



Genesis

translationNotes

v6

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Table of Contents

Copyrights & Licensing	1
translationNotes	30
Introduction to Genesis	30
Genesis 1 General Notes	52
Genesis 1:1-2	53
Genesis 1:3-5	54
Genesis 1:6-8	55
Genesis 1:9-10	57
Genesis 1:11-13	59
Genesis 1:14-15	61
Genesis 1:16-19	63
Genesis 1:20-21	65
Genesis 1:22-23	67
Genesis 1:24-25	68
Genesis 1:26-27	70
Genesis 1:28-29	72
Genesis 1:30-31	73
Genesis 2 General Notes	75
Genesis 2:1-3	77
Genesis 2:4-6	79
Genesis 2:7-8	81
Genesis 2:9-10	82
Genesis 2:11-12	84
Genesis 2:13-14	85
Genesis 2:15-17	86
Genesis 2:18-20	88
Genesis 2:21-23	89
Genesis 2:24-25	91
Genesis 3 General Notes	92
Genesis 3:1-3	93
Genesis 3:4-6	95
Genesis 3:7-8	97
Genesis 3:9-11	98
Genesis 3:12-13	99
Genesis 3:14-15	100
Genesis 3:16	102
Genesis 3:17-19	103
Genesis 3:20-21	105
Genesis 3:22-24	106
Genesis 4 General Notes	108
Genesis 4:1-2	109

Table of Contents

Genesis 4:3-5	111
Genesis 4:6-7	113
Genesis 4:8-9	115
Genesis 4:10-12	117
Genesis 4:13-15	119
Genesis 4:16-17	120
Genesis 4:18-19	121
Genesis 4:20-22	122
Genesis 4:23-24	123
Genesis 4:25-26	125
Genesis 5 General Notes	127
Genesis 5:1-2	128
Genesis 5:3-5	129
Genesis 5:6-8	130
Genesis 5:9-11	131
Genesis 5:12-14	132
Genesis 5:15-17	133
Genesis 5:18-20	134
Genesis 5:21-24	135
Genesis 5:25-27	136
Genesis 5:28-29	137
Genesis 5:30-31	138
Genesis 5:32	139
Genesis 6 General Notes	140
Genesis 6:1-3	141
Genesis 6:4	143
Genesis 6:5-6	144
Genesis 6:7-8	145
Genesis 6:9-10	146
Genesis 6:11-12	147
Genesis 6:13-15	149
Genesis 6:16-17	151
Genesis 6:18-19	153
Genesis 6:20-22	154
Genesis 7 General Notes	155
Genesis 7:1-3	156
Genesis 7:4-5	158
Genesis 7:6-7	159
Genesis 7:8-10	160
Genesis 7:11-12	162
Genesis 7:13-14	164
Genesis 7:15-16	166
Genesis 7:17-18	167

Genesis 7:19-20	168
Genesis 7:21-22	169
Genesis 7:23-24	170
Genesis 8 General Notes	171
Genesis 8:1-3	172
Genesis 8:4-5	174
Genesis 8:6-7	175
Genesis 8:8-9	176
Genesis 8:10-12	177
Genesis 8:13-14	178
Genesis 8:15-17	180
Genesis 8:18-19	181
Genesis 8:20-22	182
Genesis 9 General Notes	184
Genesis 9:1-2	185
Genesis 9:3-4	187
Genesis 9:5-7	188
Genesis 9:8-10	190
Genesis 9:11-13	191
Genesis 9:14-15	193
Genesis 9:16-17	194
Genesis 9:18-19	195
Genesis 9:20-21	196
Genesis 9:22-23	197
Genesis 9:24-25	198
Genesis 9:26-27	200
Genesis 9:28-29	202
Genesis 10 General Notes	203
Genesis 10:1	204
Genesis 10:2-5	205
Genesis 10:6-7	206
Genesis 10:8-10	207
Genesis 10:11-14	208
Genesis 10:15-18	209
Genesis 10:19-20	210
Genesis 10:21-23	212
Genesis 10:24-25	213
Genesis 10:26-29	214
Genesis 10:30-31	215
Genesis 10:32	216
Genesis 11 General Notes	217
Genesis 11:1-2	218
Genesis 11:3-4	219

Table of Contents

Genesis 11:5-7	220
Genesis 11:8-9	222
Genesis 11:10-11	223
Genesis 11:12-13	224
Genesis 11:14-15	225
Genesis 11:16-17	226
Genesis 11:18-19	227
Genesis 11:20-21	228
Genesis 11:22-23	229
Genesis 11:24-26	230
Genesis 11:27-28	231
Genesis 11:29-30	232
Genesis 11:31-32	233
Genesis 12 General Notes	234
Genesis 12:1-3	235
Genesis 12:4-5	237
Genesis 12:6-7	238
Genesis 12:8-9	239
Genesis 12:10-13	240
Genesis 12:14-16	242
Genesis 12:17-20	244
Genesis 13 General Notes	246
Genesis 13:1-2	247
Genesis 13:3-4	248
Genesis 13:5-7	249
Genesis 13:8-9	250
Genesis 13:10-11	251
Genesis 13:12-13	253
Genesis 13:14-15	254
Genesis 13:16-18	255
Genesis 14 General Notes	256
Genesis 14:1-2	257
Genesis 14:3-6	258
Genesis 14:7-9	260
Genesis 14:10-12	262
Genesis 14:13-14	264
Genesis 14:15-16	266
Genesis 14:17-18	267
Genesis 14:19-20	268
Genesis 14:21-24	270
Genesis 15 General Notes	272
Genesis 15:1-3	273
Genesis 15:4-5	275

Genesis 15:6-8	277
Genesis 15:9-11	278
Genesis 15:12-13	279
Genesis 15:14-16	280
Genesis 15:17-21	282
Genesis 16 General Notes	284
Genesis 16:1-4	285
Genesis 16:5-6	287
Genesis 16:7-8	289
Genesis 16:9-10	290
Genesis 16:11-12	291
Genesis 16:13-14	293
Genesis 16:15-16	294
Genesis 17 General Notes	295
Genesis 17:1-2	296
Genesis 17:3-6	298
Genesis 17:7-8	300
Genesis 17:9-11	301
Genesis 17:12-14	303
Genesis 17:15-16	305
Genesis 17:17-18	306
Genesis 17:19-21	307
Genesis 17:22-23	309
Genesis 17:24-27	310
Genesis 18 General Notes	311
Genesis 18:1-2	312
Genesis 18:3-5	313
Genesis 18:6-8	315
Genesis 18:9-10	316
Genesis 18:11-12	317
Genesis 18:13-15	318
Genesis 18:16-19	320
Genesis 18:20-21	322
Genesis 18:22-23	323
Genesis 18:24-26	324
Genesis 18:27-28	326
Genesis 18:29-31	327
Genesis 18:32-33	329
Genesis 19 General Notes	330
Genesis 19:1-3	331
Genesis 19:4-5	333
Genesis 19:6-8	334
Genesis 19:9	336

Table of Contents

Genesis 19:10-11	338
Genesis 19:12-13	339
Genesis 19:14-15	340
Genesis 19:16-17	342
Genesis 19:18-20	344
Genesis 19:21-22	346
Genesis 19:23-25	347
Genesis 19:26-28	349
Genesis 19:29	350
Genesis 19:30	351
Genesis 19:31-33	352
Genesis 19:34-35	354
Genesis 19:36-38	355
Genesis 20 General Notes	356
Genesis 20:1-3	357
Genesis 20:4-5	359
Genesis 20:6-7	361
Genesis 20:8-9	363
Genesis 20:10-12	365
Genesis 20:13-14	367
Genesis 20:15-16	369
Genesis 20:17-18	370
Genesis 21 General Notes	371
Genesis 21:1-4	372
Genesis 21:5-7	374
Genesis 21:8-9	376
Genesis 21:10-11	377
Genesis 21:12-13	378
Genesis 21:14-16	380
Genesis 21:17-18	382
Genesis 21:19-21	384
Genesis 21:22-24	385
Genesis 21:25-27	387
Genesis 21:28-30	389
Genesis 21:31-32	390
Genesis 21:33-34	391
Genesis 22 General Notes	392
Genesis 22:1-3	393
Genesis 22:4-6	395
Genesis 22:7-8	397
Genesis 22:9-10	398
Genesis 22:11-12	399
Genesis 22:13-14	401

Genesis 22:15-17	402
Genesis 22:18-19	404
Genesis 22:20-22	406
Genesis 22:23-24	407
Genesis 23 General Notes	408
Genesis 23:1-2	409
Genesis 23:3-4	410
Genesis 23:5-6	411
Genesis 23:7-9	412
Genesis 23:10-11	414
Genesis 23:12-13	416
Genesis 23:14-16	417
Genesis 23:17-18	419
Genesis 23:19-20	421
Genesis 24 General Notes	422
Genesis 24:1-4	423
Genesis 24:5-7	425
Genesis 24:8-9	427
Genesis 24:10-11	428
Genesis 24:12-14	430
Genesis 24:15-16	432
Genesis 24:17-18	434
Genesis 24:19-20	435
Genesis 24:21-23	436
Genesis 24:24-25	438
Genesis 24:26-27	439
Genesis 24:28-30	441
Genesis 24:31-32	443
Genesis 24:33-35	445
Genesis 24:36-38	447
Genesis 24:39-41	448
Genesis 24:42-44	450
Genesis 24:45-46	452
Genesis 24:47-48	453
Genesis 24:49	455
Genesis 24:50-51	456
Genesis 24:52-53	457
Genesis 24:54-55	458
Genesis 24:56-58	459
Genesis 24:59-60	460
Genesis 24:61-62	462
Genesis 24:63-65	463
Genesis 24:66-67	465

Table of Contents

Genesis 25 General Notes	466
Genesis 25:1-4	467
Genesis 25:5-6	468
Genesis 25:7-8	469
Genesis 25:9-11	470
Genesis 25:12	472
Genesis 25:13-16	473
Genesis 25:17-18	474
Genesis 25:19-20	475
Genesis 25:21-22	476
Genesis 25:23	477
Genesis 25:24-26	479
Genesis 25:27-28	480
Genesis 25:29-30	481
Genesis 25:31-34	482
Genesis 26 General Notes	484
Genesis 26:1	485
Genesis 26:2-3	486
Genesis 26:4-5	487
Genesis 26:6-8	489
Genesis 26:9-11	491
Genesis 26:12-14	493
Genesis 26:15-17	495
Genesis 26:18	497
Genesis 26:19-20	498
Genesis 26:21-22	499
Genesis 26:23-25	500
Genesis 26:26-27	502
Genesis 26:28-29	503
Genesis 26:30-31	504
Genesis 26:32-33	505
Genesis 26:34-35	506
Genesis 27 General Notes	507
Genesis 27:1-2	508
Genesis 27:3-4	509
Genesis 27:5-7	510
Genesis 27:8-10	512
Genesis 27:11-12	514
Genesis 27:13-14	515
Genesis 27:15-17	516
Genesis 27:18-19	517
Genesis 27:20-21	518
Genesis 27:22-23	519

Genesis 27:24-25	520
Genesis 27:26-27	521
Genesis 27:28	523
Genesis 27:29	524
Genesis 27:30-31	526
Genesis 27:32-33	527
Genesis 27:34-35	528
Genesis 27:36-37	529
Genesis 27:38	531
Genesis 27:39-40	532
Genesis 27:41-42	534
Genesis 27:43-45	535
Genesis 27:46	537
Genesis 28 General Notes	538
Genesis 28:1-2	539
Genesis 28:3-4	541
Genesis 28:5	543
Genesis 28:6-7	544
Genesis 28:8-9	546
Genesis 28:10-11	547
Genesis 28:12-13	548
Genesis 28:14-15	550
Genesis 28:16-17	552
Genesis 28:18-19	553
Genesis 28:20-22	554
Genesis 29 General Notes	556
Genesis 29:1-3	557
Genesis 29:4-6	559
Genesis 29:7-8	560
Genesis 29:9-10	562
Genesis 29:11-12	563
Genesis 29:13-14	564
Genesis 29:15-18	565
Genesis 29:19-20	567
Genesis 29:21-22	568
Genesis 29:23-25	569
Genesis 29:26-27	571
Genesis 29:28-30	572
Genesis 29:31-32	573
Genesis 29:33-34	575
Genesis 29:35	576
Genesis 30 General Notes	577
Genesis 30:1-2	578

Table of Contents

Genesis 30:3-4	579
Genesis 30:5-6	580
Genesis 30:7-8	581
Genesis 30:9-11	582
Genesis 30:12-13	583
Genesis 30:14-15	584
Genesis 30:16-18	586
Genesis 30:19-21	588
Genesis 30:22-24	589
Genesis 30:25-26	591
Genesis 30:27-28	592
Genesis 30:29-30	594
Genesis 30:31-32	595
Genesis 30:33-34	596
Genesis 30:35-36	597
Genesis 30:37-38	598
Genesis 30:39-40	599
Genesis 30:41-42	600
Genesis 30:43	601
Genesis 31 General Notes	602
Genesis 31:1-3	603
Genesis 31:4-6	605
Genesis 31:7-9	606
Genesis 31:10-11	607
Genesis 31:12-13	608
Genesis 31:14-16	610
Genesis 31:17-18	612
Genesis 31:19-21	613
Genesis 31:22-23	614
Genesis 31:24-25	615
Genesis 31:26-28	616
Genesis 31:29-30	618
Genesis 31:31-32	619
Genesis 31:33	621
Genesis 31:34-35	622
Genesis 31:36-37	623
Genesis 31:38-40	625
Genesis 31:41-42	627
Genesis 31:43-44	629
Genesis 31:45-47	630
Genesis 31:48-50	631
Genesis 31:51-53	633
Genesis 31:54-55	635

Genesis 32 General Notes	636
Genesis 32:1-2	637
Genesis 32:3-5	638
Genesis 32:6-8	640
Genesis 32:9-10	641
Genesis 32:11-12	643
Genesis 32:13-16	645
Genesis 32:17-18	647
Genesis 32:19-21	649
Genesis 32:22-23	651
Genesis 32:24-26	652
Genesis 32:27-28	653
Genesis 32:29-30	654
Genesis 32:31-32	655
Genesis 33 General Notes	656
Genesis 33:1-3	657
Genesis 33:4-5	659
Genesis 33:6-8	660
Genesis 33:9-11	661
Genesis 33:12-14	663
Genesis 33:15-17	665
Genesis 33:18-20	666
Genesis 34 General Notes	668
Genesis 34:1-3	669
Genesis 34:4-5	671
Genesis 34:6-7	672
Genesis 34:8-10	673
Genesis 34:11-13	674
Genesis 34:14-17	676
Genesis 34:18-19	677
Genesis 34:20-21	678
Genesis 34:22-23	680
Genesis 34:24-26	681
Genesis 34:27-29	683
Genesis 34:30-31	685
Genesis 35 General Notes	687
Genesis 35:1-3	688
Genesis 35:4-5	690
Genesis 35:6-8	692
Genesis 35:9-10	694
Genesis 35:11-13	695
Genesis 35:14-15	697
Genesis 35:16-20	698

Table of Contents

Genesis 35:21-22	700
Genesis 35:23-25	701
Genesis 35:26-27	702
Genesis 35:28-29	704
Genesis 36 General Notes	705
Genesis 36:1-3	706
Genesis 36:4-5	708
Genesis 36:6-8	709
Genesis 36:9-12	711
Genesis 36:13-14	713
Genesis 36:15-16	714
Genesis 36:17-19	715
Genesis 36:20-22	716
Genesis 36:23-24	717
Genesis 36:25-28	718
Genesis 36:29-30	719
Genesis 36:31-33	720
Genesis 36:34-36	721
Genesis 36:37-39	723
Genesis 36:40-43	725
Genesis 37 General Notes	726
Genesis 37:1-2	727
Genesis 37:3-4	729
Genesis 37:5-6	730
Genesis 37:7-8	731
Genesis 37:9-11	733
Genesis 37:12-14	735
Genesis 37:15-17	737
Genesis 37:18-20	738
Genesis 37:21-22	739
Genesis 37:23-24	741
Genesis 37:25-26	742
Genesis 37:27-28	744
Genesis 37:29-30	746
Genesis 37:31-33	747
Genesis 37:34-36	748
Genesis 38 General Notes	750
Genesis 38:1-2	751
Genesis 38:3-5	752
Genesis 38:6-7	753
Genesis 38:8-10	754
Genesis 38:11	756
Genesis 38:12-14	757

Genesis 38:15-16	759
Genesis 38:17-18	760
Genesis 38:19-20	761
Genesis 38:21-23	762
Genesis 38:24-26	763
Genesis 38:27-28	765
Genesis 38:29-30	766
Genesis 39 General Notes	767
Genesis 39:1-2	768
Genesis 39:3-4	770
Genesis 39:5-6	772
Genesis 39:7-9	774
Genesis 39:10-12	776
Genesis 39:13-15	777
Genesis 39:16-18	778
Genesis 39:19-20	779
Genesis 39:21-23	780
Genesis 40 General Notes	782
Genesis 40:1-3	783
Genesis 40:4-5	785
Genesis 40:6-8	786
Genesis 40:9-11	787
Genesis 40:12-13	788
Genesis 40:14-15	789
Genesis 40:16-17	790
Genesis 40:18-19	791
Genesis 40:20-23	792
Genesis 41 General Notes	794
Genesis 41:1-3	795
Genesis 41:4-6	797
Genesis 41:7-8	799
Genesis 41:9-11	801
Genesis 41:12-13	803
Genesis 41:14-16	805
Genesis 41:17-18	807
Genesis 41:19-21	808
Genesis 41:22-24	809
Genesis 41:25-26	811
Genesis 41:27-29	812
Genesis 41:30-32	814
Genesis 41:33-34	816
Genesis 41:35-36	818
Genesis 41:37-38	820

Table of Contents

Genesis 41:39-41	821
Genesis 41:42-43	823
Genesis 41:44-45	825
Genesis 41:46-47	827
Genesis 41:48-49	828
Genesis 41:50-52	829
Genesis 41:53-54	831
Genesis 41:55-57	832
Genesis 42 General Notes	834
Genesis 42:1-4	835
Genesis 42:5-6	837
Genesis 42:7-8	839
Genesis 42:9-11	840
Genesis 42:12-13	841
Genesis 42:14-17	842
Genesis 42:18-20	844
Genesis 42:21-22	846
Genesis 42:23-25	848
Genesis 42:26-28	850
Genesis 42:29-32	852
Genesis 42:33-34	854
Genesis 42:35-36	855
Genesis 42:37-38	856
Genesis 43 General Notes	858
Genesis 43:1-2	859
Genesis 43:3-5	860
Genesis 43:6-7	862
Genesis 43:8-10	864
Genesis 43:11-12	866
Genesis 43:13-15	868
Genesis 43:16-17	870
Genesis 43:18-20	871
Genesis 43:21-23	873
Genesis 43:24-25	875
Genesis 43:26-27	876
Genesis 43:28-29	877
Genesis 43:30-31	879
Genesis 43:32-34	880
Genesis 44 General Notes	882
Genesis 44:1-2	883
Genesis 44:3-5	885
Genesis 44:6-7	887
Genesis 44:8-10	888

Genesis 44:11-13	890
Genesis 44:14-15	891
Genesis 44:16-17	892
Genesis 44:18-19	894
Genesis 44:20-22	896
Genesis 44:23-26	898
Genesis 44:27-29	900
Genesis 44:30-32	902
Genesis 44:33-34	904
Genesis 45 General Notes	906
Genesis 45:1-3	907
Genesis 45:4-6	908
Genesis 45:7-8	910
Genesis 45:9-11	912
Genesis 45:12-13	914
Genesis 45:14-15	915
Genesis 45:16-18	916
Genesis 45:19-20	918
Genesis 45:21-23	919
Genesis 45:24-26	921
Genesis 45:27-28	922
Genesis 46 General Notes	923
Genesis 46:1-4	924
Genesis 46:5-7	926
Genesis 46:8-11	928
Genesis 46:12-15	930
Genesis 46:16-18	932
Genesis 46:19-22	933
Genesis 46:23-25	935
Genesis 46:26-27	936
Genesis 46:28-30	937
Genesis 46:31-32	939
Genesis 46:33-34	940
Genesis 47 General Notes	942
Genesis 47:1-2	943
Genesis 47:3-4	944
Genesis 47:5-6	945
Genesis 47:7-10	946
Genesis 47:11-12	947
Genesis 47:13-14	948
Genesis 47:15-17	949
Genesis 47:18-19	951
Genesis 47:20-22	953

