

edition of this volume appeared in 1984 and should be a part of every NT translator's library.

3. **Translate the NT text as it stands.** This is the most important recommendation of all. The NT text must be allowed to speak for itself. For some translators there may be a temptation to harmonize the NT with its OT counterpart where such exists. But this temptation must be resisted. If the NT text says "Babylon" where the OT has "Damascus", we must translate what the NT author wrote. We have no right to change his text even though we may realize that what he wrote does not, in fact, come from the Hebrew original.

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## TRANSLATING *HAGIASMOS* "SANCTIFICATION" IN PAUL'S LETTERS

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The word *hagiasmos*, translated "sanctification" or "holiness" in some English translations, occurs ten times in the New Testament, eight of which are in the writings ascribed to Paul. The term is always used in relation with believers. (It occurs in Rom 6.19,22; 1 Cor 1.30; 1 Th 4.3,4,7; 2 Th 2.13 and 1 Tim 2.15. Outside Paul's writings it appears in Heb 12.14, where it is a Christian virtue, and in 1 Pet 1.2, where it denotes the setting apart of the believer.)

In order to translate this biblical term in a way that is meaningful to present-day readers, it may be necessary to use more than one word. In this article I will look at the way this was done in the Bahasa Indonesia Sehari-hari (BIS) translation, a functional equivalent translation of the Bible into modern Indonesian.

*Hagiasmos* is a term belonging to the *hagios* "holy" group of words. In the Septuagint (LXX), words from the *hagios* group are used to translate the Hebrew *kadosh* and words derived from this root. (O. Procksh in his article on *hagios* in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, page 95, remarks that the LXX translators "rightly employed the relatively little-used Greek *hagios* as a rendering of the Hebrew *kadosh*." Employing a word that was not in frequent use among the ancient Greeks, the LXX translators invested it with the same meaning as *kadosh*, thereby giving the word a deeper meaning than it originally had in its Greek culture.)

When used for things or people, *kadosh* expresses the idea of "belonging to God" or "dedicated to God". The word *hagios* is used to translate the Hebrew word in Ex 3.5, where the ground becomes holy, in Neh 11.1, where Jerusalem is holy; in 2 Chr 35.3, where the ark is holy. People are called holy because they belong to God or serve him, as for example, the firstborn of the Israelites (Ex 13.2) and the priests (Ex 28.41).

When applied to God, *hagios* refers to an essential part of God's character. He is entirely separated from all other beings, and pure from any evil. It is because of God's holiness that things and people related to him become holy (Num 16.5). Holiness is not imparted by cult or ritual, but derived from the personal God who is himself holy. It is not something that can be worked up, rather it is something that is conferred upon things and persons that belong to God. Therefore it refers to a status, not a process. Yet those upon whom this status has been conferred should express it in their conduct. It is in this respect that holiness acquires an ethical connotation.

As A.J. Wenham has pointed out in his commentary on Leviticus, there are two aspects to sanctification, a divine act and human actions. God sanctifies and man also sanctifies.

The people of Israel, as a people chosen and sanctified by God, were holy or were to be holy as God is holy. They had to sanctify themselves, that is to separate themselves from the evil and pollution surrounding them, and refrain from anything that would defile them. They did this by obeying the Law. Yet, they are reminded by the Law that it is God who sanctifies them (Lev 21.8). Thus the element of purity and purification became a part of the meaning of holiness, with the stress falling more on the moral element in the later OT books.

The word *hagiasmos* itself occurs nine times in the LXX. One occurrence is in Judges 17.3, where the pieces of silver are consecrated to the Lord. The word "consecration" may be a better translation than "sanctification" in English to translate *hagiasmos*, to convey the sense of belonging to God. Sanctification in English can either denote a process or a state, and in its theological use in some circles it refers to the concept of renewal and growth in the life of the Christian believer. Therefore translations such as RSV and NASB give rise to ambiguity when they render *hagiasmos* by "sanctification" in most instances. In this respect the original New Testament's rendering of *hagiasmos* by "consecration" is preferable.

Although the background of the NT usage of the *hagios* word group should be sought in the LXX translation of the OT, in the NT the emphasis has shifted from the cultic to the personal aspect of holiness. Paul uses *hagios* and the related terms frequently, and it is used in the same kind of contexts as in the other NT books and the LXX. So, the Scriptures are holy (1 Cor 3.17), the people of God are holy (Col 1.2)

and the children of a believing parent are holy (1 Cor 7.14). The basic meaning that can be discerned is "to set apart unto God", and "separated from evil". This seems to be the most frequent meaning of the term. *Hagiasmos* itself denotes the act of God effected in the lives of believers by which they are brought into a state of consecration to God. Believers have been conferred the status of holiness, which is essential for having a right relationship and fellowship with God. The state of holiness is expressed in holy living as a sign of obedience to God. Therefore Paul exhorts his readers to conduct themselves as those who are sanctified. They have been sanctified, but they still have to live this status out. Therefore, in some contexts *hagiasmos* refers to the conduct of the believer who is in the service of God. One should please God in all one does, and refrain from evil.

