

## The Difficulty of Translation

The difficulty of translation is well illustrated in v.20 "the children of your bereavement will yet say in your ears, This place is too narrow for me, make room for me to dwell in." The word here translated "bereavement" occurs only once in the OT. However, there are related words which occur a considerable number of times (check whether these words always refer to loss of children; whether they can sometimes be used for loss of a spouse or of a parent, or whether they can be used in a still wider sense.)

The phrase "children of bereavement" would seem quite clear: they are the children who are connected with one's having lost children. The Hebrew phrase, however, does not state how they are connected. Are they the <sup>new</sup> children that replace those of whom one was bereaved. Job lost his children, God replaced them with others. Or are they children who actually died, from whom they have been bereaved. Or are they children who are born -- who come during the period of their suffering the loss of others? Are they children who come possibly far later to replace those who were lost? Three versions before me take the three different views. The NASB says "the children of whom you were bereaved." One immediately wonders how these children of whom they were bereaved are yet going to say something to them, and particularly going to ask for room in which to live. If this interpretation is to be taken, the picture must look forward to a time of resurrection, and not be a picture of events on this world. It is a bit hard to reconcile this with the statement in v.21, "then you will say in your heart, Who has begotten these for me since I have been bereaved of my children?" The second interpretation is that of the RSV, "the children born in the time of your bereavement." This would suggest that while they were suffering greatly, feeling the loss over the children, immediately others were born who said to them, This