Table of Contents

Genesis 47:23-24	955
Genesis 47:25-26	956
Genesis 47:27-28	957
Genesis 47:29-31	958
Genesis 48 General Notes	960
Genesis 48:1-2	961
Genesis 48:3-4	962
Genesis 48:5-7	964
Genesis 48:8-10	966
Genesis 48:11-13	967
Genesis 48:14-16	968
Genesis 48:17-18	970
Genesis 48:19-20	971
Genesis 48:21-22	973
Genesis 49 General Notes	975
Genesis 49:1-2	976
Genesis 49:3-4	977
Genesis 49:5-6	979
Genesis 49:7	981
Genesis 49:8	982
Genesis 49:9	983
Genesis 49:10	984
Genesis 49:11-12	985
Genesis 49:13	987
Genesis 49:14-15	988
Genesis 49:16-18	990
Genesis 49:19-21	992
Genesis 49:22-23	994
Genesis 49:24	995
Genesis 49:25	997
Genesis 49:26	998
Genesis 49:27	999
Genesis 49:28-30	1000
Genesis 49:31-33	1002
Genesis 50 General Notes	1004
Genesis 50:1-3	1005
Genesis 50:4-6	1006
Genesis 50:7-9	1008
Genesis 50:10-11	1010
Genesis 50:12-14	1012
Genesis 50:15-17	1014
Genesis 50:18-21	1016
Genesis 50:22-23	1018

Genesis 50:24-26	1019
translationQuestions	1021
Genesis 1	1021
Genesis 2	1023
Genesis 3	1025
Genesis 4	1028
Genesis 5	1030
Genesis 6	1032
Genesis 7	1034
Genesis 8	1036
Genesis 9	1038
Genesis 10	1040
Genesis 11	1041
Genesis 12	1043
Genesis 13	1045
Genesis 14	1047
Genesis 15	1049
Genesis 16	1051
Genesis 17	1053
Genesis 18	1056
Genesis 19	1059
Genesis 20	1062
Genesis 21	1064
Genesis 22	1067
Genesis 23	1069
Genesis 24	1071
Genesis 25	1074
Genesis 26	1076
Genesis 27	1078
Genesis 28	1081
Genesis 29	1083
Genesis 30	1086
Genesis 31	1089
Genesis 32	1092
Genesis 33	1094
Genesis 34	1096
Genesis 35	1098
Genesis 36	1100
Genesis 37	1101
Genesis 38	1103
Genesis 39	1106
Genesis 40	1108
Genesis 41	1110

Table of Contents

Genesis 42	1113
Genesis 43	1116
Genesis 44	1118
Genesis 45	1121
Genesis 46	1123
Genesis 47	1124
Genesis 48	1126
Genesis 49	1128
Genesis 50	1130
translationWords	1132
twelve tribes of Israel	1132
Abel	1133
Abimelech	1134
abomination, abominable	1135
Abraham, Abram	1136
Adam	1137
afflict, affliction	1138
Ai	1139
Almighty	1140
altar	1141
marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished	1142
Ammon, Ammonites, Ammonitess	1143
Amorite	1144
angel, archangel	1145
angry, anger	1147
anoint, anointed	1148
appoint, appointed	1149
Aram, Aramean, Aramaic	1150
Ararat	1151
archer	1152
ark	1153
Asher	1154
assembly, assemble	1155
Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire	1156
authority	1157
avenge, revenge, vengeance	1158
Babel	1159
barren	1160
Beersheba	1161
believe, believe in, belief	1162
Benjamin	1163
Bethel	1164
Bethlehem, Ephrathah	1165

Bethuel	1166
biblical time: day	1167
biblical time: month	1168
biblical time: year	1169
birthright	1170
blameless	1171
bles, blessed, blessing	1172
blood	1174
bloodshed	1175
blot out, wipe out	1176
bind, bond, bound	1177
bow, bow down	1179
bow and arrow	1180
bread	1181
breathe, breath	1182
bronze	1184
brother	1185
burden	1186
burnt offering, offering by fire	1187
bury, buried, burial	1188
Cain	1189
call, calling, called, call out	1190
camel	1192
Canaan, Canaanite	1193
cast out, drive out, throw out	1194
Chaldea, Chaldean	1195
chariot	1196
cherubim, cherub	1197
children, child	1198
circumcise, circumcision	1199
clan	1200
clean, cleanse	1201
comfort, comforter	1202
command, to command, commandment	1203
conceive, conception	1204
concubine	1205
consume	1206
corrupt, corruption	1207
council	1208
covenant	1209
covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love	1211
cow, calf, bull, cattle	1212
create, creation, Creator	1213

Table of Contents

creature	1214
Translation Suggestions	1215
crown, to crown	1216
curse, cursed	1217
Cush	1218
cut off	1219
cypress	1220
Damascus	1221
Dan	1222
death, die, dead	1223
deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive	1225
declare, declaration	1226
deer, doe, buck, roebuck, fawn	1227
defile, be defiled	1228
descendant, descended from	1229
desert, wilderness	1230
desolate, desolation	1231
detestable, detest	1232
devastate, devastation	1233
devour	1234
discern, discernment	1235
disgrace, disgraceful	1236
divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer	1237
donkey, mule	1238
dove, pigeon	1239
dream	1240
drink offering	1241
Eden, garden of Eden	1242
Edom, Edomite, Idumea	1243
Egypt, Egyptian	1244
encourage, encouragement	1245
Enoch	1246
enslave, in bondage	1247
envy, covet	1248
Ephraim	1249
Esau	1250
everlasting, eternal, eternity	1251
Euphrates River	1252
Eve	1253
evil, wicked, wickedness	1254
face	1256
faith	1258
faithful, faithfulness	1260

false god, foreign god, god, goddess	1261
famine	1262
ancestor, father, forefather	1263
favor, favorable, favoritism	1264
fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh	1265
feast	1266
fig	1267
firstborn	1268
flesh	1269
flock, herd	1270
flood	1271
fool, foolish, folly	1272
foreigner, foreign, alien	1273
forever	1274
forgive, forgiveness	1275
forsake, forsaken, forsook	1276
fountain, spring	1277
fruit, fruitful	1278
fulfill	1280
furnace	1281
Gad	1282
gate, gate bar	1283
Gaza	1284
generation	1285
Gerar	1286
giant	1287
gift	1288
Gilead	1289
Girgashites	1290
glory, glorious	1291
goat, kid	1292
God	1293
godly, godliness	1295
gold	1296
Gomorrah	1297
good, goodness	1298
Goshen	1300
governor, govern, proconsul, government	1301
grace, gracious	1302
grain	1303
grape	1304
guilt, guilty	1305
hades, sheol	1306

Table of Contents

Hagar	1307
Ham	1308
Hamor	1309
hand, right hand, to hand over	1310
hang	1312
Haran	1313
harp	1314
harvest	1315
heal, cure	1316
heart	1317
heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly	1318
Hebrew	1319
Hebron	1320
heifer	1321
heir	1322
Hittite	1323
Hivite	1324
holy, holiness	1325
Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord	1326
honey, honeycomb	1328
honor, to honor	1329
horse	1330
horsemen	1331
house	1332
household	1333
house of God, Yahweh's house	1334
image of God, image	1335
inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir	1336
iniquity	1338
innocent	1339
instruct, instruction	1341
interpret, interpretation	1342
Isaac	1343
Ishmael	1344
Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel	1345
Issachar	1346
Jacob, Israel	1347
Japheth	1348
jealous, jealousy	1349
Jebusites, Jebus	1350
Jordan River	1351
Joseph (OT)	1352
Judah	1353

judge, judgment	1354
judge	1356
just, justice, justly	1357
justify, justification	1358
Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh	1359
kind, kinds	1360
king	1361
kiss	1362
Laban	1363
labor pains, in labor	1364
lamb, Lamb of God	1365
Lamech	1367
law, principle	1368
Leah	1369
Levite, Levi	1370
life, live, living, alive	1371
lion	1373
livestock	1374
loins	1375
lord, master, sir	1376
Lord	1377
Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God	1378
Lot	1379
love	1380
lust	1382
magic, magician	1383
manager, steward	1384
Manasseh	1385
meditate	1386
Melchizedek	1387
mercy, merciful	1388
Meshech	1390
Mesopotamia, Aram Naharaim	1391
Midian, Midianites	1392
mighty, might	1393
mind	1394
Moab, Moabite, Moabites	1395
mock, ridicule, scoff at	1396
Most High	1397
mourn, mourning	1398
multiply	1399
myrrh	1400
Nahor	1401

Table of Contents

name	1402
Naphtali	1403
nation	1404
Negev	1405
Nile River, River of Egypt	1406
Nineveh, Ninevite	1407
Noah	1408
oak	1409
oath, swear, swear by	1410
obey, obedient, obedience	1411
offspring	1412
oil	1413
olive	1414
oppress, oppression, oppressor	1415
overseer	1416
ox, oxen	1417
Paddan Aram	1418
Paran	1419
peace, peaceful	1420
people group, peoples, the people, a people	1421
people of God, my people	1423
Perizzite	1424
Pharaoh, king of Egypt	1425
Philistines	1426
pillar, column	1427
pit	1428
plague	1429
pledge	1430
possess, possession	1431
Potiphar	1432
power, powers	1433
praise	1434
pray, prayer	1435
priest, priesthood	1436
prince, princess	1438
prison, prisoner, imprison	1439
Promised Land	1440
promise	1441
prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess	1442
prosper, prosperity, prosperous	1444
prostitute, harlot, whore	1445
prostrate	1446
punish, punishment	1447

pure, purify, purification	1449
Rachel	1450
reap, reaper	1451
Rebekah	1452
rebel, rebellious, rebellion	1453
rebuke	1454
refuge, shelter	1455
reign	1456
remnant	1457
renown, renowned	1458
rest	1459
restore, restoration	1460
Reuben	1461
reveal, revelation	1462
righteous, righteousness	1463
right hand	1464
robe	1465
royal	1466
ruler, rulers, rule	1467
sackcloth	1468
sacred	1469
sacrifice, offering	1470
salvation	1472
sanctify, sanctification	1473
Sarah, Sarai	1474
Satan, devil, evil one	1475
save, safe	1477
scepter	1479
seal, to seal	1480
seed	1481
seize	1482
send, send out, sent	1483
serpent, snake, viper	1484
servant, slave, slavery	1485
serve, service	1487
sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking	1488
shadow	1489
shame, shameful, ashamed	1490
Shechem	1491
sheep, ram, ewe	1492
Shem	1493
shepherd, to shepherd	1494
Shiloh	1496

Table of Contents

Shinar	1497
Sidon, Sidonians	1498
sign, proof, reminder	1499
silver	1501
Simeon	1502
sin, sinful, sinner, sinning	1503
Sodom	1505
son, son of	1506
sons of God	1508
soul	1509
spirit, spiritual	1510
staff	1512
statute, statutes	1513
storehouse	1514
Succoth	1515
sulfur	1516
sweep, swept	1517
sword	1518
Tamar	1519
Tarshish	1520
tempt, temptation	1521
tent	1522
tenth, tithe	1523
terror, terrify	1524
test	1525
testimony, testify	1526
thresh, threshing	1527
throne	1528
tomb, grave, burial place	1529
tribe	1530
trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness	1531
Tubal	1532
unbeliever, unbelief	1533
uncircumcised, uncircumcision	1534
unclean	1535
unleavened bread, Festival of Unleavened Bread	1536
upright, uprightness	1537
Ur	1538
vine	1539
vineyard	1540
virgin	1541
vision	1542
voice	1543

vow	1544
walk	1545
well, cistern	1546
wheat	1547
wine, wineskin, new wine	1548
wise, wisdom	1549
witness, eyewitness	1550
womb	1552
word	1553
word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture	1554
worship	1556
worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless	1557
wrong, mistreat, hurt	1558
Yahweh	1559
yoke	1561
Zebulun	1562
Zoar	1563
translationAcademy	1564
First, Second or Third Person	1564
Abstract Nouns	1566
Active or Passive	1569
Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding	1572
Double Negatives	1574
Doublet	1577
Ellipsis	1579
Euphemism	1581
Order of Events	1583
Exclusive “We”	1586
Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information	1588
When Masculine Words Include Women	1590
Go and Come	1592
Hendiadys	1594
Hyperbole	1596
Hypothetical Situations	1599
Idiom	1602
Imperatives - Other Uses	1604
Inclusive “We”	1606
Irony	1608
Litotes	1611
Merism	1613
Metaphor	1615
Metonymy	1620
Nominal Adjectives	1622

Table of Contents

Parallelism	1624
Predictive Past	1626
Personification	1628
Pronouns	1630
Direct and Indirect Quotations	1632
Quotes within Quotes	1634
Reflexive Pronouns	1637
Rhetorical Question	1640
Sentence Structure	1643
Simile	1645
Synecdoche	1648
Forms of You	1650
Biblical Distance	1651
Biblical Volume	1654
Biblical Weight	1658
Fractions	1660
Hebrew Months	1663
How to Translate Names	1666
Numbers	1670
Ordinal Numbers	1673
Symbolic Action	1676
Translate Unknowns	1679
Background Information	1682
Connecting Words	1685
Introduction of a New Event	1688
Introduction of New and Old Participants	1692
Poetry	1695
Proverbs	1699
Symbolic Language	1702

translationNotes

Introduction to Genesis

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Genesis

1. From the Creation to the Tower of Babel
 - a) The account about the creation of the heavens and the earth (1:1–4:26)
 - b) The account about Adam (5:1–6:8)
 - c) The account about Noah (6:9–11:9)
 - d) The account about Shem (11:10–11:26)
 - e) The account about Terah (11:27–11:32)

2. The accounts about the Patriarchs
 - a) The account about Abraham (12:1–25:11)
 - b) The account about Ishmael (25:12–25:18)
 - c) The account about Isaac (25:19–35:29)
 - d) The account about Esau (36:1–37:1)
 - e) The account about Jacob (37:2–50:26)

What is Genesis about?

Genesis is a record of God’s mighty acts, the beginning of human life, and how sin brought death and separation between people and God. Yet Genesis gives us hope and tells us about God’s ultimate promise to save us. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#) and [save](#), [safe](#))

How should the title of this book be translated?

“Genesis” means “in the beginning,” so translators should express in their title this idea. Titles such as “The Beginning of Things” may be suitable. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Who wrote Genesis?

The writers of both the Old and New Testament present Moses as being very involved with writing the book of Genesis.

What are the different parts of Genesis?

Genesis 1–11 is an account of the early years of creation. It very briefly records significant events occurring over a period of several thousand years. Genesis 12–50 focuses on the special relationship God began with Abraham and his descendants. Abraham’s descendants, who came to be

known as the Hebrews and later as Israelites, would come to worship Yahweh. Genesis ends with Abraham's descendants living in Egypt with the hope of returning one day to the Promised Land. (See: [Promised Land](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What are the covenants mentioned in Genesis?

There are three covenants mentioned in Genesis. The covenant with Adam involved God's instruction not to eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The punishment for disobedience would be death. The covenant that God made with Noah was a promise to never again destroy the world with a flood. God made yet another covenant with Abraham. In it, God promised to make his descendants into a great nation. He also promised to protect them and to give them land of their own.

What was God's purpose for the book of Genesis?

The book of Genesis says that a perfect God created a perfect world. However, the world became imperfect because human beings began to sin. But Genesis shows that God continues to have complete control over the world.

Genesis also describes the start of God's plan to bring the sinful world back to himself. An important event in this process occurred when God began a special relationship with Abraham and his descendants. He expressed this relationship in a covenant with Abraham.

What was the custom for inheritance as described by Genesis?

The cultural concepts of inheritance and of the passing on of a father's blessing are very significant in Genesis. The blessing that Abraham passed on to his son Isaac placed him as an ancestor of the people of Israel. This is unlike the experience of Ishmael, Abraham's other son, who did not receive that same divine blessing. Likewise, Isaac's older son Esau foolishly gave up the same blessing, which his younger brother Jacob received instead. (See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#) and [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Additionally, it was customary for a man to divide among his sons his material wealth and land. All his sons received equal portions, except that the oldest son received twice as much. The oldest son's portion was called a double portion. It was this double portion that Esau also gave up.

How does Genesis present sin and evil?

Ancient Near Eastern societies, like many societies today, view sin and disasters of all kinds as if they were physical dirt or rottenness that could spread among people, throughout their communities, and even their land. As a result, many societies have very little trouble understanding the Genesis account of how sin was introduced into the world.

These societies also assume that the way to stop the spread of evil is to perform sacrifices. For this reason, many societies still today easily understand the reason for the animal sacrifices of which Genesis speaks.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is one way in which Genesis marks the beginning of important sections?

Genesis uses one Hebrew phrase that the ULB translates as either, “this is the record of,” “these were the events concerning,” or “these were the descendants of.” The information in these sections may have come from sources much older than Moses himself. These passages are 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; and 37:2.

If the translator wants to translate in only two ways, we recommend for most passages a phrase such as, “this is the record about” or “this is information about.” Some passages will be better translated, however, as “These were the descendants of.”

Why are the beginnings of some narrative sections in Genesis difficult to translate?

This is because Hebrew style often makes an opening statement that summarizes the following narrative. Probable examples of this style occur in Gen. 1:1; 6:22; 18:1; 21:1; and 22:1.

Many languages, however, do not prefer to summarize a narrative until the end. In this case, translators may choose a different approach. For example, in Gen. 1:1 (“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”), translators may decide to translate like this: “This is about how God made the heavens and the earth in the beginning.”

What is the difference between “people,” “peoples,” and “people groups”?

The word “people” refers to all the individuals who belong to a group, such as “the people of Israel.” The word “peoples” (used in the ULB) refers to groups that speak the same languages, have the same customs, and worship the same gods, such as the peoples of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. The expression “people groups” (used in the UDB) is equivalent to “peoples” in the ULB. The translator should use the most equivalent term that is common in the project language.

What is the relationship between individuals and peoples that have similar names?

Many individually named persons in Genesis eventually had large numbers of descendants who were called after their ancestor’s name. For example, Cush was the name of such a individual, but it also became the name of the nation that his descendants formed (the Cushites), as well as the name of the region in which they lived. If possible, when translating these names, the translator should make a strong resemblance between them, as, for example, “Cush” and “Cushite” or “Moab” and “Moabite.” Otherwise, the translator may say, “the descendants of Cush.”

What does the phrase “to this day” mean?

This phrase was used by the narrator to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that “to this day” refers to a time which has already passed. The translator might decide to say, “to this day, at the time when this is being written,” or, “to this day, at the time of writing.” This Hebrew phrase occurs in Gen. 19:37, 19:38, 22:14, 26:33, 32:32, 35:20, 47:26, 48:18.