To translate *hagiasmos* into Indonesian by a term that carries the same components of meaning and has the same ethical connotation is quite difficult, especially if the aim is to translate meaningfully for the modern lay reader.

The Indonesian language has several words to denote the holy:

*Keramat*, mainly used for objects, though occasionally applied to people.

Things or people that are *keramat* "sacred" are believed to be endowed with miraculous powers. The word does not convey the idea of belonging to God.

*Kudus*, a loan word from the Arabic, mainly used in religious language.

It means holy and pure. If it has the same basic meaning as the related Hebrew word *kadosh*, then it is only known to a select few.

*Suci*, in many contexts a synonym of *kudus*, though it has a much wider usage. People and things are called *suci* if they are considered untainted by sin or evil. In everyday usage, the word does not convey the meaning of belonging to God.

The Indonesian New Translation, a literal translation first published in 1974, translates the term *hagiasmos* by *kudus* and words derived from it: *pengudusan* "sanctification", *menguduskan* "to sanctify" or just *kudus* "holy". *Pengudusan*, a religious term, implies a process of progressively becoming more holy. The old Indonesian (Malay) NT translation, first published in 1939, uses the word *kesucian* to translate *hagiasmos*. The term denotes a state of holiness, with the stress on moral purity. It does not adequately bring out the meaning of belonging to God.

The Indonesian CL translation (BIS), published in 1984, does not use any of the above terms to translate *hagiasmos* in Paul's writings. None of the above terms was considered to convey adequately to the intended audience the meaning of the Greek term. Instead of using one specific term, *hagiasmos* has been translated by more than one word in the BIS,

so that present-day readers will understand it in much the same way as the original readers did.

In Romans, *hagiasmos* occurs twice in chapter 6, in verses 19 and 22. It is used in relation to believers who are called to be saints (1.7), who are under grace (6.15), who have been set free from sin to become slaves of righteousness (6.18). Therefore here *hagiasmos* not only refers to God's act of consecration, but also to the believer's moral activity arising out of this state. It is this aspect that the BIS translators have stressed in verse 19: "... so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification" has been translated *untuk maksud-maksud Allah yang khusus* "for God's specific purposes". So also in verse 22: "... the return you get is sanctification" has been translated *hidup khusus untuk Allah* "living for God alone".

In 1 Cor 1.30: "... in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption", *hagiasmos* is put in a parallel position to wisdom, righteousness and redemption, and is rooted in Christ. In view of the parallel concepts, it is clear a result is indicated here. The believers are holy because they are "in Christ" who is intrinsically holy. *Hagiasmos* here has been rendered by BIS as: *umatnya yang khusus* "his own people".

In 1 Th 4.3-7, *hagiasmos* involves abstaining from unchastity (verse 3) and is contrasted with uncleanness (verse 7), while in verse 4 it is used as a parallel with "honour" to modify the verb. *Hagiasmos* is here rooted in the will of God, and calls for moral conduct. BIS translates *hagiasmos* in verse 3 as *hidup khusus untuk dia* "live for him alone", and in verses 4 and 5 *menyenangkan hati Allah* (literally "pleasing God's heart").

The expression in 2 Th 2.13 "sanctification by the spirit" (*en hagiasmo pneumatos*), is generally understood as sanctification or consecration effected by the Holy Spirit. This consecration was effected at the moment of conversion. BIS translates this as *umat Allah yang suci* "God's holy people".

The noun also appears in the Pastorals once (1 Tim 2.15), where, in view of the context, it clearly denotes ethical behaviour. BIS translates *hidup khusus untuk Allah* "living for God alone", but perhaps it would be better here to translate it with *hidup tanpa cela* "lead a blameless life", which would suit the context better.

In conclusion then, to translate *hagiasmos* in a way that is meaningful to the average modern reader, it may often be necessary to render it by a phrase which brings out the primary meaning of the term. If it refers to the act of consecration, this phrase should include the notion of belonging to God, and if it refers to the conduct of the believer, the phrase should stress the idea of pleasing God and refraining from evil.