew (14.34) and Mark (6.53), show Jesus and his disciples crossing back toward the west as indicated by the fact that they came to land at Gennesaret.

Mt 16.5 = Mk 8.13

While the adverbial phrase comes at the beginning of the paragraph about the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees in Matthew (16.5), it is actually at the very end of the preceding section in Mark (8.13). But the setting is the same. The disciples again cross over—this time from the territory of Magadan on the west side of the lake (see Mt 15.39)—and move toward the east. Magadan is also known as Dalmanutha (Mk 8.10) and Taricheae.

References in the Gospel of John

At the end of the passage dealing with John the Baptist (Jn 1.28), there is a summary statement giving the location of the events just described. This verse, however, is complicated by the reference to a village called Bethany. This is not the same Bethany referred to elsewhere in the Gospel because that village was located only a very short distance from Jerusalem (see Jn 11.18) and was the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha (Jn 12.1) as well as Simon, who had suffered from a dreaded skin disease (Mt 26.6). This Bethany was on the east side of the Jordan River and in the same general area as the one where John originally started baptizing people. The fact that the east side of the river is intended should be made clear in translation in order to avoid confusion on the part of the reader who may be familiar only with the better known Bethany near Jerusalem.

In Jn 3.26 mention of the location of John's baptismal activities is repeated. So the reference is again to the east side of the Jordan. And this is the same meaning as contained in Jn 10.40 where Jesus is said to have crossed back over to the east side of the river to "the place where John at first baptized".

The sixth chapter of John contains four different references to "the other side" (verses 1, 17, 22, and 25). In each case the body of water

implied or stated is Lake Galilee. The first reference (verse 1) is almost certainly from west to east. Verse 17 shows movement from east to west ("to Capernaum"). The "opposite side" of the lake in verse 22 is the east side. And the phrase "to Capernaum" in verse 24 indicates that the "other side" in the following verse is the west side. The geographical reference in verse 25 is left out altogether by the Living Bible presumably because the previous verse makes the meaning clear.

The only place where "the other side" does not refer to the Jordan River or Lake Galilee is found in Jn 18.1. Here the water mentioned is actually a ravine known as Kidron. It is located on the east side of the city of Jerusalem and contained water only during the rainy season. Since Jesus was coming out of the city, when he crossed this gully he was going from west to east.

The more difficult passages

Mt 19.1 and Mk 10.1

The words "to the territory of Judea, on the other side of the Jordan" are virtually identical in Mt 19.1 and Mk 10.1 with the significant exception that the word "and" is included in Mark's account. Some manuscripts of Mark actually omit the conjunction. And a few manuscripts have "into the region of Judea **through** the other side of the Jordan". This reading was followed by KJV, but it is very probable that this was an intentional scribal alteration. The reading with "and" is most likely to be the original one. If this reading of Mark is accepted, the meaning of the text would seem to be quite different from that of Matthew. So we should take special care in translating these verses.

Some commentators have tried to account for the apparent difference between the two evangelists by suggesting that Matthew lived on the eastern side of the Jordan River and that when he referred to "the other side" he meant the western side. However, this theory has never been proven or even widely accepted.

At first sight, Mk 10.1 would seem to indicate that Jesus went south from Capernaum, over the mountains of Samaria into Judea and then east across the Jordan into the region known as Perea. It is so translated by most modern versions. However, Vincent Taylor sees the possibility that the reading with **and** could show Mark's "intention to describe a journey through Perea to Judea". If this is the case, it would seem that both Gospel writers were attempting to show that Jesus and his disciples "went beyond the Jordan to Judea" and not "went to Judea beyond the Jordan". This is almost certainly the meaning of Mt 19.1. David Hill, for example, states in his commentary on the passage in Matthew that "Jesus leaves Galilee to go to Perea on his way to Jerusalem; this common route from Galilee avoided Samaria" (*The Gospel of Matthew: New Century Bible*, page 278).

Similarly R. C. Lenski suggests that the phrase introduced by "the

other side” does not modify “Judea” but rather the verb “to come” and indicates “that Jesus took the road ‘beyond the Jordan’ in order to reach the boundaries of Judea instead of following the road through Samaria. At no time did the borders of Judea extend eastward beyond the Jordan; our versions read as though they did and should be corrected. Matthew writes for former Jews who knew the geography of their land and also knew that the Jews of Galilee preferred the road ‘beyond the Jordan’ when going to Judea and Jerusalem because it avoided Samaria with its hostile population which was especially hostile to Jews who were going to the festivals of Jerusalem” (*The Interpretation of Matthew*, page 276).