List of translationAcademy Topics in Genesis

* **First, Second or Third Person** is found in: 18:13, 18:16, 18:27, 19:01, 19:18, 27:30, 28:20, 33:04, 33:12, 33:15, 35:01, 41:09, 41:12, 41:25, 41:27, 41:33, 42:09, 44:06, 44:08, 44:16, 44:18, 44:20, 44:23, 44:30, 44:33, 46:33, 47:03, 47:18, 49:01, 50:15

* **Abstract Nouns** is found in: 18:20, 19:12, 19:18, 21:14, 21:22, 21:28, 23:10, 23:12, 23:14, 24:12, 24:26, 24:49, 29:31, 30:25, 31:41, 34:11, 41:19, 41:50, 42:21, 43:08, 43:13, 43:21, 44:30, 45:07, 46:33, 47:29

* **Active or Passive** is found in: 01:09, 02:01, 02:18, 03:17, 03:22, 04:10, 04:13, 04:23, 05:01, 06:01, 07:23, 08:01, 08:06, 10:24, 11:03, 12:01, 12:10, 12:14, 14:19, 15:12, 16:05, 17:09, 17:12, 17:24, 18:03, 18:16, 18:24, 19:14, 20:15, 21:12, 22:13, 22:18, 22:20, 24:31, 24:66, 25:09, 26:04, 26:09, 26:28, 27:29, 28:14, 29:07, 29:31, 29:33, 30:33, 31:22, 31:38, 32:09, 32:11, 32:24, 32:29, 33:09, 33:12, 34:06, 34:24, 34:30, 35:06, 35:09, 35:16, 37:31, 37:34, 38:03, 38:12, 38:17, 38:19, 38:24, 38:29, 39:19, 40:01, 40:14, 41:04, 41:19, 41:22, 41:27, 41:30, 42:14, 42:18, 42:23, 42:26, 43:18, 44:03, 44:08, 44:11, 44:27, 45:19, 47:20, 48:01, 50:24

* **Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding** is found in: 02:11, 02:13, 06:07, 08:06, 14:03, 14:10, 23:07, 23:10, 23:17

* **Double Negatives** is found in: 08:20, 11:05, 21:22, 22:11, 22:15, 32:24, 39:07

* **Doublet** is found in: 01:22, 01:26, 01:28, 04:23, 05:28, 08:15, 09:01, 09:05, 23:01, 24:66, 25:07, 25:17, 28:03, 28:16, 35:11, 35:28, 39:05, 47:27, 48:03

* **Ellipsis** is found in: 06:20, 12:01, 19:16, 21:22, 24:21, 24:24, 24:49, 33:09, 40:06, 40:12, 41:07, 41:14, 41:22, 41:25, 42:18, 42:29, 43:01, 44:01, 44:11, 47:23, 49:07

* **Euphemism** is found in: 04:01, 04:16, 04:25, 11:29, 12:14, 15:14, 16:05, 17:09, 17:12, 19:04, 19:06, 20:04, 20:06, 21:05, 21:08, 25:07, 27:43, 29:28, 31:34, 34:01, 35:28, 37:21, 39:16, 47:29, 49:28, 49:31, 50:01

* **Order of Events** is found in: 24:28, 26:18, 27:24, 47:01, 50:07, 50:24

* **Exclusive “We”** is found in: 19:01, 19:12, 20:08, 22:04, 26:09, 26:19, 32:17, 34:14, 37:07, 41:09, 43:06, 43:08

* **Exclusive “We”]]** is found in: 24:21

* **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** is found in: 03:07, 03:17, 04:01, 04:03, 04:08, 04:18, 04:25, 06:13, 07:08, 07:15, 08:04, 08:20, 09:05, 10:19, 10:32, 11:05, 11:08, 12:06, 12:10, 12:17, 13:01, 13:03, 14:03, 14:07, 14:17, 14:21, 15:14, 16:15, 19:10, 19:18, 19:21, 19:23, 19:31, 19:34, 20:10, 20:17, 21:01, 21:05, 21:08, 21:10, 21:22, 22:01, 22:11, 22:15, 22:18, 24:21, 24:49, 25:19, 25:21, 25:31, 26:01,

26:06, 26:12, 26:15, 26:23, 26:30, 26:34, 27:01, 27:03, 27:26, 27:28, 27:39, 27:43, 29:07, 29:11, 29:23, 29:26, 30:03, 30:27, 30:39, 30:41, 31:14, 31:17, 31:22, 31:45, 31:54, 32:09, 33:01, 33:12, 33:15, 33:18, 34:18, 35:04, 35:09, 35:21, 35:26, 36:01, 36:06, 36:09, 36:17, 36:29, 36:34, 36:37, 36:40, 37:12, 37:29, 37:34, 38:06, 38:08, 38:11, 38:12, 38:15, 38:21, 38:29, 39:05, 39:10, 39:19, 40:06, 40:09, 40:14, 40:20, 41:22, 41:25, 41:53, 42:01, 42:05, 42:09, 42:12, 42:18, 42:23, 42:37, 43:08, 43:24, 43:30, 43:32, 44:18, 44:20, 45:04, 45:07, 45:14, 45:21, 46:01, 47:05, 49:31, 50:04

* **When Masculine Words Include Women** is found in: 31:26, 41:44

* **Go and Come** is found in: 06:16, 07:01, 07:15, 08:15, 08:18, 14:07, 24:31, 24:39, 35:26, 41:14, 42:05, 43:16, 48:21

* **Hendiadys** is found in: 04:10, 19:23

* **Hyperbole** is found in: 25:31, 27:46, 29:31, 30:01, 31:01

* **Hypothetical Situations** is found in: 24:08, 24:39, 43:08, 44:30

* **Idiom** is found in: 02:01, 02:24, 03:04, 03:17, 04:03, 04:08, 04:13, 04:16, 15:01, 15:04, 15:12, 15:14, 17:01, 17:19, 18:24, 18:32, 19:06, 19:09, 19:16, 19:29, 20:01, 20:15, 21:19, 21:22, 22:11, 23:05, 24:50, 25:07, 25:17, 26:02, 26:09, 26:19, 27:05, 27:20, 27:26, 27:39, 27:46, 29:01, 29:07, 29:09, 30:03, 30:07, 30:14, 30:22, 30:27, 31:12, 31:36, 32:13, 34:04, 35:16, 35:28, 36:06, 36:31, 36:34, 36:37, 37:03, 37:09, 37:12, 37:18, 37:21, 37:27, 38:06, 38:08, 39:01, 39:03, 39:21, 41:33, 41:35, 41:39, 41:42, 41:50, 41:55, 42:37, 43:28, 43:30, 44:27, 44:30, 46:01, 47:25, 47:27, 47:29, 48:21, 49:08, 49:14, 49:19, 50:01, 50:04, 50:22

* **Imperatives - Other Uses** is found in: 01:03, 01:06, 01:09, 01:11, 01:14, 01:20, 01:22, 01:24, 24:01

* **Inclusive "We"** is found in: 31:31, 31:36, 34:20, 37:07, 39:16, 43:01, 43:08

* **Irony** is found in: 37:18

* **Litotes** is found in: 24:26, 31:31, 37:21, 39:07

* **Merism** is found in: 01:03, 02:09, 03:04, 03:22, 08:20, 19:10, 24:01, 31:24, 31:29, 43:32

* **Metaphor** is found in: 04:06, 05:21, 06:07, 06:11, 09:01, 09:05, 15:01, 16:11, 17:01, 18:22, 18:24, 18:27, 19:10, 19:14, 19:16, 19:18, 19:31, 19:34, 20:08, 20:15, 21:19, 24:08, 24:21, 24:39, 24:45, 24:49, 25:07, 25:27, 26:09, 26:34, 27:01, 27:11, 27:13, 27:28, 27:34, 27:36, 27:39, 27:43, 28:03, 28:16, 29:31, 30:01, 30:16, 30:22, 31:14, 31:38, 34:01, 34:30, 35:04, 37:25, 37:34, 39:01, 39:03, 39:05, 39:07, 39:21, 40:12, 41:27, 41:30, 41:35, 41:50, 42:26, 42:37, 43:08, 44:06, 44:16, 44:18, 44:27, 44:30, 44:33, 45:07, 45:09, 45:16, 47:18, 47:29, 48:01, 48:14, 48:19, 48:21, 49:07, 49:09, 49:11, 49:14, 49:19, 49:22, 49:24, 49:26, 50:15

* **Metonymy** is found in: 03:17, 04:10, 06:05, 06:07, 06:11, 06:16, 07:15, 07:21, 09:01, 09:11, 09:14, 11:01, 12:01, 14:10, 15:01, 15:04, 15:14, 16:13, 19:14, 19:23, 19:31, 20:04, 20:06, 20:08, 20:10, 20:13, 20:15, 21:12, 21:14, 21:17, 21:22, 21:33, 22:04, 22:07, 22:18, 23:10, 23:17, 24:01, 24:05, 24:28, 24:36, 24:52, 24:56, 24:59, 25:23, 26:01, 26:04, 26:09, 26:12, 26:15, 26:18, 26:23, 27:08, 27:13, 27:22, 27:29, 27:39, 27:41, 28:01, 28:20, 29:13, 29:21, 30:27, 30:33, 30:35, 30:41, 31:01, 31:10, 31:12, 31:26, 31:29, 31:41, 31:48, 32:03, 32:06, 32:11, 32:19, 33:06, 33:09, 34:06, 34:11, 34:18, 34:24, 35:01, 35:04, 35:11, 36:40, 37:01, 37:21, 37:25, 37:27, 40:01, 40:20, 41:30, 41:33, 41:35, 41:37, 41:39, 41:44, 41:46, 41:48,

41:55, 42:01, 42:14, 42:18, 42:21, 42:23, 42:33, 44:06, 44:08, 44:18, 45:01, 45:04, 45:07, 45:24, 45:27, 46:28, 46:31, 47:13, 47:15, 47:18, 47:25, 48:03, 48:14, 48:19, 48:21, 49:03, 49:07, 49:10, 49:13, 49:14, 49:16, 49:19, 49:22, 49:24, 49:25, 49:27, 50:04, 50:07, 50:24

* **Nominal Adjectives** is found in: 03:20, 19:31, 23:03, 23:05, 23:07, 23:10, 23:12, 23:14

* **Parallelism** is found in: 01:26, 04:23, 06:20, 11:01, 19:14, 26:04, 31:01, 31:36, 37:07, 41:30, 43:08, 44:03, 44:16, 49:01, 49:03, 49:05, 49:08, 49:11

* **Predictive Past** is found in: 49:11

* **Personification** is found in: 01:16, 04:06, 04:10, 19:18, 30:33, 31:43, 31:48, 31:51, 37:07

* **Pronouns** is found in: 01:26, 03:14, 05:01, 11:05

* **Direct and Indirect Quotations** is found in: 24:28, 34:06

* **Quotes within Quotes** is found in: 20:04, 20:10, 20:13, 24:05, 24:12, 26:09, 27:05, 32:03, 32:09, 32:11, 32:17, 42:21, 42:29, 43:03, 43:06, 44:18, 44:20, 44:23, 44:27, 45:09, 45:16, 45:19, 46:31, 46:33, 48:03, 48:19, 50:04, 50:15

* **Reflexive Pronouns** is found in: 20:04, 22:07, 32:19, 33:01

* **Rhetorical Question** is found in: 03:01, 03:09, 03:12, 04:06, 04:08, 04:10, 12:17, 13:08, 17:17, 18:11, 18:13, 18:16, 18:24, 19:18, 20:04, 20:08, 21:05, 23:14, 24:31, 25:31, 26:09, 27:36, 27:43, 27:46, 29:15, 29:23, 30:01, 30:14, 30:29, 31:14, 31:43, 32:29, 33:15, 34:22, 34:30, 37:09, 37:12, 37:25, 37:29, 39:07, 40:06, 42:01, 42:21, 43:06, 43:28, 44:03, 44:08, 44:14, 44:33, 47:15, 49:09, 50:18

* **Sentence Structure** is found in: 31:04

* **Simile** is found in: 19:26, 22:15, 25:24, 26:04, 28:14, 31:26, 32:11, 33:09, 41:48, 49:03, 49:09, 49:11

* **Synecdoche** is found in: 03:17, 07:21, 09:05, 12:01, 15:14, 19:06, 21:14, 21:28, 22:04, 22:15, 27:29, 27:39, 27:41, 28:14, 28:20, 32:09, 33:09, 34:24, 34:30, 38:19, 41:07, 42:21, 42:37, 43:03, 43:11, 43:13, 43:21, 43:26, 43:32, 44:16, 44:23, 44:27, 44:30, 45:12, 45:24, 45:27, 46:28, 47:15, 48:11, 48:14, 49:05, 49:19

* **Forms of You** is found in: 02:15, 03:01, 03:04, 03:09, 06:20, 07:01, 18:03, 24:24, 24:31, 24:49, 27:28, 27:29, 31:04, 31:29, 42:18, 42:37, 43:08, 44:27, 46:01, 48:21

* **Biblical Distance** is found in: 06:13, 06:16

* **Biblical Volume** is found in: 18:06

* **Biblical Weight** is found in: 23:14, 24:21

* **Fractions** is found in: 41:33, 47:23

* **Hebrew Months** is found in: 07:11, 08:04, 08:13

* **How to Translate Names** is found in: 02:11, 02:13, 04:18, 04:20, 04:25, 05:06, 05:09, 05:12, 05:15, 05:18, 05:21, 05:25, 05:28, 10:26, 11:10, 11:12, 11:14, 11:16, 11:18, 11:20, 11:22, 11:24, 11:27, 11:29, 12:06, 13:16, 14:03, 15:17, 16:13, 19:36, 20:01, 21:22, 21:31, 22:01, 22:20, 22:23, 23:01, 23:03, 23:05, 23:07, 23:10, 23:14, 23:17, 23:19, 24:10, 24:15, 25:09, 25:17, 25:19, 26:19, 26:21, 26:26, 26:32, 26:34, 28:01, 28:05, 28:06, 28:08, 28:18, 29:23, 29:28, 29:31, 29:33, 29:35, 30:05, 30:12, 30:19, 30:22, 31:45,

31:48, 32:03, 32:22, 32:27, 32:29, 33:12, 33:15, 33:18, 34:01, 35:06, 35:16, 35:21, 35:23, 35:26, 36:01, 36:04, 36:09, 36:13, 36:15, 36:17, 36:20, 36:23, 36:25, 36:29, 36:31, 36:34, 36:37, 36:40, 37:01, 37:15, 38:01, 38:03, 38:06, 38:08, 38:11, 38:12, 38:19, 38:21, 38:24, 38:29, 41:44, 41:50, 46:08, 46:12, 46:16, 46:19, 46:23, 47:11, 48:03, 49:28, 50:10, 50:12, 50:22

* Numbers is found in: 04:23, 05:03, 05:06, 05:21, 05:30, 06:01, 11:10, 20:15, 21:01, 21:05, 21:28, 22:23, 23:01, 23:14, 24:54, 24:59, 25:07, 25:13, 25:17, 25:19, 25:24, 26:12, 26:34, 31:38, 31:41, 32:06, 32:13, 33:18, 35:21, 35:28, 37:01, 37:09, 37:27, 41:46, 42:12, 45:21, 46:12, 46:16, 46:19, 46:23, 46:26, 47:07, 47:27, 50:01, 50:10, 50:22

* Ordinal Numbers is found in: 07:11, 08:13, 22:04, 22:15, 34:24, 41:04, 42:18

* Symbolic Action is found in: 21:25, 24:01, 24:08, 24:26, 24:47, 24:52, 24:63, 27:29, 28:18, 31:12, 33:01, 33:06, 35:01, 35:14, 41:42, 41:44, 42:05, 43:26, 43:28, 44:11, 44:14, 47:29, 48:11, 48:14, 48:17, 49:08, 50:18

* Translate Unknowns is found in: 02:11, 21:33, 25:31, 30:14, 30:37, 31:26, 43:11

* Background Information is found in: 13:05, 14:10, 14:13, 16:01, 16:15, 20:04, 23:10, 24:28, 25:27, 27:05, 28:06, 29:01, 29:15, 29:23, 31:24, 31:31, 31:34, 32:31, 34:04, 37:03, 39:05, 42:05, 42:23, 48:05, 48:08

* Connecting Words is found in: 24:12, 24:47, 26:15, 27:05, 30:31, 49:08

* Introduction of a New Event is found in: 21:22, 22:01, 22:20, 38:01, 38:24, 38:27, 39:05, 39:07, 39:10, 39:13, 39:16, 39:19, 40:01, 40:20, 41:01, 41:07, 42:01, 43:01, 44:23, 48:01

* Poetry is found in: 25:23, 49:01

* Symbolic Language is found in: 23:07, 23:12

List of translationWords in Genesis

* twelve tribes of Israel is found in: 49:28

* Abel is found in: 04:01, 04:03, 04:08, 04:25

* Abimelech is found in: 20:01, 20:04, 20:08, 20:10, 20:13, 20:15, 20:17, 21:22, 21:25, 21:28, 21:31, 26:01, 26:06, 26:09, 26:26

* abomination, abominable is found in: 46:33

* Abraham, Abram is found in: 11:24, 11:27, 11:29, 11:31, 12:01, 12:04, 12:06, 12:08, 12:10, 12:14, 13:05, 13:08, 13:12, 13:14, 14:10, 14:13, 14:15, 14:17, 14:19, 14:21, 15:01, 15:09, 15:12, 15:17, 16:01, 16:05, 16:15, 17:01, 17:17, 17:22, 17:24, 18:06, 18:11, 18:13, 18:16, 18:22, 18:27, 18:32, 19:26, 19:29, 20:01, 20:08, 20:10, 20:13, 20:17, 21:01, 21:05, 21:08, 21:10, 21:12, 21:14, 21:22, 21:25, 21:28, 22:01, 22:04, 22:07, 22:09, 22:11, 22:13, 22:15, 22:18, 22:20, 23:01, 23:03, 23:05, 23:07, 23:10, 23:12, 23:14, 23:17, 23:19, 24:01, 24:08, 24:12, 24:15, 24:26, 24:33, 24:42, 24:52, 24:59, 25:01, 25:05, 25:07, 25:09, 25:19, 26:01, 26:04, 26:18, 26:23, 28:03, 28:12, 31:41, 31:51, 32:09, 35:11, 35:26, 48:14, 49:28, 49:31, 50:12, 50:24

* Adam is found in: 03:17, 03:20, 04:25, 05:01, 05:03, 11:05

- * afflict, affliction is found in: 12:17, 16:11, 29:31, 41:50
- * Ai is found in: 12:08, 13:03
- * Almighty is found in: 17:01, 28:03, 35:11, 43:13, 48:03
- * altar is found in: 08:20, 12:06, 12:08, 13:03, 13:16, 22:09, 26:23, 33:18, 35:01, 35:06
- * marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished is found in: 43:32, 45:24
- * Ammon, Ammonites, Ammonitess is found in: 19:36
- * Amorite is found in: 10:15, 14:13, 15:14, 48:21
- * angel, archangel is found in: 16:07, 16:09, 16:11, 19:01, 19:14, 21:17, 22:11, 22:15, 24:05, 24:39, 28:12, 31:10, 32:01, 48:14
- * angry, anger is found in: 31:34, 31:36, 41:09, 44:18, 49:05, 49:07
- * anoint, anointed is found in: 31:12
- * Aram, Aramean, Aramaic is found in: 25:19, 28:05, 31:19, 31:24
- * Ararat is found in: 08:04
- * archer is found in: 21:19, 49:22
- * ark is found in: 06:13, 07:01, 07:17, 08:04, 08:08, 08:18, 09:08
- * Asher is found in: 30:12, 35:26, 46:16, 49:19
- * assembly, assemble is found in: 48:03, 49:01
- * Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire is found in: 10:11, 25:17
- * authority is found in: 16:09, 41:35, 41:44, 42:37
- * Babel is found in: 10:08, 11:08
- * barren is found in: 11:29
- * Beersheba is found in: 21:14, 21:31, 21:33, 22:18, 26:23, 26:32, 28:10, 46:01, 46:05
- * believe, believe in, belief is found in: 15:06, 45:24
- * Benjamin is found in: 35:16, 35:23, 42:01, 42:35, 42:37, 43:13, 43:16, 43:28, 44:11, 45:12, 45:21, 46:19, 49:27
- * Bethel is found in: 12:08, 13:03, 28:18, 31:12, 35:01, 35:06, 35:14, 35:16
- * Bethlehem, Ephrathah is found in: 35:16, 48:05
- * Bethuel is found in: 28:01
- * biblical time: day is found in: 08:04, 08:13, 21:01, 21:33, 22:04, 24:54, 25:07, 27:43, 29:19, 30:14, 30:35, 31:22, 42:14, 50:10
- * biblical time: month is found in: 29:13

- * **biblical time: year** is found in: 07:11, 08:13, 21:05, 23:01, 25:07, 25:19, 25:24, 26:12, 26:34, 29:15, 29:19, 31:38, 31:41, 35:28, 41:01, 41:25, 41:27, 41:46, 41:53, 45:04, 45:09, 47:07, 47:15, 47:27, 50:22, 50:24
- * **birthright** is found in: 25:31, 27:36, 43:32
- * **blameless** is found in: 06:09, 17:01
- * **bless, blessed, blessing** is found in: 01:22, 01:28, 02:01, 05:01, 09:01, 09:26, 12:01, 14:19, 17:15, 18:16, 22:15, 22:18, 24:01, 24:26, 24:31, 24:47, 24:59, 25:09, 26:02, 26:04, 26:12, 26:23, 26:28, 27:03, 27:08, 27:11, 27:18, 27:22, 27:24, 27:26, 27:29, 27:30, 27:32, 27:34, 27:36, 27:38, 27:41, 28:01, 28:14, 30:27, 30:29, 31:54, 32:24, 32:29, 35:09, 39:05, 47:07, 48:03, 48:08, 48:14, 48:19, 49:25, 49:26, 49:28
- * **blood** is found in: 04:10, 09:03, 09:05, 37:21, 37:25, 37:31, 42:21
- * **bloodshed** is found in: 09:05
- * **blot out, wipe out** is found in: 07:23
- * **bind, bond, bound** is found in: 22:09, 42:23, 44:30, 49:11
- * **bow, bow down** is found in: 17:03, 17:17, 18:01, 19:01, 23:07, 23:12, 24:26, 24:47, 24:52, 27:29, 33:01, 33:06, 37:07, 37:09, 42:05, 43:26, 43:28, 44:14, 47:29, 48:11, 49:08
- * **bow and arrow** is found in: 21:14, 27:03, 48:21, 49:24
- * **bread** is found in: 03:17, 14:17, 21:14, 25:31, 27:15, 28:20, 37:25, 40:16, 43:32, 45:21, 47:15
- * **breathe, breath** is found in: 07:21
- * **bronze** is found in: 04:20
- * **brother** is found in: 09:05, 09:24, 16:11, 19:06, 29:04, 33:09, 42:26, 43:06, 43:13, 47:01
- * **burden** is found in: 49:14
- * **burnt offering, offering by fire** is found in: 08:20, 22:01, 22:04, 22:07, 22:13
- * **bury, buried, burial** is found in: 25:09, 35:04, 35:06, 35:16, 35:28, 47:29, 48:05, 49:28, 49:31, 50:04, 50:12
- * **Cain** is found in: 04:01, 04:03, 04:06, 04:08, 04:13, 04:16, 04:23, 04:25
- * **call, calling, called, call out** is found in: 04:25, 41:07
- * **camel** is found in: 12:14, 24:10, 24:12, 24:19, 24:21, 24:28, 24:61, 30:43, 31:17, 31:34, 32:06, 32:13, 37:25
- * **Canaan, Canaanite** is found in: 09:18, 09:22, 09:24, 09:26, 10:06, 10:15, 10:19, 11:31, 12:04, 12:06, 13:05, 13:12, 16:01, 17:07, 23:01, 23:19, 24:01, 24:36, 28:01, 28:06, 28:08, 31:17, 33:18, 34:30, 35:06, 36:01, 36:04, 36:06, 37:01, 38:01, 42:05, 42:07, 42:12, 42:29, 44:08, 45:16, 45:24, 46:05, 46:08, 46:31, 47:01, 47:13, 47:15, 48:03, 48:05, 49:28, 50:04, 50:10, 50:12
- * **cast out, drive out, throw out** is found in: 21:10
- * **Chaldea, Chaldean** is found in: 11:27, 11:31, 15:06
- * **chariot** is found in: 41:42, 46:28, 50:07

- * cherubim, cherub is found in: 03:22
- * children, child is found in: 45:09, 46:08
- * circumcise, circumcision is found in: 17:09, 17:12, 17:22, 17:24, 21:01, 34:14, 34:22, 34:24
- * clan is found in: 10:02, 36:15, 36:17, 36:29, 36:40
- * clean, cleanse is found in: 07:01, 07:08, 08:20
- * comfort, comforter is found in: 50:18
- * command, to command, commandment is found in: 06:20, 07:04, 07:08, 21:01, 26:04, 27:08, 28:01, 28:06, 32:03, 42:23, 44:01, 45:19, 45:21, 47:11, 50:01
- * conceive, conception is found in: 21:01, 29:31, 29:33, 30:05, 30:16, 30:37, 30:41
- * concubine is found in: 22:23, 25:05, 35:21, 36:09
- * consume is found in: 31:38
- * corrupt, corruption is found in: 06:11
- * council is found in: 49:05
- * covenant is found in: 06:18, 09:08, 09:11, 09:14, 09:16, 15:17, 17:01, 17:03, 17:07, 17:09, 17:12, 17:19, 21:25, 21:31, 26:28, 31:43
- * covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love is found in: 21:22, 24:12, 24:26, 32:09, 39:21
- * cow, calf, bull, cattle is found in: 26:12, 32:13, 41:01, 41:04, 41:17, 41:19, 41:25, 41:27
- * create, creation, Creator is found in: 01:01, 02:01, 14:19, 14:21
- * creature is found in: 06:18
- * crown, to crown is found in: 49:26
- * curse, cursed is found in: 03:14, 03:17, 04:10, 05:28, 08:20, 09:24, 12:01, 27:11, 27:13, 27:29, 49:07
- * Cush is found in: 02:13, 10:06
- * cut off is found in: 17:12
- * cypress is found in: 06:13
- * Damascus is found in: 14:15, 15:01
- * Dan is found in: 14:13, 30:05, 35:23, 46:23, 49:16
- * death, die, dead is found in: 02:15, 03:01, 07:21, 27:01, 34:27
- * deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive is found in: 03:12, 27:11, 27:34, 31:07, 31:19, 31:26, 34:11
- * declare, declaration is found in: 41:25
- * deer, doe, buck, roebuck, fawn is found in: 49:19
- * defile, be defiled is found in: 34:04, 34:11, 34:27, 49:03

- * descendant, descended from is found in: 09:08, 10:01, 11:05, 11:10, 12:06, 13:14, 13:16, 15:04, 15:12, 15:17, 16:09, 17:07, 17:09, 17:12, 17:19, 21:12, 21:22, 22:15, 24:59, 25:01, 25:12, 26:02, 26:04, 26:23, 28:03, 28:12, 28:14, 32:11, 35:11, 36:01, 36:09, 36:15, 46:05, 46:26, 48:03, 48:19
- * desert, wilderness is found in: 14:03, 16:07, 21:14, 21:19, 36:23, 37:21
- * desolate, desolation is found in: 47:18
- * detestable, detest is found in: 43:32
- * devastate, devastation is found in: 41:30, 41:35
- * devour is found in: 31:14, 49:27
- * discern, discernment is found in: 41:33, 41:39
- * disgrace, disgraceful is found in: 34:06
- * divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer is found in: 30:27, 44:03, 44:14
- * donkey, mule is found in: 12:14, 16:11, 22:01, 24:33, 30:43, 32:03, 34:27, 36:23, 42:26, 43:18, 43:24, 44:03, 44:11, 45:21, 47:15, 49:11, 49:14
- * dove, pigeon is found in: 08:08, 08:10
- * dream is found in: 20:01, 20:06, 28:12, 31:10, 31:24, 37:05, 37:07, 37:09, 37:18, 40:04, 40:09, 40:16, 41:01, 41:04, 41:07, 41:09, 41:12, 41:14, 41:17, 41:22, 41:25, 41:30, 42:09
- * drink offering is found in: 35:14
- * Eden, garden of Eden is found in: 02:07, 02:09, 02:15, 03:22, 04:16
- * Edom, Edomite, Idumea is found in: 25:29, 32:03, 36:01, 36:06, 36:09, 36:15, 36:17, 36:20, 36:29, 36:31, 36:40
- * Egypt, Egyptian is found in: 12:10, 12:14, 13:01, 13:10, 15:17, 16:01, 21:08, 21:19, 25:12, 25:17, 26:02, 37:25, 37:27, 37:34, 39:01, 39:05, 40:01, 41:07, 41:19, 41:27, 41:30, 41:33, 41:35, 41:39, 41:42, 41:44, 41:46, 41:48, 41:53, 41:55, 42:01, 43:01, 43:32, 45:01, 45:04, 45:07, 45:12, 45:16, 45:21, 46:01, 46:05, 46:08, 46:19, 46:26, 47:05, 47:11, 47:15, 47:20, 47:25, 48:05, 50:01, 50:10, 50:12, 50:22
- * encourage, encouragement is found in: 21:17
- * Enoch is found in: 05:18, 05:21
- * enslave, in bondage is found in: 15:12
- * envy, covet is found in: 26:12, 30:01
- * Ephraim is found in: 41:50, 46:19, 48:01, 48:05, 48:14, 48:17, 50:22
- * Esau is found in: 25:24, 25:27, 25:29, 26:34, 27:01, 27:05, 27:11, 27:15, 27:18, 27:24, 27:30, 27:32, 27:36, 27:41, 28:05, 28:06, 32:03, 32:06, 32:11, 32:19, 33:01, 33:09, 33:15, 35:01, 35:28, 36:01, 36:04, 36:06, 36:09, 36:13, 36:15, 36:17, 36:40
- * everlasting, eternal, eternity is found in: 17:07, 17:12, 17:19, 21:33, 48:03, 49:26
- * Euphrates River is found in: 02:13, 15:17

- * Eve is found in: 03:20, 04:01
- * evil, wicked, wickedness is found in: 02:15, 03:04, 06:05, 13:12, 18:20, 18:22, 18:24, 19:06, 38:08, 39:07, 44:03, 44:33
- * face is found in: 30:39, 32:29, 33:09, 41:55, 43:03
- * faithful, faithfulness is found in: 20:13, 24:49, 47:29
- * false god, foreign god, god, goddess is found in: 31:19, 31:29, 31:31, 31:34, 35:01, 35:04
- * famine is found in: 12:10, 26:01, 41:27, 41:30, 41:35, 41:50, 41:53, 41:55, 42:05, 42:18, 42:33, 43:01, 45:04, 45:09, 47:03, 47:13, 47:20
- * ancestor, father, forefather is found in: 05:06, 05:09, 05:12, 05:15, 05:18, 05:21, 05:25, 05:28, 05:30, 05:32, 09:18, 11:12, 15:14, 17:03, 19:36, 26:15, 27:18, 27:32, 28:08, 28:12, 31:01, 31:29, 31:41, 31:51, 32:09, 35:28, 36:23, 36:40, 37:01, 41:50, 42:35, 43:06, 43:26, 45:07, 46:31, 46:33, 47:01, 47:03, 47:29, 48:14, 48:21, 49:25, 49:28
- * favor, favorable, favoritism is found in: 19:18, 30:27, 32:03, 33:09, 39:03, 39:21, 40:16, 41:14, 47:25, 50:04
- * fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh is found in: 03:09, 09:01, 15:01, 20:10, 22:11, 26:06, 28:16, 31:31, 31:41, 31:51, 32:06, 32:11, 35:16, 42:18, 42:35, 43:18, 43:21, 44:33, 46:01, 50:18
- * feast is found in: 21:08, 26:30, 29:21, 40:20
- * fig is found in: 03:07
- * firstborn is found in: 04:03, 27:18, 27:32, 29:26, 35:23, 36:15, 38:06, 41:50, 43:32, 46:08, 48:14, 48:17, 49:03
- * flesh is found in: 02:24, 06:01, 06:11, 06:16, 08:15, 09:11, 09:14, 09:16, 37:27, 40:18
- * flock, herd is found in: 21:28, 24:33, 27:08, 29:01, 29:07, 29:09, 30:31, 30:39, 30:43, 31:04, 31:38, 31:41, 31:43, 32:03, 32:06, 32:13, 32:19, 33:12, 34:27, 37:01, 37:12, 37:15, 38:17, 38:19, 45:09, 46:31, 47:01, 47:15, 47:18, 50:07
- * flood is found in: 06:16, 07:06, 07:08, 07:17, 09:11, 09:14, 09:28, 10:01, 11:10
- * fool, foolish, folly is found in: 31:26
- * foreigner, foreign, alien is found in: 17:24, 19:09, 20:01, 21:33, 23:03, 31:14
- * forever is found in: 43:08, 44:30
- * forgive, forgiveness is found in: 50:15
- * forsake, forsaken, forsook is found in: 24:26
- * fountain, spring is found in: 07:11, 08:01, 24:12, 24:15, 24:28, 24:42, 24:45, 36:23, 49:22
- * fruit, fruitful is found in: 01:11, 01:22, 01:28, 04:03, 28:03, 35:11, 41:50, 47:27, 48:03, 49:22
- * fulfill is found in: 26:02
- * furnace is found in: 19:26

- * Gad is found in: 30:09, 35:26, 46:16, 49:19
- * gate, gate bar is found in: 19:01, 22:15, 23:10, 23:17, 24:59, 28:16, 34:20, 38:12
- * Gaza is found in: 10:19
- * generation is found in: 07:01, 09:11, 10:32, 15:14, 17:07, 17:09, 17:12, 50:22
- * Gerar is found in: 20:01, 26:01, 26:06, 26:26
- * giant is found in: 06:04
- * gift is found in: 32:13, 32:17, 32:19, 43:11, 43:24
- * Gilead is found in: 31:19, 31:22, 31:24, 37:25
- * Girgashites is found in: 10:15
- * goat, kid is found in: 15:09, 27:08, 27:15, 30:31, 30:33, 31:10, 31:12, 31:38, 32:13, 37:31, 38:17, 38:19
- * God is found in: 01:01, 01:06, 01:09, 01:11, 01:16, 01:20, 01:22, 01:26, 01:28, 01:30, 02:01, 03:04, 06:11, 06:13, 06:20, 07:15, 08:01, 08:15, 09:01, 09:26, 12:08, 13:14, 14:17, 14:19, 15:17, 16:13, 17:07, 18:01, 18:16, 18:20, 18:22, 18:24, 18:32, 20:01, 20:06, 20:10, 20:13, 20:17, 21:01, 21:05, 21:12, 21:17, 21:19, 21:33, 22:01, 22:09, 23:05, 24:01, 24:05, 24:12, 24:42, 24:47, 25:09, 27:20, 27:28, 28:03, 28:12, 28:20, 30:01, 30:05, 30:22, 31:04, 31:12, 31:24, 31:29, 31:41, 31:48, 32:01, 32:09, 32:27, 32:29, 33:04, 35:01, 35:06, 39:07, 40:06, 41:14, 41:25, 41:27, 41:30, 41:39, 41:50, 42:18, 42:26, 43:13, 43:21, 44:16, 45:04, 46:01, 48:03, 48:14, 49:25, 50:15
- * gold is found in: 24:33, 41:42, 44:08
- * Gomorrah is found in: 10:19, 13:10, 14:01, 14:10, 18:20, 19:23, 19:26
- * good, goodness is found in: 01:03, 01:09, 01:11, 01:16, 01:30, 02:09, 02:15, 03:04, 41:22, 41:25, 41:35, 41:37, 44:03, 50:18
- * Goshen is found in: 45:09, 46:28, 47:01, 47:05, 47:27, 50:07
- * governor, govern, proconsul, government is found in: 42:05
- * grace, gracious is found in: 33:04, 43:28
- * grain is found in: 27:28, 27:36, 37:07, 41:04, 41:35, 41:48, 41:55, 42:01, 42:18, 42:23, 42:26, 42:33, 43:01, 44:01, 45:21, 47:13
- * grape is found in: 40:09, 49:11
- * guilt, guilty is found in: 26:09, 42:21
- * hades, sheol is found in: 37:34, 42:37, 44:27
- * Hagar is found in: 16:01, 16:07, 16:15, 21:08, 21:14, 21:17, 25:12
- * Ham is found in: 05:32, 06:09, 07:13, 09:18, 09:22, 10:01, 10:19
- * Hamor is found in: 34:01, 34:04, 34:06, 34:08, 34:18, 34:20, 34:24
- * hand, right hand, to hand over is found in: 09:01, 09:05, 14:19, 30:35, 32:11, 33:09, 37:21, 37:27, 41:44, 49:24

- * hang is found in: 40:20, 41:12
- * Haran is found in: 11:31, 12:04, 27:43, 28:10, 29:04
- * harp is found in: 04:20, 31:26
- * harvest is found in: 30:14, 45:04, 47:23
- * heal, cure is found in: 20:17
- * heart is found in: 08:20, 20:04, 20:06, 24:45, 27:41, 42:26, 45:24, 49:05
- * heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly is found in: 01:01, 02:01, 06:16, 07:19, 14:19, 15:04, 21:17, 22:11, 22:15, 24:01, 24:05, 26:04, 27:28, 27:39, 28:12, 28:16, 49:25
- * Hebrew is found in: 14:13, 39:13, 39:16, 40:14, 41:12, 43:32
- * Hebron is found in: 13:16, 23:01, 23:19, 35:26, 37:12
- * heifer is found in: 15:09
- * heir is found in: 15:01, 15:04, 21:10
- * Hittite is found in: 23:10, 25:09, 26:34, 36:01, 49:28, 50:12
- * Hivite is found in: 34:01
- * Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord is found in: 01:01, 41:37
- * honey, honeycomb is found in: 43:11
- * honor, to honor is found in: 30:19, 34:18
- * horse is found in: 47:15, 49:11
- * horsemen is found in: 50:07
- * house is found in: 28:01, 31:29, 34:24, 34:27, 39:03, 39:05, 41:09, 41:39, 42:18, 42:33, 43:16, 44:01, 45:01, 45:07, 45:16, 46:26, 46:31
- * household is found in: 07:01, 12:01, 12:17, 17:12, 17:24, 18:16, 20:17, 24:01, 24:28, 26:12, 30:29, 31:19, 31:34, 31:36, 31:41, 34:18, 34:30, 35:01, 36:06, 41:50, 45:09, 45:16, 47:11, 47:23, 50:07
- * house of God, Yahweh's house is found in: 28:16
- * image of God, image is found in: 01:26, 09:05
- * inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir is found in: 15:06, 28:03, 31:14, 48:05
- * iniquity is found in: 15:14, 44:16
- * innocent is found in: 20:04, 44:08
- * instruct, instruction is found in: 26:04
- * interpret, interpretation is found in: 40:04
- * Isaac is found in: 17:19, 21:01, 21:05, 21:08, 21:10, 21:12, 22:01, 22:04, 22:07, 22:09, 24:01, 24:12, 24:61, 24:63, 24:66, 25:05, 25:09, 25:19, 25:21, 25:27, 26:01, 26:06, 26:09, 26:12, 26:19, 26:30, 26:34,

27:01, 27:05, 27:20, 27:24, 27:26, 27:30, 27:32, 27:39, 27:46, 28:01, 28:06, 28:12, 31:17, 31:41, 31:51, 32:09, 35:11, 35:26, 35:28, 46:01, 48:14, 49:31, 50:24

* Ishmael is found in: 16:11, 16:15, 17:17, 17:19, 17:22, 17:24, 25:09, 25:12, 25:13, 25:17, 28:08, 36:01, 37:25, 37:27, 39:01

* Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel is found in: 32:27, 34:06, 35:09, 36:31, 49:07, 49:16, 49:24, 50:24

* Issachar is found in: 30:16, 35:23, 46:12, 49:14

* Jacob, Israel is found in: 25:24, 25:27, 25:29, 27:05, 27:11, 27:15, 27:18, 27:24, 27:26, 27:30, 27:36, 27:41, 27:46, 28:01, 28:06, 28:16, 29:01, 29:09, 29:19, 29:28, 30:01, 30:05, 30:16, 30:25, 30:35, 30:41, 31:01, 31:04, 31:17, 31:22, 31:29, 31:33, 31:36, 32:01, 32:13, 32:19, 32:27, 33:01, 33:09, 33:15, 33:18, 34:01, 34:04, 34:06, 34:11, 34:18, 34:24, 34:27, 34:30, 35:01, 35:04, 35:06, 35:09, 35:21, 35:26, 35:28, 36:06, 37:01, 37:03, 37:12, 37:31, 42:01, 42:05, 42:29, 42:37, 43:06, 43:08, 43:11, 45:21, 45:27, 46:01, 46:05, 46:08, 46:12, 46:19, 46:23, 46:26, 46:28, 47:07, 47:27, 47:29, 48:01, 48:08, 48:14, 49:01, 49:24, 49:31, 50:01, 50:24

* Japheth is found in: 05:32, 06:09, 07:13, 09:18, 09:26, 10:01, 10:21

* jealous, jealousy is found in: 37:09

* Jebusites, Jebus is found in: 10:15

* Jordan River is found in: 13:10, 32:09, 50:10

* Joseph (OT) is found in: 30:22, 30:25, 33:01, 35:23, 37:01, 37:12, 37:23, 37:27, 37:31, 39:01, 39:05, 39:10, 39:19, 40:01, 40:09, 40:18, 41:14, 41:17, 41:25, 41:39, 41:42, 41:44, 41:46, 41:50, 41:53, 41:55, 42:01, 42:07, 42:14, 42:23, 42:35, 43:13, 43:16, 43:18, 43:32, 44:01, 44:03, 45:01, 45:21, 45:27, 46:19, 46:26, 46:28, 47:01, 47:11, 48:01, 48:08, 48:17, 49:22, 50:01

* Judah is found in: 29:35, 35:23, 37:25, 38:01, 38:11, 38:12, 38:19, 43:03, 43:08, 44:14, 44:16, 44:18, 46:12, 46:28, 49:08, 49:10

* judge, judgment is found in: 15:14, 16:05, 31:36, 31:51, 49:16

* judge is found in: 18:24, 19:09

* just, justice, justly is found in: 18:16

* justify, justification is found in: 44:16

* Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh is found in: 14:07, 16:13, 20:01

* kind, kinds is found in: 01:20, 01:24

* king is found in: 14:01, 14:03, 14:10, 14:17, 14:21, 17:03, 17:15, 26:01, 26:06, 35:11, 36:31, 39:19, 40:01, 41:46

* kiss is found in: 27:26, 29:11, 29:13, 31:26, 31:54, 33:04, 45:14, 48:08, 50:01

* Laban is found in: 24:28, 24:31, 24:33, 24:50, 25:19, 27:43, 28:01, 28:05, 29:04, 29:09, 29:13, 29:19, 29:21, 29:28, 30:25, 30:35, 30:41, 31:01, 31:12, 31:19, 31:22, 31:33, 31:36, 31:48, 31:54, 32:03, 46:16, 46:23