Mt 4.15

Perhaps the most difficult of all those passages containing a reference to “the other side” is found in Mt 4.15. It is unique in that it is the only case where the word in question is contained in a quotation from the Old Testament. The words of Mt 4.15-16 come from the first two verses of Isaiah 9 and are taken as the fulfillment of a Messianic prophecy. The NT rendering is a rather free adaptation of the OT text and follows neither the standard Hebrew text nor the commonly accepted Greek translation of that text.

There were at least eight different instances in the Old Testament where the word that is usually translated and understood as referring to the east side of the Jordan must be understood as “west of the Jordan” (Dt 3.20, 25; 11.30; Num 32.19; Jos 5.1; 9.1; 12.7; 1 Chron 26.30). This provides at least some precedent for such a rendering of an OT quote in the NT.

The OT passage in Isaiah should in fact be understood in the context of the Assyrian invasion of the Kingdom of Israel. For this reason, some commentators have suggested that “the expressions **by the way of the sea** (that is, towards the Mediterranean) and **beyond Jordan** (that is, west of Jordan) depict the district from the point of view of the Assyrian invaders” (R.V.G. Tasker, *Matthew*, page 56).

Some translations seem to give the impression that Mt 4.15 speaks of two or more different geographical areas. However, the intention of Isaiah and of Matthew was probably to describe a single region using several different names or descriptions:

“The land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali,
on the way of the sea,
across the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles”.

When the land was apportioned to the twelve tribes of Israel (see Jos 19), two of the northernmost groups near the lake were the descendants of Zebulun and Naphtali. Over time the northern part of the Kingdom of Israel became known by these two names, but it really referred to a single geographical area to the north and west of Lake Galilee. In that same area the primary road between Egypt and Damascus was called

“the way of the sea”. Further, the words “Galilee of the nations” or “Galilee of the Gentiles” also referred to the northern part of Galilee which was heavily populated by non-Jews. It seems logical then—in spite of the fact that nowhere else in the NT does “the other side” indicate the **west side** of the Jordan—that in this verse it has a different meaning from all other NT references.

TABLE

Biblical Reference	Body of Water	Location or Movement		Geographical Reference
		From:	To:	
Mt 4.15	Jordan		(west?)	OT quote Is 9.1-2
Mt 4.25	Jordan		(east)	
Mt 8.18	Galilee	west	east	
Mt 8.28	Galilee	west	east	Gadara (verse 28)
*Mt 9.1	Galilee	east	west	“his own town” (= Capernaum)
Mt 14.22	Galilee	west	east	
*Mt 14.34	Galilee	east	west	Gennesaret
Mt 16.5	Galilee	west	east	Magadan (15.39)
Mt 19.1	Jordan		via the east?	
Mk 3.8	Jordan	east	west	
Mk 4.35	Galilee	west	east	Gerasenes (5.1)
Mk 5.1	Galilee	west	east	Gerasenes
Mk 5.21	Galilee	east	west	Ten Towns (verse 20)
*Mk 5.21	Galilee	east	west	
*Mk 6.53	Galilee	east	west	Gennesaret
Mk 6.45	Galilee	west	east	Bethsaida
Mk 8.13	Galilee	west	east	Dalmanutha (verse 10)
Mk 10.1	Jordan		via the east?	
Lk 8.22	Galilee	west	east	Gerasenes (verse 26)
**Lk 8.26	Galilee	west	east	Gerasenes
Jn 1.28	Jordan	(east)		
Jn 3.26	Jordan	(east)		
Jn 6.1	Galilee	west	east	
Jn 6.17	Galilee	east	west	Capernaum
Jn 6.22	Galilee	(east)		
Jn 6.25	Galilee	east	west	Capernaum (verse 26)
Jn 10.40	Jordan	west	east	where John baptized
Jn 18.1	Kidron	west	east	a garden

(...) indicates a geographical reference with no movement implied.

** The related adverb *antiperan* which occurs only once.

* The related verb *diaperao* occurring five times in the Synoptic Gospels. One of these is Lk 16.26 where it is used figuratively of the gulf between the rich man and Lazarus.