* labor pains, in labor is found in: 35:16

- * **lamb, Lamb of God** is found in: 21:28, 22:07, 30:39
- * **Lamech** is found in: 04:18, 04:23, 05:25, 05:28, 05:30
- * **law, principle** is found in: 26:04
- * **Leah** is found in: 29:15, 29:23, 29:28, 30:09, 30:16, 31:04, 31:14, 31:33, 33:01, 34:01, 35:23, 35:26, 46:12, 46:16, 49:31
- * **Levite, Levi** is found in: 29:33, 34:24, 34:30, 35:23, 46:08
- * **life, live, living, alive** is found in: 01:30, 02:07, 02:09, 07:04, 07:21, 09:03, 09:05, 46:28
- * **lion** is found in: 49:09
- * **livestock** is found in: 07:21, 30:29, 31:07, 31:17, 33:12, 34:04, 46:05, 46:31, 47:05, 47:15
- * **loins** is found in: 37:34
- * **lord, master, sir** is found in: 19:01, 19:18, 23:05, 24:08, 24:12, 24:17, 24:26, 24:33, 24:39, 24:47, 24:50, 24:56, 24:63, 27:29, 27:36, 31:34, 32:03, 32:17, 33:06, 33:12, 39:01, 39:03, 39:07, 39:16, 40:01, 42:09, 42:29, 42:33, 43:18, 44:03, 44:06, 44:16, 44:33, 45:07, 47:18
- * **Lord** is found in: 18:03, 18:27, 18:29, 18:32, 20:04
- * **Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God** is found in: 02:15, 02:18, 03:12, 03:14, 03:20, 03:22, 15:01, 15:06
- * **Lot** is found in: 11:27, 12:04, 13:01, 13:05, 13:08, 13:10, 13:12, 13:14, 14:10, 14:15, 19:01, 19:04, 19:06, 19:09, 19:10, 19:12, 19:14, 19:18, 19:23, 19:26, 19:29, 19:30, 19:36
- * **love** is found in: 22:01, 25:27, 29:15, 29:28, 29:31, 34:08, 37:03, 44:20
- * **lust** is found in: 39:07
- * **magic, magician** is found in: 41:07, 41:22
- * **manager, steward** is found in: 15:01, 39:03, 39:05, 43:16, 43:18, 43:21, 43:24, 44:01, 44:03, 44:06, 44:08, 44:11
- * **Manasseh** is found in: 41:50, 46:19, 48:01, 48:05, 48:14, 48:17, 50:22
- * **meditate** is found in: 24:63
- * **Melchizedek** is found in: 14:17
- * **mercy, merciful** is found in: 19:16, 43:13
- * **Meshech** is found in: 10:02
- * **Mesopotamia, Aram Naharaim** is found in: 24:10
- * **Midian, Midianites** is found in: 25:01, 36:34, 37:27, 37:34
- * **mighty, might** is found in: 06:04, 49:24
- * **mind** is found in: 19:29, 30:22, 37:09
- * **Moab, Moabite, Moabites** is found in: 19:36, 36:34
- * **mock, ridicule, scoff at** is found in: 21:08, 39:13, 39:16

- * Most High is found in: 14:17, 14:19
- * mourn, mourning is found in: 23:01, 50:10
- * multiply is found in: 09:05, 22:15, 26:04, 26:23, 28:03, 35:11, 47:27, 48:03
- * myrrh is found in: 37:25
- * Nahor is found in: 22:20, 24:10, 31:51
- * name is found in: 04:25, 12:01, 26:23, 30:27, 35:09, 41:50, 48:14, 49:24
- * Naphtali is found in: 30:07, 35:23, 46:23, 49:19
- * nation is found in: 10:02, 10:19, 10:30, 12:01, 15:14, 17:03, 17:15, 17:19, 18:16, 20:04, 21:12, 21:17, 22:18, 25:23, 26:04, 27:29, 35:11, 46:01, 48:03, 48:19, 49:10
- * Negev is found in: 12:08, 13:01, 13:03, 20:01, 24:61
- * Nile River, River of Egypt is found in: 41:01, 41:17
- * Nineveh, Ninevite is found in: 10:11
- * Noah is found in: 05:28, 05:30, 05:32, 06:07, 06:20, 07:11, 08:15, 08:18, 09:01, 09:08, 09:16, 09:20, 09:24, 09:28, 10:01, 10:32
- * oak is found in: 12:06, 13:16, 14:13, 18:01, 35:04, 35:06
- * oath, swear, swear by is found in: 21:22, 21:31, 22:15, 24:01, 24:05, 24:08, 24:36, 24:39, 25:31, 26:02, 26:28, 26:30, 31:51, 47:29, 50:04, 50:24
- * obey, obedient, obedience is found in: 22:18, 26:04, 27:08, 27:13, 27:43, 28:06
- * offspring is found in: 22:18, 24:05
- * oil is found in: 28:18, 35:14
- * olive is found in: 08:10
- * oppress, oppression, oppressor is found in: 15:12, 31:41
- * overseer is found in: 41:33
- * ox, oxen is found in: 20:13, 21:25, 32:03, 49:05
- * Paddan Aram is found in: 25:19, 28:01, 31:17, 33:18, 35:09, 35:26, 46:12, 48:05
- * Paran is found in: 21:19
- * peace, peaceful is found in: 15:14, 26:28, 26:30, 34:04, 34:20, 43:21, 44:16
- * people group, peoples, the people, a people is found in: 19:36, 25:01, 25:23, 27:29, 28:03, 34:14, 34:22, 34:27, 41:55, 48:19, 49:16, 49:28, 49:31, 50:24
- * Perizzite is found in: 13:05, 34:30
- * Pharaoh, king of Egypt is found in: 12:14, 12:17, 37:34, 39:01, 40:01, 40:06, 40:09, 40:14, 40:16, 40:18, 41:01, 41:04, 41:07, 41:09, 41:12, 41:14, 41:17, 41:25, 41:27, 41:30, 41:33, 41:35, 41:37, 41:39, 41:42, 41:44, 41:46, 41:55, 42:14, 44:18, 45:01, 45:07, 45:16, 45:21, 46:05, 46:31, 46:33, 47:01, 47:05, 47:11, 47:18, 47:20, 47:25, 50:04

- * **Philistines** is found in: 10:11, 21:31, 21:33, 26:01, 26:06, 26:12, 26:15
- * **pillar, column** is found in: 28:18, 28:20, 31:12, 31:45, 31:51, 35:14, 35:16
- * **pit** is found in: 37:21
- * **plague** is found in: 12:17
- * **pledge** is found in: 38:17, 38:19
- * **possess, possession** is found in: 31:01, 31:36, 32:22, 41:42, 45:19, 46:05, 47:27, 48:03
- * **Potiphar** is found in: 37:34, 39:01, 39:13
- * **power, powers** is found in: 31:29, 45:12, 49:03
- * **praise** is found in: 29:35, 49:08
- * **pray, prayer** is found in: 20:06, 20:17, 25:21
- * **priest, priesthood** is found in: 14:17, 41:44, 41:50, 46:19, 47:20, 47:25
- * **prince, princess** is found in: 12:14, 25:13, 34:01, 49:26
- * **prison, prisoner, imprison** is found in: 31:26, 39:19, 39:21, 40:01, 42:14, 42:18
- * **promise** is found in: 21:01, 24:05, 28:14
- * **prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess** is found in: 20:06
- * **prosper, prosperity, prosperous** is found in: 26:21, 30:43, 32:09
- * **prostitute, harlot, whore** is found in: 34:30, 38:15, 38:21, 38:24
- * **prostrate** is found in: 43:28
- * **punish, punishment** is found in: 04:13, 19:14
- * **pure, purify, purification** is found in: 35:01
- * **Rachel** is found in: 29:04, 29:09, 29:11, 29:15, 29:19, 29:28, 30:01, 30:05, 30:07, 30:22, 30:25, 31:04, 31:14, 31:19, 31:31, 31:33, 33:01, 35:16, 35:23, 46:19, 46:23, 48:05
- * **reap, reaper** is found in: 26:12
- * **Rebekah** is found in: 22:23, 24:15, 24:28, 24:45, 24:50, 24:52, 24:56, 24:61, 24:63, 25:19, 25:21, 25:27, 26:06, 26:34, 27:05, 27:11, 27:15, 27:41, 28:05, 29:11, 35:06, 49:31
- * **rebel, rebellious, rebellion** is found in: 27:39
- * **rebuke** is found in: 31:41, 37:09
- * **reign** is found in: 36:31, 36:34, 36:37, 37:07
- * **remnant** is found in: 45:07
- * **renown, renowned** is found in: 06:04
- * **rest** is found in: 02:01
- * **restore, restoration** is found in: 20:06, 41:12

- * Reuben is found in: 29:31, 30:14, 35:21, 35:23, 37:21, 37:29, 42:21, 42:37, 46:08, 48:05
- * reveal, revelation is found in: 35:06, 41:27
- * righteous, righteousness is found in: 06:09, 07:01, 15:06, 18:16, 18:22, 18:24, 18:27, 20:04
- * right hand is found in: 48:11, 48:14, 48:17
- * robe is found in: 49:11
- * royal is found in: 49:19, 50:04
- * ruler, rulers, rule is found in: 41:39, 45:07, 45:24
- * sackcloth is found in: 37:34
- * sacred is found in: 28:20
- * sacrifice, offering is found in: 04:03, 08:20, 31:54, 46:01
- * salvation is found in: 49:16
- * sanctify, sanctification is found in: 02:01
- * Sarah, Sarai is found in: 11:29, 11:31, 12:04, 12:10, 12:17, 16:01, 16:05, 16:07, 17:15, 17:17, 17:19, 18:06, 18:09, 18:11, 18:13, 20:01, 20:13, 20:15, 20:17, 21:01, 21:05, 21:08, 21:12, 23:01, 23:19, 24:36, 24:66, 25:09, 49:31
- * save, safe is found in: 47:25
- * scepter is found in: 49:10
- * seal, to seal is found in: 38:17
- * seed is found in: 01:11, 03:14, 38:08
- * seize is found in: 21:25
- * send, send out, sent is found in: 41:07
- * serpent, snake, viper is found in: 03:01, 03:04, 03:12, 03:14, 49:16
- * servant, slave, slavery is found in: 09:24, 09:26, 16:01, 16:05, 16:07, 18:03, 19:01, 19:18, 20:08, 20:13, 20:17, 21:10, 21:12, 21:25, 24:01, 24:05, 24:08, 24:10, 24:12, 24:17, 24:33, 24:52, 24:59, 24:61, 24:66, 25:12, 26:15, 26:19, 26:23, 26:32, 27:36, 29:15, 29:23, 29:28, 30:03, 30:07, 30:09, 30:16, 30:43, 31:33, 32:03, 32:09, 32:13, 32:17, 32:19, 32:22, 33:01, 33:04, 33:06, 33:12, 35:23, 35:26, 39:16, 40:20, 41:09, 41:12, 41:37, 42:09, 42:12, 42:23, 43:18, 43:28, 43:32, 44:06, 44:08, 44:16, 44:18, 44:20, 44:23, 44:27, 44:30, 44:33, 45:01, 45:16, 47:03, 47:18, 47:20, 47:25, 49:14, 50:01, 50:18
- * serve, service is found in: 15:14, 25:23, 27:29, 27:39, 30:25, 30:29, 31:04, 43:30
- * sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking is found in: 16:01, 19:04, 19:06, 19:31, 19:34, 24:15, 26:09, 29:23, 30:03, 30:14, 30:16, 34:01, 35:21, 38:01, 38:08, 38:15, 38:17, 38:24, 39:07, 39:10, 39:13
- * shadow is found in: 19:06
- * shame, shameful, ashamed is found in: 30:22, 38:21

- * Shechem is found in: 12:06, 33:18, 34:01, 34:04, 34:06, 34:08, 34:11, 34:18, 34:20, 34:24, 34:30, 35:04, 37:12
- * sheep, ram, ewe is found in: 12:14, 15:09, 20:13, 21:25, 22:13, 26:12, 29:01, 29:04, 29:09, 30:31, 30:33, 31:19, 31:38, 32:13, 38:12
- * Shem is found in: 05:32, 06:09, 07:13, 09:18, 09:26, 10:01, 10:21, 10:30, 11:10
- * shepherd, to shepherd is found in: 04:01, 46:31, 46:33, 47:03, 49:24
- * Shiloh is found in: 49:10
- * Shinar is found in: 10:08, 11:01, 14:01, 14:07
- * Sidon, Sidonians is found in: 10:15, 10:19, 49:13
- * sign, proof, reminder is found in: 01:14, 09:11, 17:09
- * silver is found in: 20:15, 24:33, 33:18, 37:27, 42:35, 44:01, 44:08, 45:21
- * Simeon is found in: 29:33, 34:24, 34:30, 35:23, 42:23, 42:35, 43:21, 46:08, 48:05, 49:05
- * sin, sinful, sinner, sinning is found in: 04:06, 13:12, 18:20, 20:06, 20:08, 31:36, 39:07, 42:21
- * Sodom is found in: 10:19, 13:10, 13:12, 14:01, 14:10, 14:21, 18:16, 18:20, 18:22, 19:01, 19:04, 19:23, 19:26
- * son, son of is found in: 24:50, 29:04, 29:11, 41:50, 46:12
- * sons of God is found in: 06:01, 06:04
- * soul is found in: 42:21, 49:05
- * spirit, spiritual is found in: 07:21, 41:07, 45:27
- * staff is found in: 32:09, 38:17
- * statute, statutes is found in: 26:04, 47:25
- * storehouse is found in: 41:55
- * Succoth is found in: 33:15
- * sulfur is found in: 19:23
- * sweep, swept is found in: 18:24, 19:14, 19:16
- * sword is found in: 27:39, 34:24, 48:21, 49:05
- * Tamar is found in: 38:06, 38:11, 38:12, 38:24
- * Tarshish is found in: 10:02
- * tent is found in: 12:08, 25:27, 26:23, 31:33, 35:21
- * tenth, tithe is found in: 14:19, 28:20
- * terror, terrify is found in: 28:16
- * test is found in: 22:01, 42:14

- * **testimony, testify** is found in: 30:33
- * **thresh, threshing** is found in: 50:10
- * **throne** is found in: 41:39
- * **tomb, grave, burial place** is found in: 23:03, 23:05, 23:07, 23:19, 35:16, 50:04
- * **tribe** is found in: 17:19, 25:13, 49:16
- * **trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness** is found in: 24:26, 32:09, 47:29
- * **Tubal** is found in: 10:02
- * **uncircumcised, uncircumcision** is found in: 34:14
- * **unclean** is found in: 07:01, 07:08
- * **unleavened bread, Festival of Unleavened Bread** is found in: 19:01
- * **Ur** is found in: 11:27, 11:31, 15:06
- * **vine** is found in: 40:09, 49:11
- * **vineyard** is found in: 09:20
- * **virgin** is found in: 24:15
- * **vision** is found in: 15:01, 46:01
- * **voice** is found in: 21:14, 21:17, 22:18
- * **vow** is found in: 28:20, 31:12
- * **walk** is found in: 17:01, 24:39, 48:14
- * **well, cistern** is found in: 16:13, 21:19, 21:25, 26:15, 26:18, 26:19, 26:21, 26:32, 29:01
- * **wheat** is found in: 30:14
- * **wine, wineskin, new wine** is found in: 09:20, 14:17, 19:31, 19:34, 27:24, 27:28, 27:36, 49:11
- * **wise, wisdom** is found in: 03:04, 41:07, 41:33, 41:39
- * **witness, eyewitness** is found in: 21:28, 31:43, 31:48, 31:51
- * **womb** is found in: 25:23, 25:24, 29:31, 38:27, 49:25
- * **word** is found in: 30:33, 34:18, 37:07, 37:12, 41:39, 42:18, 44:06, 44:08, 44:18, 44:23, 45:27
- * **word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture** is found in: 15:01, 15:04
- * **worship** is found in: 21:33, 22:04, 24:26, 24:47
- * **worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless** is found in: 32:09
- * **wrong, mistreat, hurt** is found in: 16:05
- * **Yahweh** is found in: 02:04, 02:07, 02:09, 02:21, 03:01, 03:07, 03:09, 04:01, 04:03, 04:06, 04:08, 04:13, 04:16, 04:25, 06:05, 06:07, 07:01, 07:04, 07:15, 08:20, 09:26, 11:05, 11:08, 12:01, 12:04, 12:06, 12:17, 13:03, 13:10, 13:12, 13:16, 14:21, 15:06, 16:01, 16:05, 16:07, 16:09, 16:13, 17:01, 18:13, 19:12, 19:14,

19:16, 19:23, 19:26, 20:17, 21:01, 21:33, 22:11, 22:13, 22:15, 24:01, 24:05, 24:12, 24:21, 24:26, 24:31, 24:33, 24:39, 24:42, 24:47, 24:50, 24:52, 24:56, 25:21, 25:23, 26:02, 26:12, 26:23, 26:28, 27:05, 27:20, 27:26, 28:12, 28:16, 28:20, 29:31, 29:35, 30:22, 30:27, 30:29, 31:01, 31:48, 32:09, 38:06, 38:08, 39:01, 39:03, 39:05, 39:21, 49:16

* **yoke** is found in: 27:39

* **Zebulun** is found in: 30:19, 35:23, 46:12, 49:13

* **Zoar** is found in: 13:10, 14:01, 19:21, 19:23, 19:30

Genesis 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter presents the first account of God creating the world. There is a pattern to this account: “God said ... God saw that it was good ... This was evening and morning, the first day.” Translators should preserve this pattern in their versions.

Special concepts in this chapter

The universe

This account of creation is told within the framework of ancient Hebrew ideas about the universe: the earth was resting with water around it and below it. Over the earth was something like a vast dome, called “an expanse between the waters” (1:6), on top of which was more water. Translators should try to keep these original images in their work, even though readers in their project language might have a completely different idea of what the universe is like.

Evening and morning

Genesis 1 presents the ancient Hebrew idea of a day: it begins with sunset, lasts through the night and continues through the daylight hours until the next sunset. This pattern should be preserved in translation, even if readers in the project language define “day” differently.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“God said, ‘Let there be’”

This expression occurs often in this chapter. It can be difficult to translate, because God is not shown as talking to a particular person. If God is talking to a thing, it is something not yet in existence. Translators should find the most natural way in the project language to signal the idea that God spoke things into existence; he created the world and the things in it by simply commanding that they should exist.

Links:

- [Genesis 01:01 Notes](#)
- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

Genesis 1:1-2

UDB:

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² When he began to create the earth, it was shapeless and completely desolate. Darkness covered the surface of the deep water. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the water.

ULB:

1 ¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and empty. Darkness was upon the surface of the deep. The Spirit of God was moving above the surface of the waters.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [create, creation, Creator](#)
- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord](#)

translationNotes:

- **In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth** - “This is about how God made the heavens and the earth in the beginning.” This statement summarizes the rest of the chapter. Some languages translate it as “A very long time ago God created the heavens and the earth.” Translate it in a way that shows this actually happened and is not just a folk story.
- **In the beginning** - This refers to the start of the world and everything in it.
- **the heavens and the earth** - “the sky, the ground, and everything in them”
- **heavens** - This refers here to the sky.
- **without form and empty** - God had not yet put the world in order.
- **the deep** - “the water” or “the deep water” (UDB) or “the vast water”
- **the waters** - “the water” or “the surface of the water”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:3-5

UDB:

³ God said, “I command there to be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God was pleased with the light. Then he made the light shine in some places at certain times, while in other places there was still darkness. ⁵ He named the light “day,” and he named the darkness “night.” This was an evening and morning, the first day.

ULB:

³ God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw the light, that it was good. He divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” This was evening and morning, the first day.

translationWords:

- [good, goodness](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let there be light** - This is a command. By commanding that light should exist, God made it exist. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **God saw the light, that it was good** - “God considered the light and was pleased with it.” “Good” here means “pleasing” or “suitable.”
- **divided the light from the darkness** - “separated the light and the darkness” or “made it light at one time and dark at another.” This refers to God creating the daytime and the night time.
- **This was evening and morning, the first day** - God did these things on the first day that the universe existed.
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. (See: [Merism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:6-8

UDB:

⁶ Then God said, “I command that there be an empty space like a huge dome to separate the water into two parts.” ⁷ And that is what happened. God made the empty space like a huge dome and it separated the water that is above it from the water on the earth that is below it. ⁸ God named the space like a huge dome “sky.” This was an evening and morning, the second day.

ULB:

⁶ God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” ⁷ God made the expanse and divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. It was so. ⁸ God called the expanse “sky.” This was evening and morning, the second day.

translationWords:

- God

translationNotes:

- **Let there be an expanse ... let it divide** - These are commands. By commanding that the expanse should exist and that it divide the waters, God made it exist and divide the waters. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **expanse** - “large empty space.” The Jewish people thought of this space as being shaped like the inside of dome or the inside of a bowl that is turned upside down.
- **between the waters** - “in the water”
- **God made the expanse and divided the waters** - “In this way God made the expanse and divided the waters.” When God spoke, it happened. This sentence explains what God did when he spoke.
- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears.
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [1:5](#). (See: [Merism](#))
- **the second day** - This refers to the second day that the universe existed. See how you translated “the first day” in [1:5](#) and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:9-10

UDB:

⁹ Then God said, “I command the water that is below the sky to come together, and dry ground to appear and rise above it.” And that is what happened. ¹⁰ God gave to the ground the name “earth,” and he gave to the water that came together the name “oceans.” God was pleased with the earth and the oceans.

ULB:

⁹ God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear.” It was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry land “earth,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” He saw that it was good.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [good, goodness](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let the waters ... be gathered** - This can be translated with an active verb. This is a command. By commanding that the waters gather together, God made them gather together. AT: “Let the waters ... gather” or “Let the waters ... come together” (UDB) (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **let the dry land appear** - The water had covered the land. Now the water would move aside and some of the land would be uncovered. This is a command. By commanding that dry land should appear, God made it appear. AT: “let dry land become visible” or “let the dry land become clear” or “let the land be uncovered” (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **dry land** - This refers to land that is not covered with water. It does not refer to land that is too dry for farming.
- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears. Translate this as it is in [1:7](#).
- **earth** - “land” or “ground”
- **He saw that it was good** - Here “it” refers to the land and the sea. See how you translated this in [1:4](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 01 General Notes
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:11-13

UDB:

¹¹ Then God said, “I command the earth to produce many kinds of plants that reproduce themselves—plants that will produce seeds and trees that will produce fruit with their seed in it.” And that is what happened. ¹² Then plants grew on the earth. Each kind of plant began to produce its own kind of seed, and each kind of tree produced fruit with its seed in it. God was pleased with the plants and trees. ¹³ This was an evening and morning, the third day.

ULB:

¹¹ God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit whose seed is in the fruit, each according to its own kind.” It was so. ¹² The earth produced vegetation, plants producing seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit whose seed was in it, after their kind. God saw that it was good. ¹³ This was evening and morning, the third day.

translationWords:

- God
- seed
- fruit, fruitful
- good, goodness

translationNotes:

- **Let the earth sprout vegetation** - This is a command. By commanding that vegetation should sprout on the earth, God made it sprout. AT: “Let vegetation sprout up on the earth” or “Let vegetation grow on the earth” (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit** - “vegetation, each plant that bears seed and each tree that bears fruit” or “vegetation. Let them be plants that produce seeds and fruit trees that produce fruit.” Vegetation” is used here as a general term that includes all plants and trees.
- **plants** - These are kinds of vegetation that have soft stems, rather than woody stems.
- **fruit trees bearing fruit whose seed is in the fruit** - “trees that bear fruit with seeds in them”
- **each according to its own kind** - The seeds would produce plants and trees that would be like the ones they came from. In this way, the plants and trees would “reproduce themselves” (UDB).
- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears. Translate this as it is in [1:7](#).

- **God saw that it was good** - Here “it” refers to the vegetation, plants, and trees. See how you translated this in [1:10](#).
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [1:5](#). (See: Merism)
- **the third day** - This refers to the third day that the universe existed. See how you translated “the first day” in [1:5](#) and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:14-15

UDB:

¹⁴ Then God said, "I command many lights to shine in the sky. They will distinguish day from night. By the changes in their appearance they will indicate the time for various festivals and other things that people do at certain times and in certain years. ¹⁵ I also want these lights in the sky to shine down on the earth." And that is what happened.

ULB:

¹⁴ God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night and let them be as signs, for seasons, for days and years. ¹⁵ Let them be lights in the sky to give light upon the earth." It was so.

translationWords:

- [sign, proof, reminder](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let there be lights in the sky** - This is a command. By commanding that lights should exist, God made them exist. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **lights in the sky** - "things that shine in the sky" or "things that give light in the sky." This refers to the sun, moon, and stars.
- **in the sky** - "in the expanse of the sky" or "in the large space of the sky"
- **to divide the day from the night** - "to separate the day from the night." This means "to help us tell the difference between day and night." The sun means it is daytime, and the moon and stars mean it is nighttime.
- **let them be as signs** - This is a command. By commanding that they should serve as signs, God made them serve as signs. AT: "Let them serve as signs" or "let them show" (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **signs** - Here this means something that reveals or points to something.
- **seasons** - "Seasons" refers to times that are set aside for festivals and other things that people do.
- **for seasons, for days and years** - The sun, moon, and stars show the passing of time. This enables us to know when it is time for events that happen each week, month, or year.
- **Let them be lights in the sky to give light upon the earth** - This is a command. By commanding that they should light the earth, God made them light the earth. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **to give light upon the earth** - "to shine light on the earth" or "to brighten the earth." The earth does not self-shine but it is lit and so reflects light.

- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated this in [1:7](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:16-19

UDB:

¹⁶ God made two of them to be very big lights. The biggest one, the sun, he made to govern the day and the smaller one, the moon, he made to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set all of them in the sky to shine on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light of the daytime from the darkness of the nighttime. God was pleased with the lights. ¹⁹ This was an evening and morning, the fourth day.

ULB:

¹⁶ God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. ¹⁷ God set them in the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ This was evening and morning, the fourth day.

translationWords:

- God
- good, goodness

translationNotes:

- **God made the two great lights** - “In this way God made the two great lights.” This sentence explains what God did when he spoke.
- **the two great lights** - “the two large lights” or “the two bright lights.” The two great lights are the sun and the moon.
- **to rule the day** - “to direct the daytime as a ruler directs a group of people” or “to mark the times of the day” (See: [Personification](#))
- **day** - This refers only to the daylight hours.
- **the lesser light** - “the smaller light” or “the dimmer light”
- **in the sky** - “in the heavens” or “in the open space of the sky”
- **to divide the light from the darkness** - “to separate the light from the darkness” or “to make it light at one time and dark at another.” See how you translated this in [1:4](#).
- **God saw that it was good** - Here “it” refers to the sun, moon, and stars. See how you translated this in [1:4](#).
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [1:5](#). (See: [Merism](#))
- **the fourth day** - This refers to the fourth day that the universe existed. See how you translated “the first day” in [1:5](#) and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:20-21

UDB:

²⁰ Then God said, “Fill the waters with all kinds of living things that I have made, and fill the sky with birds that fly above the earth.” ²¹ So God created the very large creatures that live in the sea, and he created all the other living things that are found, in very great numbers, in the waters. He also created every kind of bird that has wings. All these creatures would be able to produce their own offspring. God looked at all that he had made and he was pleased with them.

ULB:

²⁰ God said, “Let the waters be filled with great numbers of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the expanse of the sky.” ²¹ God created the great sea creatures, as well as every living creature after its kind, creatures that move and which fill the waters everywhere, and every winged bird after its kind. God saw that it was good.

translationWords:

- God
- kind, kinds

translationNotes:

- **Let the waters be filled with great numbers of living creatures** - This is a command. By commanding that living creatures should fill the waters, God made them exist. Some languages may have one word that refers to all kinds of fish and sea animals. AT: “Let the waters be full of many living things” or “Let many animals that swim live in the oceans” (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **let birds fly** - This is a command. By commanding that birds should fly, God made them fly. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **birds** - “animals that fly” or “flying things”
- **the expanse of the sky** - “the open space of the sky” or “the sky”
- **God created** - “In this way God created”
- **great sea creatures** - “large animals that live in the sea”
- **after its kind** - Living things of the same “kind” are like the ones they came from. See how you translated “kind” in [1:11,12](#).
- **every winged bird** - “every flying thing that has wings.” If the word for birds is used, it may be more natural in some languages to simply say “every bird,” since all birds have wings.
- **God saw that it was good** - Here “it” refers to the birds and the fish. See how you translated this in [1:4](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:22-23

UDB:

²² So God blessed them. He said, “Produce offspring and become very numerous. I want the creatures in the water to live throughout all the bodies of water, and the birds also to become very numerous.” ²³ This was an evening and morning, the fifth day.

ULB:

²² God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas. Let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³ This was evening and morning, the fifth day.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [fruit, fruitful](#)

translationNotes:

- **blessed them** - “blessed the animals that he had made”
- **Be fruitful and multiply** - This is God’s blessing. He told the sea animals to produce more sea animals like themselves, so that there would be many of them in the seas. The word “multiply” explains how they are to be “fruitful.” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **multiply** - “increase greatly in number” or “become many”
- **Let birds multiply** - This is a command. By commanding that birds should multiply, God made birds multiply. (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **birds** - “animals that fly” or “flying things.” See how you translated this in [1:20](#).
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [1:5](#). (See: [Merism](#))
- **the fifth day** - This refers to the fifth day that the universe existed. See how you translated “the first day” in [1:5](#) and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:24-25**UDB:**

²⁴ Then God said, “I command the earth to produce various kinds of animals that reproduce themselves to live on the earth. There will be many kinds of domestic animals, creatures that crawl on the ground, and large wild animals.” And that is what happened. ²⁵ God made all kinds of wild animals and domestic animals and all kinds of creatures that crawl on the ground. They could all produce more animals of their same kind. God was pleased with them.

ULB:

²⁴ God said, “Let the earth produce living creatures, each according to its own kind, livestock, creeping things, and beasts of the earth, each according to its own kind.” It was so. ²⁵ God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, the livestock after their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground after its kind. He saw that it was good.

translationWords:

- **kind, kinds**

translationNotes:

- **Let the earth produce living creatures** - “Let the earth produce living things” or “Let many living animals live on the earth.” This is a command. By commanding that the earth should produce living creatures, God made the earth produce living creatures. (See: **Imperatives - Other Uses**)
- **each according to its own kind** - “so that each kind of animal will produce more of its own kind”
- **livestock, creeping things, and beasts of the earth** - This shows that God created all kinds of animals. If your language has another way of grouping all the animals, you can use that, or you can use these groups.
- **livestock** - “animals that people look after”
- **creeping things** - “small animals”
- **beasts of the earth** - “wild animals” or “dangerous animals”
- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated this in **1:7**.
- **God made the beasts** - “In this way God made the beasts”
- **He saw that it was good** - Here “it” refers to the living creatures on the earth. See how you translated this in **1:4**.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:26-27

UDB:

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make human beings to be like us. I want them to rule over the fish in the sea, over the birds in the sky, over all the domestic animals, and over all the other creatures that move across the surface of the ground.” ²⁷ So God created human beings that were like him in many ways. He made them to be like himself. He created them as male and female.

ULB:

²⁶ God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”^[1] Some ancient copies have: ... *Over the livestock, over all the animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.* ²⁷ God created man in his own image. In his own image he created him. Male and female he created them.

translationWords:

- God
- image of God, image

translationNotes:

- **Let us make** - The word “us” here refers to God. God was saying what he intended to do. The pronoun “us” is plural. Possible reasons for the plural use are 1) the plural form suggests that God is discussing something with the angels that make up his heavenly court or 2) the plural form foreshadows the later New Testament implications that God exists in the form of the Holy Trinity. Some translate it as “Let me make” or “I will make.” If you do this, consider adding a footnote to say that the word is plural. (See: [Pronouns](#))
- **man** - “human beings” or “people.” This word here does not mean males only.
- **in our image, after our likeness** - These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that God made mankind to be like him. This verse does not tell in what ways God made people to be like himself. God does not have a body, so it does not mean that people would look like God. AT: “to truly be like us” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Pronouns](#))
- **have dominion over** - “rule over” or “have authority over”
- **God created man ... he created him** - These two sentences mean the same thing and emphasize that God created people in his own image. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **God created man** - The way that God created man was different from the way he created everything else. Do not specify that he created man by simply speaking, as in the preceding verses.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:28-29

UDB:

²⁸ God blessed them, saying, “Produce many children, who should live all over the earth and rule over it. I want you to rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over all the creatures that move across the surface of the ground.” ²⁹ God said, “Look! I have given you all the plants that produce seeds all over the earth, and all the trees that produce fruit. All these things are for you to eat.

ULB:

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹ God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the surface of all the earth, and every tree with fruit which has seed in it. They will be food to you.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [fruit, fruitful](#)

translationNotes:

- **God blessed them** - The word “them” refers to the man and woman God had created.
- **Be fruitful, and multiply** - God told the man and the woman to produce more people like themselves so that there would be many of them. The word “multiply” explains how they are to be “fruitful.” See how you translated this in [1:22](#). (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **Fill the earth** - Fill the earth with people.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 1:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ I have given all the green plants to be food for all the wild animals, for the birds, and for all the creatures that move across the surface of the ground, that is, for everything that has life-giving breath in it.” And that is what happened. ³¹ God was pleased with everything that he had made. Truly, it was all very good. This was an evening and morning, the sixth day.

ULB:

³⁰ To every beast of the earth, to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, and to every creature that has the breath of life I have given every green plant for food.” It was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made. Behold, it was very good. This was evening and morning, the sixth day.

translationWords:

- life, live, living, alive
- God
- good, goodness

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking.
- **every bird of the heavens** - “all the birds that fly in the sky”
- **that has the breath of life** - “that breathes” (UDB). This phrase emphasizes that these animals had a different kind of life than the plants. Plants do not breathe, and were to be used as food for the animals. Here “life” means physical life.
- **It was so** - “It happened like that” or “That is what happened.” What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated this in [1:7](#).
- **Behold** - “Indeed.” The word “behold” here adds emphasis to what follows.
- **it was very good** - Now when God looked at everything he had made, it was “very good.” See how you translated “it was good” in [1:10](#).
- **evening and morning** - This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [1:5](#). (See: Merism)
- **the sixth day** - This refers to the sixth day that the universe existed. See how you translated “the first day” in [1:5](#) and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 01 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 1 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Gen. 2:1-3 ends the first creation account, begun in the previous chapter. The second creation account, beginning in 2:4, is very different, using a more natural, story-telling style instead of following a set formula using repeated phrases. Translators should try to imitate this difference in their versions.

Special concepts in this chapter

The second creation account in Gen. 2:4-25

Gen. 2:4-25 presents an account of creation from a different viewpoint than the one given in Gen. 1:1-2:3. This second account should be regarded as filling out the first account, not as conflicting with it.

Yahweh, the name of God

“Yahweh,” the personal name of God in the Old Testament, appears for the first time in this chapter. Translators must decide how to represent it in their versions. For 2,000 years, it has been traditional for many Christians to represent it with the term “the Lord.” Indeed, it is demanded by Roman Catholics for their Bible versions to continue doing this. Of course, the disadvantage of using “the Lord” is that this is a title for God, not a personal name. (See: [Yahweh](#))

Translators who are not producing versions for Roman Catholics can consider transliterating the name “Yahweh,” approximating the name as best as their project languages allow.

Or translators can consider using expressions for the supreme god that might exist in their project languages, such as, “The Great One,” “The Ruler of All,” “The One who Never Sleeps,” etc. Of course, these are descriptive titles, not personal names, so they suffer from the same disadvantages that “the Lord” has.

Translators can also consider pairing a transliteration of “Yahweh” with a meaningful title for the supreme god in the project language. Whatever solution is found should be followed consistently when the name “Yahweh” occurs in the Scriptures.

The Garden of Eden

This was not a vegetable garden or cultivated field. Instead, it was probably a large area of land with fruit trees and other plants bearing leaves, etc., that were good to eat. A river flowed out from the Garden of Eden, giving the impression that the Garden was a holy place; in the ancient Near East, temples had gardens and waterways. In Rev. 22:1-2, the throne of God in the New Jerusalem is pictured with a river flowing out from it. (See: [holy, holiness](#))

Links:

- **Genesis 02:01 Notes**

Genesis 2:1-3

UDB:

¹ That is the way God created the heavens and the earth and the living things that filled them. ² By the time it was the seventh day, God had finished the work of creating everything, so he did not work anymore on that day. ³ God declared that each seventh day would have his favor. He set those days apart to be special days, because on the seventh day God did not work anymore, after finishing all his work of creating everything.

ULB:

² ¹ Then the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the living things that filled them. ² On the seventh day God came to the end of his work which he had done, and so he rested on the seventh day from all his work. ³ God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation.

translationWords:

- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- God
- bless, blessed, blessing
- sanctify, sanctification
- rest
- create, creation, Creator

translationNotes:

- **the heavens** - “the sky” or “the skies”
- **and all the living things that filled them** - “and all the many living things that are in them” or “and all the crowds of living things in them”
- **were finished** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “God had finished creating them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **On the seventh day God came to the end of his work** - God did not work at all on the seventh day.
- **came to the end of** - This is an idiom. AT: “had finished” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **he rested on the seventh day from all his work** - “on that day he did not work”
- **God blessed the seventh day** - Possible meanings are 1) God caused the seventh day to produce good result or 2) God said that the seventh day was good.
- **and sanctified it** - “and set it apart” or “and called it his own”
- **in it he rested from all his work** - “on it he did not work”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:4-6

UDB:

⁴ What follows is how God created the heavens and the earth.

God, whose name is Yahweh, made the heavens and the earth. ⁵ At first there were no plants growing, because Yahweh God had not yet caused rain to fall on the ground. Furthermore, there was no one to plow the ground for planting crops. ⁶ Instead, mist rose up from the ground, so that there was water all over the surface of the ground.

ULB:

⁴ These were the events concerning the heavens and the earth, when they were created, on the day that Yahweh God made the earth and the heavens. ⁵ No bush of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. ⁶ But a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.

translationWords:

- **Yahweh**

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The rest of Genesis 2 tells about how God created people on the sixth day.
- **These were the events concerning the heavens and the earth** - “This is the account of the heavens and the earth” or “This is the story about the heavens and the earth.” Possible meanings are 1) it is a summary of the events described in Genesis 1:1-2:3 or 2) it introduces the events described in Genesis 2. If possible, translate this so that people can understand it either way.
- **they were created** - “Yahweh God created them.” In chapter 1 the writer always speaks of God as “God,” but in chapter 2 he always speaks of God as “Yahweh God.”
- **on the day that Yahweh God made** - “when Yahweh God created.” The word “day” refers to the whole time span of the creation, not to just one particular day.
- **Yahweh** - This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
- **No bush of the field** - no shrubs growing in the wild that animals might eat
- **no plant of the field** - no leafy plants like vegetables or greens that both animals and humans can eat
- **to cultivate** - to do everything he needed to do so that the plants would grow well

- **mist** - Possible meanings are 1) something like dew or morning fog o 2) springs from underground streams.
- **the whole surface of the ground** - the entire earth

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ Then Yahweh God took some soil and formed a man. He breathed into the man's nostrils his own breath that makes things alive, and as a result the man became a whole living person. ⁸ Yahweh God made a park in a place named Eden, which was east of the land of Canaan. There he placed the man that he had formed.

ULB:

⁷ Yahweh God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. ⁸ Yahweh God planted a garden eastward, in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [life, live, living, alive](#)
- [Eden, garden of Eden](#)

translationNotes:

- **formed** - "molded" or "shaped" or "created"
- **man ... man** - "a human being ... the human" or "a person ... the person" not specifically a male
- **his nostrils** - "his nose"
- **breath of life** - "breath that makes things live." Here "life" refers to physical life.
- **a garden** - This could have been an orchard of fruit trees or an area with all kinds of trees.
- **eastward** - "in the east"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ Yahweh God caused to grow from the ground every kind of tree that is beautiful to see and that produces fruit that is good to eat. He also placed in the middle of the park a tree whose fruit would enable those who ate it to live forever. He also placed there another tree whose fruit would enable those who ate it to know what actions were good to do and what actions were evil to do.

¹⁰ A river flowed from Eden to provide water for the park. Outside of Eden, the river divided into four rivers.

ULB:

⁹ Out of the ground Yahweh God made every tree to grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. This included the tree of life that was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became four rivers.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [good, goodness](#)
- [life, live, living, alive](#)
- [Eden, garden of Eden](#)

translationNotes:

- **the tree of life** - “the tree that gives people life”
- **life** - Here this means “eternal life” or life that does not end.
- **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** - “the tree that gives people the ability to understand both good and evil” or “the tree that makes people who eat its fruit able to know good things and bad things”
- **good and evil** - This is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. AT: “everything, including both good and evil” (See: [Merism](#))
- **in the midst of the garden** - “in the middle of the garden.” The two trees may not have been in the exact center of the garden.
- **A river went out of Eden to water the garden** - The garden was in Eden. The river continued to flow outside of Eden. AT: “A river flowed through Eden to water the garden.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 02 General Notes
- **Genesis 2 Translation Questions**

Genesis 2:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ The name of the first river is Pishon. That river flows through all the land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² That gold is very pure. There is also a sweet-smelling gum called bdellium and valuable stones called onyx.

ULB:

¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² The gold of that land is good. There are also bdellium and the onyx stone.

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **Pishon** - This is the only time this river is referred to in the Bible. (See: [How to Translate Names](#)).
- **the whole land of Havilah** - “the whole land called Havilah.” It was somewhere in the Arabian Desert. (See: [How to Translate Names](#)).
- **where there is gold** - This phrase gives information about Havilah. Some languages would translate it as a separate sentence. AT: “There is gold in Havilah” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **There are also bdellium and the onyx stone** - The word “there” is placed first in the sentence for emphasis. AT: “This is also where people can find bdellium and onyx stones”
- **bdellium** - This resin comes from a tree and smells nice. A resin is sticky stuff that comes out of some trees and can burn. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **the onyx stone** - “onyx stones.” Onyx is a certain kind of beautiful stone. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:13-14**UDB:**

¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon. That river flows through all the land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris. It flows east of the city of Asshur. The name of the fourth river is Euphrates.

ULB:

¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

translationWords:

- [Cush](#)
- [Euphrates River](#)

translationNotes:

- **Gihon** - This is the only mention of this river in the Bible. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **flows throughout the whole land of Cush** - The river did not cover the whole land, but wound through various parts of the land.
- **the whole land of Cush** - “the entire land called Cush”
- **which flows east of Asshur** - “which flows in the land east of the city of Asshur.” The Tigris River flows from north to south. The phrase “which flows east of Asshur” gives information about where the Tigris River is. Some languages would translate it as a separate sentence. AT: “and it flows east of Asshur” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ Yahweh God took the man and put him in Eden to plow it and take care of it. **16-17** But Yahweh said to him, “I will not permit you to eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on the day you eat it you will surely die. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park.”

ULB:

¹⁵ Yahweh God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to work it and to maintain it. ¹⁶ Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From every tree in the garden you may freely eat. ¹⁷ But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.”

translationWords:

- Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God
- Eden, garden of Eden
- good, goodness
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- death, die, dead

translationNotes:

- **the garden of Eden** - “the garden that was in Eden”
- **to work it** - “to cultivate it.” This means to do everything necessary so that the plants will grow well.
- **to maintain it** - to guard against anything bad happening in it
- **From every tree in the garden** - “The fruit of every tree in the garden”
- **you** - This pronoun is singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **you may freely eat ... you may not eat** - In some languages it would be natural to first say what is not permitted and to then say what is permitted, as in the UDB.
- **may freely eat** - “may eat without restriction”
- **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** - “the tree that gives people the ability to understand both good and evil” or “the tree that makes people who eat its fruit able to know good things and bad things.” See how you translated this in [2:9](#).
- **you may not eat** - “I will not permit you to eat” (UDB) or “you must not eat”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:18-20

UDB:

¹⁸ Yahweh God said, “It is not good for this man to be alone. So I will make someone who will be a suitable partner for him.” ¹⁹ Yahweh God had taken some soil and had formed all kinds of animals and birds, and he brought them to the man to hear what names he would give to them. And the man gave a name to every living animal that Yahweh had made. ²⁰ Then the man gave names to all the kinds of cattle, birds, and wild animals, but none of these creatures was a partner that was suitable for the man.

ULB:

¹⁸ Then Yahweh God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him.” ¹⁹ Out of the ground Yahweh God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the sky. Then he brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the livestock, to all the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field. But for the man himself there was found no helper suitable for him.

translationWords:

- [Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God](#)

translationNotes:

- **I will make him a helper suitable for him** - “I will make a helper who is just right for him”
- **every animal of the field and every bird of the sky** - The phrases “of the field” and “of the sky” tell where the animals and birds are usually found. AT: “all kinds of animals and birds.”
- **all the livestock** - “all the animals that people look after”
- **there was found no helper suitable for him** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “there was no companion that was right for him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:21-23

UDB:

²¹ So Yahweh God caused the man to become deeply asleep. While the man was sleeping, Yahweh took out one of the man's ribs. Then he immediately closed the opening in his body and healed it. ²² Yahweh then made a woman from the rib that he had taken from the man's body, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man exclaimed, "Finally, this is truly someone like me! Her bones came from one of my bones, and her flesh came from my flesh. So I will call her woman, because she was taken from me, a man."

ULB:

²¹ Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, so the man slept. Yahweh God took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh where he took the rib. ²² With the rib that Yahweh God had taken from the man, he made a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ The man said,

"This time, this one is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.

She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of man."

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man** - "caused the man to sleep intensely." A deep sleep is a time of sleeping in which a person is not easily disturbed or wakened.
- **With the rib ... he made a woman** - "From the rib ... he formed a woman." The rib was the material God made the woman from.
- **This time, this one is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh** - "Finally, this one's bones are like my bones, and her flesh is like my flesh." After looking among all the animals for a partner and not finding one, he finally saw someone who was like him and could be his partner. The man was probably expressing his feeling of relief and joy.
- **flesh** - This refers to the soft parts of the body like skin and muscle.
- **She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of man** - The translator may want to write a footnote saying "The Hebrew word for 'woman' sounds like the Hebrew word for 'man.'"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 02 General Notes
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 2:24-25

UDB:

²⁴ The first woman was taken from the man's body, so that is why when a man and a woman marry, they must leave their parents. The man will join very closely to his wife, so that the two of them will be as though they are one person.

²⁵ Although the man and his wife were naked, they were not ashamed about being naked.

ULB:

²⁴ Therefore a man will leave his father and his mother, he will be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵ They were both naked, the man and his wife, but were not ashamed.

translationWords:

- [flesh](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - What follows is written by the author. The man did not say these things.
- **Therefore** - "That is why"
- **a man will leave his father and his mother** - "a man will stop living in his father and mother's home." This is about men in general. It does not refer to any particular man at any particular time.
- **they will become one flesh** - This idiom speaks of sexual activity as though the bodies that are together become one body. AT: "their two bodies will become one body" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **They were both naked** - The word "they" refers to the man and the woman that God had created.
- **naked** - "not wearing clothing"
- **but were not ashamed** - "they were not ashamed about being naked" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 02 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 2 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the second creation account that began in Gen. 2:4. But a new section of this account begins in 3:1. The ULB reads, “Now the serpent was more shrewd than any other beast of the field which Yahweh God had made,” because this is how the Scriptures introduce the serpent into the account. However, many languages prefer different ways to introduce new characters or things into stories, for example, “One of the wild animals made by God was the serpent” or “This is about the serpent, one of the wild animals that God had made.”

Scholars typically refer to the events of this chapter as “the fall” or “the fall of man” because sin is introduced into creation. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Curses

In this chapter, God curses the man, the woman, and the serpent for their misdeeds. In general, cursing is calling down God’s punishment on someone or something. In this chapter, however, it is God himself who is doing the cursing. Of course, he does not call down punishment on the man, the woman, and the serpent from someone else. Instead, he is promising that he himself will punish them. (See: [curse](#), [cursed](#))

Serpent

Most scholars believe that the serpent is Satan, even though his name is not used in this chapter. There are other places in Scripture where the serpent is used as an image for Satan. (See: [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 03:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 3:1-3

UDB:

¹ Now the snake was more cunning than all the other wild animals that Yahweh God had made. The snake said to her, “Did God really say to you, ‘Do not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the park?’” ² The woman replied, “What God said was, ‘Do not eat the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the park or touch it. If you do that, you will die.’” ³ But you can eat fruit from any of the other trees.”

ULB:

3 ¹ Now the serpent was more shrewd than any other beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. He said to the woman, “Has God really said, ‘You must not eat from any tree of the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees of the garden, ³ but concerning the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You may not eat it, nor may you touch it, or you will die.’”

translationWords:

- serpent, snake, viper
- Yahweh
- death, die, dead

translationNotes:

- **Now** - The writer is beginning a new part of the story.
- **more shrewd** - “more cunning” (UDB) or “smarter at getting what he wanted by telling lies”
- **Has God really said, ‘You ... garden?’** - The snake is pretending to be surprised that God has made this rule. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: “I am surprised that God said, ‘You ... garden.’” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **You must not eat** - The word “you” is plural and refers to the man and the woman. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **We may eat ... God said, ‘You may not eat it** - Eve told the serpent what God had permitted them to do first and then what God had told them not to do. Some languages would say what they were told not to do first and then say what they were allowed to do, as in the UDB.
- **We may eat** - “We are allowed to eat” or “We have permission to eat”
- **You may not ... nor may you ... you will die** - The word “you” is plural and refers to the man and the woman. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **You may not eat it** - “You must not eat it” or “Do not eat it”
- **nor may you touch it** - “and you must not touch it” or “and do not touch it”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:4-6

UDB:

⁴ The snake said to the woman, "No, you will certainly not die. God said that ⁵ only because he knows that when you eat fruit from that tree, you will understand new things. It will be as though your eyes were opened, and you will know what is good to do and what is evil to do, just as God does." ⁶ The woman saw that the fruit on that tree was good to eat, and it was very beautiful. She desired it because she thought it would make her wise. So she picked some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he ate it.

ULB:

⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "You will surely not die. ⁵ For God knows that the day you eat it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. Then she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.

translationWords:

- serpent, snake, viper
- God
- good, goodness
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- wise, wisdom

translationNotes:

- **You ... you ... your ... you** - These words refer to the man and the woman and so are dual or plural. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **your eyes will be opened** - "your eyes will open." This idiom means "you will become aware of things" or "you will understand new things." This meaning can be stated clearly. AT: "It will be as though your eyes were opened" (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#))
- **knowing good and evil** - Here "good and evil" is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. See how you translated "knowledge of good and evil" in [2:9](#). AT: "knowing everything, including both good and evil" (See: [Merism](#))
- **it was a delight to the eyes** - "the tree was delightful to look at" or "it was nice to look at" or "it was very beautiful" (UDB)
- **and that the tree was desirable to make one wise** - "and she wanted the tree's fruit because it could make a person wise" or "and she wanted its fruit because it could make her understand what was right and wrong just as God does"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:7-8

UDB:

⁷ Immediately it was as though their eyes were opened, and they realized that they were naked, so they were ashamed. So they picked some fig leaves and fastened them together to make clothes for themselves.

⁸ Late that afternoon, when a cool breeze was blowing, they heard the sound of Yahweh God as he was walking in the park. So the man and his wife hid themselves among the bushes in the park, so that Yahweh God would not see them.

ULB:

⁷ The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. ⁸ They heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, so the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [fig](#)

translationNotes:

- **The eyes of both of them were opened** - “Then their eyes opened” or “They became aware” or “They understood.” See how you translated “your eyes will be opened” in [3:5](#).
- **sewed** - “fastened” or “joined”
- **fig leaves** - If people do not know what fig leaves are like, this can be translated as “large leaves from a fig tree” or simply “large leaves.”
- **and made coverings for themselves** - They did this because they were ashamed. This implicit information can be made explicit if needed as in the UDB. AT: “and clothed themselves with them because they were ashamed” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **in the cool of the day** - “at the time of day when a cool breeze blows”
- **from the presence of Yahweh God** - “from Yahweh God’s sight” or “so that Yahweh God would not see them” (UDB) or “from Yahweh God”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:9-11

UDB:

⁹ But Yahweh God called to the man, saying to him, “Why are you trying to hide from me?” ¹⁰ The man replied, “I heard the sound of your footsteps in the garden, and I was naked, so I was afraid and I hid from you.” ¹¹ God said, “How did you find out you were naked? It must be because you ate some of the fruit from the tree that I told you, ‘Do not eat its fruit.’ Is that what you have done?”

ULB:

⁹ Yahweh God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ The man said, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked. So I hid myself.” ¹¹ God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Where are you?** - “Why are you trying to hide from me?” (UDB). God knew where the man was. When the man answered, he did not say where he was but why he was hiding.
- **you** - In verses 9 and 11, God was speaking to the man. Languages that have a singular form of “you” would use that here. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **I heard you** - “I heard the sound you were making”
- **Who told you** - God knew the answer to this question. He asked it in order to force Adam to confess that he had disobeyed God. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Have you eaten ... from?** - Again, God knew this had happened. Translate this question in a form that shows God was accusing Adam of disobedience. The sentence can be translated as a statement. AT: “You must have eaten ... from.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:12-13

UDB:

¹² The man said, “You gave me this woman to be with me. She is the one who gave me some of the fruit from that tree, so I ate it.” ¹³ Then Yahweh God said to the woman, “Why did you do such a thing?” The woman replied, “I ate it because the snake deceived me.”

ULB:

¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” ¹³ Yahweh God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent lied to me, and I ate.”

translationWords:

- [Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God](#)
- [serpent, snake, viper](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)

translationNotes:

- **What is this you have done?** - God already knew what the woman had done. When he asked this question, he was giving her the opportunity to tell him about it, and he was expressing his disappointment with what she had done. Many languages use rhetorical questions for scolding or rebuking. If possible, use a form that expresses this disappointment. It can also be translated as a statement. AT: “You have done a terrible thing.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Then Yahweh God said to the snake, "Because you did this, of all the domestic animals and the wild animals, I will curse you alone. As a result, you and all other snakes will crawl on the ground on your bellies, and so what you eat will have dirt on it as long as you live. ¹⁵ I will cause you and the woman to be enemies to each other, and I will cause your descendant and her descendant to be enemies toward each other. You will bite his heel, but he will crush your head."

ULB:

¹⁴ Yahweh God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you alone among all the livestock
and all the beasts of the field.

It is on your stomach that you will go,
and it is dust that you will eat all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put hostility between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed.

He will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel."

translationWords:

- Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God
- serpent, snake, viper
- curse, cursed
- seed

translationNotes:

- **cursed are you alone** - "you alone are cursed." The word "curse" is first in Hebrew in order to emphasize the contrast between God's blessing on the animals and this curse on the serpent. This is a "curse formula," or the way that curses were expressed. By saying this curse, God made it happen.
- **all the livestock and all the beasts of the field** - "all domestic animals and all wild animals"
- **It is on your stomach that you will go** - "You will move along the ground on your stomach." The words "it is upon your stomach" comes first to emphasize the contrast between the way other animals would move along using their legs and the way the serpent would slither along on its stomach. This is also part of the curse formula.

- **it is dust that you will eat** - “you will eat dust.” The words “it is dust” comes first to emphasize the contrast between the plants above the ground that other animals would eat and the dirty food on the ground that the serpent would eat. This is part of the curse formula.
- **hostility between you and the woman** - This means that the serpent and the woman would become enemies.
- **seed** - “offspring” or “descendant.” The word “seed” refers to what a man puts into a woman to cause a baby to grow inside the woman. Like the word “offspring,” it can refer to more than one person, as in the word “descendants.” Try to find a word that is singular but can refer to more than one person.
- **He will bruise ... his heel** - The words “he” and “his” refer to the woman’s descendant. If “seed” was translated as plural, this can be translated as “they will bruise ... their heel”; in this case, consider inserting footnotes to say that the “they” and “their” are used to translate a singular pronoun. (See: [Pronouns](#))
- **bruise** - “crush” or “strike” or “attack”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:16

UDB:

¹⁶ Then Yahweh said to the woman, “I will make you have great pain when you give birth to children. You will want to be with your husband, but he will rule over you.”

ULB:

¹⁶ To the woman he said,

”I will greatly multiply your pain in having children;
it is in pain that you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband, but he will rule over you.”

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **I will greatly multiply your pain** - “I will make your pain increase much” or “I will make your pain to be very severe”
- **in having children** - “in giving birth to children” or “when you give birth to children” (UDB)
- **Your desire will be for your husband** - “You will have a strong desire for your husband.” Possible meanings are 1) “You will want very much to be with your husband” or 2) “You will want to control your husband”
- **he will rule over you** - “he will be your master” or “he will control you”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:17-19**UDB:**

¹⁷ Then he said to the man, "You listened to what your wife said, and you ate some of the fruit of the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat it.' So I will make it difficult to grow things in the ground because of what you did. You will have to work hard as long as you live to produce things from the ground to eat. ¹⁸ Thornbushes and thistle plants and other weeds will grow and prevent what you have planted from growing. And for food, you will have to eat things that just grow in your fields. ¹⁹ All your life you will sweat as you work hard to produce food to eat. Then you will die, and your body will be buried in the ground. I made you from soil, so your body will become soil again."

ULB:

¹⁷ To Adam he said,

"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and have eaten from the tree, concerning which I commanded you,
saying, 'You may not eat from it,'
cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful work you will eat from it all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you will eat bread,
until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken.
For dust you are, and to dust you will return."

translationWords:

- Adam
- curse, cursed
- bread

translationNotes:

- **Adam** - The name Adam is the same as the Hebrew word for "man." Some translations say "Adam" and some say "the man." You may use either form as it refers to the same person.
- **you have listened to the voice of your wife** - This is an idiom. AT: "you have obeyed what your wife said" (See: **Idiom**)

- **have eaten from the tree** - You can say what it was that they ate. AT: “have eaten the fruit of the tree” or “have eaten some of the fruit of the tree” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **You may not eat from it** - “You must not eat from it” or “Do not eat its fruit”
- **cursed is the ground** - The word “curse” comes first in the sentence to emphasize that the ground, which had been “good” (1:10), was now under God’s curse. This can be stated in active form. AT: “I am cursing the ground” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **through painful work** - “by doing hard work”
- **you will eat from it** - The word “it” refers to the ground and is a metonym for the parts of the plants, which grow in the ground, that people eat. AT: “you will eat what grows from it” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the plants of the field** - Possible meanings are 1) “the plants that you take care of in your fields” or 2) “the wild plants that grow in the open fields.”
- **By the sweat of your face** - “By doing hard work that makes your face sweat”
- **you will eat bread** - Here the word “bread” is a synecdoche for food in general. AT: “you will eat food” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **until you return to the ground** - “until you die and your body is put in the ground.” In some cultures, they put the bodies of people who have died in a hole in the ground. Man’s hard work does not end until the time of his death and burial.
- **For dust you are, and to dust you will return** - “I made you from soil, so your body will become soil again.” Translate both occurrences of “dust” with the same word in order to show that man begins and ends in the same condition.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ The man, whose name was Adam, named his wife Eve, which means “living,” because she became the ancestor of all living people. ²¹ Then Yahweh God killed some animals and made clothes from their skins for Adam and his wife.

ULB:

²⁰ The man called his wife’s name Eve because she was the mother of all the living. ²¹ Yahweh God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

translationWords:

- [Eve](#)
- [Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God](#)
- [Adam](#)

translationNotes:

- **The man** - Some translations say “Adam.”
- **called his wife’s name Eve** - “gave his wife the name Eve” or “named his wife Eve” (UDB)
- **Eve** - Translators may write a footnote saying “The name Eve sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘living.’”
- **all the living** - The word “living” refers to people. AT: “all the people” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **garments of skins** - “clothing made out of animal skins”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 3:22-24**UDB:**

²² Then Yahweh God said, “Look! Those two have become like us because they know what is good to do and what is evil to do. So now, it will not be good if they reach out and pick and eat some of the fruit from the tree which enables people who eat it to live forever!” ²³ So Yahweh God drove out the man and his wife from the park of Eden. Yahweh God had created Adam from the ground, and he forced him to plow the ground. ²⁴ After Yahweh God drove them out, on the east side of the park he placed cherubim and a flaming sword that flashed back and forth, in order to block the entrance, so that people could not go back to the tree that enables anyone who eats its fruit to live forever.

ULB:

²² Yahweh God said, “Now the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. So now he must not be allowed to reach out with his hand, take from the tree of life, eat it, and live forever.” ²³ Therefore Yahweh God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ So God drove the man out of the garden, and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword that turned every way, in order to guard the way to the tree of life.

translationWords:

- Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God
- Eden, garden of Eden
- cherubim, cherub

translationNotes:

- **the man** - Possible meanings are 1) God was referring to one human, the man, or 2) God was referring to humans in general, so this would mean the man and his wife. Even if God was speaking about one person, what he said applied to both of them.
- **like one of us** - “like us.” The pronoun “us” is plural. See how you translated “Let us make” in [1:26](#).
- **knowing good and evil** - Here “good and evil” is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. See how you translated “knowledge of good and evil” in [2:9](#). AT: “knowing everything, including both good and evil” (See: [Merism](#))
- **he must not be allowed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “I will not allow him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **tree of life** - “the tree that gives people life.” Translate this as in [2:9](#).

- **the ground from which he had been taken** - “dirt because he had been taken from dirt.” This does not refer to the particular place on the land that the God took man from.
- **So God drove the man out of the garden** - “God forced the man to leave the garden.” This refers to the event in [3:23](#) , where it says “Yahweh God sent him out of the garden of Eden.” God did not send the man out a second time.
- **to cultivate** - This means to what is needed so that plants grow well. Translate this as in [2:5](#).
- **in order to guard the way to the tree of life** - “in order to stop people from going to the tree of life”
- **flaming sword** - Possible meanings are 1) a sword that had flames coming from it or 2) a fire that was shaped like a sword. Languages that do not have swords could use another weapon such as a spear or arrow.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 03 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 3 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Most of the text in this chapter is prose, but 4:23-24 is poetry. If the translator should put these two verses into poetic form, or at least into elegant speech, different from the rest of the chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Vengeance

The theme of vengeance is important in this chapter. Ancient Hebrew society allowed for people to seek revenge if a relative was murdered. After Cain murdered his brother Abel, he thought that he would be helpless against this danger because he had been driven away from God's protection. (See: [avenge](#), [revenge](#), [vengeance](#))

The theme of vengeance continues with the words of Lamech, who had killed someone for injuring him: "I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for bruising me. If Cain is avenged seven times as much, truly Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times as much" (Gen. 4:23b-24).

Links:

- [Genesis 04:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 4:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Adam slept with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son whom she named Cain, which means “produce,” because, she said, “By Yahweh’s help I have produced a son.”

² Some time later she gave birth to another son, and she named him Abel. After those boys grew up, Abel tended sheep and goats, and Cain became a farmer.

ULB:

4 ¹ The man slept with Eve his wife. She conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, “I have produced a man with Yahweh’s help.” ² Then she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel became a shepherd, but Cain cultivated the soil.

translationWords:

- Eve
- Cain
- Yahweh
- Abel
- shepherd, to shepherd

translationNotes:

- **The man** - “the human being” or “Adam” (UDB)
- **slept with** - Your language may have a way of saying this politely. Some older versions say “knew.” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **I have produced a man** - The word for “man” typically describes an adult male, rather than a baby or child. If that would cause confusion, it could be translated as “manchild” or “boy” or “baby boy” or “son.”
- **Cain** - Translators may want to include a footnote that says “The name Cain sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘produce.’ Eve named him Cain because she produced him.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Then she gave birth** - We do not know how much time passed between the births of Cain and Abel. They may have been twins, or Abel may have been born after Eve became pregnant again. If possible, use an expression that does not tell how much time passed.
- **cultivated** - This means he did everything he needed to do so that the plants would grow well. See how “cultivate” is translated in [2:5](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:3-5

UDB:

³ One day it happened that Cain harvested some of the crops he had grown and brought them to Yahweh as a gift for him, ⁴ and Abel took from his flock some of the first lambs that had been born and killed them and, as a gift, gave to Yahweh the fatty parts, which were the best parts. Yahweh was pleased with Abel and his offering, ⁵ but he was not pleased with Cain and his offering. So Cain became very angry, and his expression became unpleasant.

ULB:

³ It came about that in the course of time Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground as an offering to Yahweh. ⁴ As for Abel, he brought some of the firstborn of his flock and some of the fat. Yahweh accepted Abel and his offering, ⁵ but Cain and his offering he did not accept. So Cain was very angry, and he scowled.

translationWords:

- Cain
- fruit, fruitful
- sacrifice, offering
- Yahweh
- Abel
- firstborn

translationNotes:

- **It came about that** - This phrase is used to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using that method here.
- **in the course of time** - Possible meanings are 1) “after some time had passed” or 2) “at the right time”
- **fruit of the ground** - This refers to the food that came from plants he had tended. AT: “crops” or “harvest” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **some of the fat** - This refers to the fatty parts of the lambs that he had killed, it was the best part of the animal. AT: “some of their fat parts” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **accepted** - “looked favorably upon” or “was pleased with”
- **was very angry** - Some languages have an idiom for anger such as “He burned” or “His anger burned.”
- **he scowled** - This means that the expression on his face showed that he was angry or jealous. Some languages have an idiom that describes what a person’s face looks like when he is angry. (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Yahweh said to Cain, "You should not be angry! You should not scowl like that! ⁷ If you do what is right, I will accept you. But if you do not do what is right, the evil that you want to do will devour you, like a lion waiting outside your door to attack you. Your desire to sin wants to control you, but you must control it."

ULB:

⁶ Yahweh said to Cain, "Why are you angry and why are you scowling? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin crouches at the door and desires to control you, but you must rule over it."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- Cain
- sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

translationNotes:

- **Why are you angry and why are you scowling?** - God used these rhetorical questions to tell Cain that he was wrong to be angry and scowl. They may also have been intended to give Cain an opportunity to confess that he was wrong. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **If you ... will you not be accepted?** - God used this rhetorical question to remind Cain of something Cain should have already known. AT: "You know that if you do what is right, I will accept you" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **But if you do not ... you must rule over it** - God speaks of sin as if it were a person. AT: "But if you do not do what is right, you will desire to sin even more, and then you will do sinful things. You must refuse to obey it" (See: [Personification](#))
- **sin crouches ... to control you** - Here sin is spoken of as a dangerous wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack Cain. AT: "you will become so angry that you will not be able to stop sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **sin** - Languages that do not have a noun that means "sin" could translate this as "your desire to sin" or "the bad things you want to do."
- **you must rule over it** - Yahweh speaks of Cain's desire to sin as if it were a person over whom Cain should rule. AT: "you must control it so you do not sin" (See: [Personification](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ But one day, Cain said to his younger brother Abel, “Come with me to the fields.” So they went together. And when they were in the countryside, suddenly Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹ Then, even though Yahweh knew what Cain had done, he said to Cain, “Do you know where Abel, your younger brother, is?” Cain replied, “No, I do not know. My job is not to guard my younger brother!”

ULB:

⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. It came about that while they were in the fields, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.[1]The best ancient copies read in this way. However, some old translations and some modern translations read, *Cain said to Abel his brother, “Let us go into the fields.” It came about that while they were in the fields, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

⁹ Then Yahweh said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

translationWords:

- Cain
- Abel
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **Cain spoke to Abel his brother** - Some languages will need to add the implicit information that Cain spoke to his brother about going to the fields. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **brother** - Abel was Cain’s younger brother. Some languages may need to use the word for “younger brother.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **rose up against** - “attacked” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Where is Abel your brother** - God knew that Cain had killed Abel, but he asked Cain this question so that Cain would have to answer. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Am I my brother’s keeper?** - Cain used this rhetorical question in order to avoid telling the truth. This can be translated as a statement. AT: “I am not my brother’s keeper!” or “Taking care of my brother is not my job!” (See [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:10-12

UDB:

¹⁰ Yahweh said, "What you have done is terrible! Your brother's blood that has soaked into the ground convicts you of your guilt. ¹¹ You have killed your younger brother, and, now that the ground has soaked up your younger brother's blood, you are not welcome on it and your efforts to produce crops on it will fail. ¹² When you till the ground to plant crops, the ground will produce very little for you. You will continually wander around the earth, and not have any place to live permanently."

ULB:

¹⁰ Yahweh said, "What have you done? Your brother's blood is calling out to me from the ground. ¹¹ Now cursed are you from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you cultivate the ground, from now on it will not yield to you its strength. A fugitive and a wanderer you will be in the earth."

translationWords:

- blood
- curse, cursed

translationNotes:

- **What have you done?** - God uses a rhetorical question to rebuke Cain. This can be translated as a statement. AT: "What you have done is terrible!" (UDB) (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Your brother's blood is calling out to me** - Abel's blood is a metonym for his death, as if it were a person calling out for God to punish Cain. AT: "Your brother's blood is like a person calling out to me to punish the person who killed him" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Now cursed are you from the ground** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "I am cursing you so that you will not be able to grow food from the ground" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood** - God speaks of the earth as if it were a person who could drink Abel's blood. AT: "which is soaked with your brother's blood" (See: [Personification](#))
- **from your hand** - God speaks of Cain's hand as if it had poured Abel's blood into the ground's "mouth." AT: "that spilled when you killed him" or "from you" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Synecdoche](#))
- **cultivate** - This means to do everything necessary to do so that the plants would grow well. See how "cultivate" is translated in [2:5](#).
- **it will not yield to you its strength** - The ground is personified as if it were a person who loses strength. AT: "the ground will not produce much food for you" (See: [Personification](#))

- **A fugitive and a wanderer** - You can join these words together. AT: “A homeless wanderer”
(See: [Hendiadys](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:13-15

UDB:

¹³ Cain replied to Yahweh, "You are punishing me more than I can endure. ¹⁴ You are about to expel me from the ground that I have been tilling, and I will no longer be able to come into your presence. Furthermore, I will be continually wandering around the earth with no place to live permanently, and anyone who sees me will kill me." ¹⁵ But Yahweh said to him, "No, that will not happen. I will put a mark on you to warn anyone who sees you that I will punish him severely if he kills you. I will punish that person seven times as severely as I am punishing you." Then Yahweh put a mark on Cain.

ULB:

¹³ Cain said to Yahweh, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴ Indeed, you have driven me out this day from this ground, and I will be hidden from your face. I will be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." ¹⁵ Yahweh said to him, "If anyone kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." Then Yahweh put a mark on Cain, so that if anyone found him, that person would not attack him.

translationWords:

- [Cain](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [punish, punishment](#)

translationNotes:

- **I will be hidden from your face** - The term "your face" represents God's presence. AT: "I will not be able to speak to you" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **a fugitive and a wanderer** - Translate this as in [4:12](#)
- **vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "I will take vengeance on him seven times" or "I will punish that person seven times as severely as I am punishing you" (UDB) (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **would not attack him** - "would not kill Cain"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ So Cain left Yahweh and went to live in the land called Nod, which means ‘wandering’, which was east of Eden.

¹⁷ Some time later, Cain slept with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, whom she named Enoch. Then Cain started to build a city, and he named the city ‘Enoch,’ the same name that his son had.

ULB:

¹⁶ So Cain went out from the presence of Yahweh and lived in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

¹⁷ Cain slept with his wife and she conceived. She gave birth to Enoch. He built a city and named it after his son Enoch.

translationWords:

- [Cain](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Eden, garden of Eden](#)

translationNotes:

- **went out from the presence of Yahweh** - Even though Yahweh is everywhere, this idiom speaks of Cain as though he went far away. AT: “went away from where Yahweh spoke to him” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Nod** - Translators may add a footnote saying “The word Nod means ‘wandering.’”
- **slept with** - Your language may have a way of saying this politely. Some older versions say “knew.” See how you translated this in [4:1](#). (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **He built a city** - “Cain built a city”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ Enoch grew up and married and became the father of a son whom he named Irad. When Irad grew up he became the father of a son whom he named Mehujael. Mehujael grew up and became the father of a son whom he named Methushael. Methushael grew up and became the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ When Lamech grew up he married two women. The name of one was Adah and the name of the other was Zillah.

ULB:

¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad. Irad became the father of Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah.

translationWords:

- [Lamech](#)

translationNotes:

- **To Enoch was born Irad** - It is implied that Enoch grew up and married a woman. AT: “Enoch grew up and married and became the father of a son whom he named Irad” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Irad became the father of Mehujael** - “Irad had a son and named him Mehujael” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Adah ... Zillah** - women’s names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:20-22

UDB:

²⁰ Adah gave birth to a son named Jabal. Later, Jabal became the first person who lived in tents because he traveled from place to place to take care of livestock. ²¹ His younger brother's name was Jubal. He was the first person who made a lyre and a flute. ²² Lamech's other wife Zillah gave birth to a son whom she named Tubal Cain. Later he learned how to make things out of bronze and iron. The name of Tubal Cain's younger sister was Naamah.

ULB:

²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who lived in tents who have livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of those who play the harp and pipe. ²² As for Zillah, she bore Tubal Cain, the forger of tools of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal Cain was Naamah.

translationWords:

- [harp](#)
- [bronze](#)

translationNotes:

- **Adah ... Zillah** - Translate these names as in [4:19](#).
- **He was the father of those who lived in tents** - Possible meanings are 1) "He was the first person to live in a tent" or 2) "He and his descendants lived in tents."
- **who lived in tents who have livestock** - people who both live in tents and also take care of animals
- **He was the father of those who play the harp and pipe** - Possible meanings are 1) "He was the first person to play the harp and pipe" or 2) "He and his descendants played the harp and pipe."
- **Tubal Cain, the forger of tools of bronze and iron** - "Tubal Cain. He made bronze and iron tools" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **iron** - This is a very strong metal used to make tools, implements and weapons.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:23-24**UDB:**

²³ One day Lamech said to his two wives, "Adah and Zillah, my two wives, listen carefully to what I am saying. A young man struck me and wounded me, so I killed him. ²⁴ Yahweh said long ago that he would avenge and punish anyone who killed Cain seven times as much as he punished Cain. So if anyone tries to kill me, may he be punished seventy-seven times as much."

ULB:

²³ Lamech said to his wives,

"Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say.

For I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for bruising me.

²⁴ If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times."

translationWords:

- Cain
- Lamech

translationNotes:

- **Adah ... Zillah** - Translate these names as in 4:19.
- **listen to my voice ... listen to what I say** - Lamech said the same thing twice for emphasis. His voice is a metonym for his whole person. AT: "listen carefully to me" (See: **Parallelism** and **Metonymy**)
- **a man ... a young man** - Lamech killed only one person. (See: **Doublet**)
- **for wounding me ... for bruising me** - "because he wounded me ... because he bruised me" or "because he hurt me" (See: **Doublet**)
- **If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech** - Lamech knows that God will avenge Cain seven times. AT: "Since God will punish anyone who kills Cain seven times, Lamech" (See: **Active or Passive**)
- **then Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "whoever kills me, God will punish seventy-seven times" (See: **Active or Passive**)
- **seventy-seven** - 77 (See: **Numbers**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 04 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 4 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 4:25-26

UDB:

²⁵ Adam continued to sleep with his wife, and she again became pregnant and gave birth to another son, whom she named Seth. She said, “I name him Seth because God has given me another child to take the place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” ²⁶ When Seth grew up, he became the father of a son whom he named Enosh. About that time people began to worship Yahweh.

ULB:

²⁵ Adam slept with his wife again, and she bore another son. She called his name Seth and said, “God has given me another son in the place of Abel, for Cain killed him.” ²⁶ A son was born to Seth and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of Yahweh.

translationWords:

- Adam
- Abel
- Cain
- call, calling, called, call out
- name
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **slept with** - Your language may have a way of saying this politely. Some older versions say “knew.” See how you translated this in [4:1](#). (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **and said, ”God has given me another son** - This is the reason that she named him Seth. This can be made explicit. AT: “and explained, ‘God has given me another child.’” (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Seth** - Translators may add a footnote that says “This name sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘has given.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **A son was born to Seth** - This can be made explicit. AT: “Seth’s wife bore him a son” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **to call on the name of Yahweh** - This is the first time people called God by the name Yahweh. This can be made explicit. AT: “to worship God by using the name Yahweh” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 04 General Notes
- **Genesis 4 Translation Questions**

Genesis 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter provides the first of many lists of descendants in the Bible. This is not a simple list, because the author makes comments about each person. Translators should format this text in the way that is clearest in the project language. Many may choose to introduce each new person in a separate paragraph, as the ULB and UDB do.

Links:

- [Genesis 05:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 5:1-2

UDB:

¹ This is a list of those who descended from Adam. When God created humans, he made them to be like him in many ways. ² He created one man and one woman. He blessed them, and on the day that he created them, he called them ‘human beings.’

ULB:

5 ¹ This is the record of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created mankind, he made them in his own likeness. ² Male and female he created them. He blessed them and named them mankind when they were created.

translationWords:

- [Adam](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This is the beginning of the list of Adam’s descendants.
- **in his own likeness** - This phrase means that God made mankind to be like him. This verse does not tell in what ways God made people to be like himself. God does not have a body, so it does not mean that people would look like God. AT: “to truly be like us.” See how “after our likeness” is translated in [1:26](#). (See: [Pronouns](#))
- **when they were created** - This can be made active. AT: “when he created them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:3-5

UDB:

³ When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him. That was the son he named Seth. ⁴ After Seth was born, Adam lived eight hundred more years, and during those years he became the father of other sons and daughters. ⁵ Adam lived 930 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. ⁴ After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived eight hundred years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ⁵ Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [Adam](#)

translationNotes:

- **130 ... eight hundred** - Translators may write the numerals “130” and “800” or the words “one hundred thirty” and “eight hundred.” (The ULB and the UDB use numerals if the number has three or more words; they use words if a number has only one or two words.) (See: [Numbers](#))
- **he became the father of a son** - “he had a son”
- **in his own likeness, after his image** - These two phrases mean the same thing. They are used as a reminder that God made man in his own image. See how you translated similar phrases in [1:26](#).
- **Seth** - Translate this name as you did in [4:25](#).
- **He became the father of more sons and daughters** - “He had more sons and daughters”
- **and then he died** - This phrase will be repeated throughout the chapter. Use the ordinary word for “died.”
- **Adam lived 930 years** - People used to live a very long time. Use your ordinary word for “years.” AT: “Adam lived a total of 930 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:6-8

UDB:

⁶ When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷ After Enosh was born, Seth lived 807 more years, and became the father of other sons and daughters. ⁸ Seth lived 912 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

⁶ When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷ After he became the father of Enosh, he lived 807 years and became the father of more sons and daughters. ⁸ Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **he became the father of Enosh** - Here “father” means his actual father, not his grandfather. AT: “he had his son Enosh.”
- **Enosh** - This is the name of a person. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **and became the father of more sons and daughters** - “and had more sons and daughters”
- **Seth lived 912 years** - “Seth lived a total of 912 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **and then he died** - This phrase is repeated throughout the chapter. Use the ordinary word for “died.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ When Enosh was ninety years old, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰ After Kenan was born, Enosh lived 815 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹¹ Enosh lived 905 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

⁹ When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰ After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ¹¹ Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format. Translate them according to the notes in [5:6-8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#) and [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:12-14**UDB:**

¹² When Kenan was seventy years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³ After Mahalalel was born, Kenan lived 840 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Kenan lived 910 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

¹² When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³ After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format. Translate them according to the notes in [5:6-8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names and Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ When Mahalalel was sixty-five years old, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ After Jared was born, Mahalalel lived 830 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Mahalalel lived 895 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

¹⁵ When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format. Translate them according to the notes in [5:6-8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#) and [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:18-20**UDB:**

¹⁸ When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹ Jared lived eight hundred years after Enoch was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. ²⁰ Jared lived 962 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

¹⁸ When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹ After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ²⁰ Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [Enoch](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format. Translate them according to the notes in [5:6-8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names and Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:21-24

UDB:

²¹ When Enoch was sixty-five years old, he became the father of Methuselah. ²² Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for three hundred years after Methuselah was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. ²³ Enoch lived 365 years. ²⁴ He was in close fellowship with God, and one day he disappeared, because God took him away to be with him.

ULB:

²¹ When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²² Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ²³ Enoch lived 365 years. ²⁴ Enoch walked with God, and then he was gone, for God took him.

translationWords:

- [Enoch](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **he became the father of Methuselah** - “he had his son Methuselah”
- **Methuselah** - This is the name of a man. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Enoch walked with God** - To walk with someone is a metaphor for being in a close relationship with him. AT: “Enoch had a close relationship with God” or “Enoch lived in union with God” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **He became the father of more sons and daughters** - “He had more sons and daughters”
- **Enoch lived 365 years** - “Enoch lived a total of 365 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **then he was gone** - The word “he” refers to Enoch. He was no longer on earth.
- **for God took him** - This means that God took Enoch to be with himself (God).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:25-27**UDB:**

²⁵ When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶ Methuselah lived 782 years after Lamech was born, and became the father of other sons and daughters. ²⁷ Methuselah lived 969 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

²⁵ When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶ After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ²⁷ Methuselah lived 969 years. Then he died.

translationWords:

- ancestor, father, forefather
- Lamech

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format. Translate them according to the notes in 5:6-8. (See: [How to Translate Names and Numbers](#))
- **Lamech** - This Lamech is different from the Lamech in 4:18.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:28-29

UDB:

²⁸ When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son, ²⁹ whom he named Noah, because, as he said, “He will bring us relief from all the hard work we have been doing to produce food from the ground that Yahweh cursed.”

ULB:

²⁸ When Lamech had lived 182 years, he became the father of a son. ²⁹ He called his name Noah, saying, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the painful labor of our hands, which we must do because of the ground that Yahweh has cursed.”

translationWords:

- [Lamech](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Noah](#)
- [curse, cursed](#)

translationNotes:

- **became the father of a son** - “had a son”
- **Noah** - Translators may want to add a footnote that says: “This name sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘rest.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#)).
- **from our work and from the painful labor of our hands** - Lamech says the same thing twice to emphasize how hard the work was. AT: “from working so hard with our hands” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:30-31**UDB:**

³⁰ Lamech lived 595 years after Noah was born and became the father of other sons and daughters.

³¹ Lamech lived 777 years altogether, and then he died.

ULB:

³⁰ Lamech lived 595 years after he became the father of Noah. He became the father of more sons and daughters. ³¹ Lamech lived 777 years. Then he died.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Lamech](#)

translationNotes:

- **Lamech lived 777 years** - "Lamech lived a total of 777 years" (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 5:32**UDB:**

³² When Noah was five hundred years old, he became the father of sons whom he named Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

ULB:

³² After Noah had lived five hundred years, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

translationWords:

- Noah
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Shem
- Ham
- Japheth

translationNotes:

- **he became the father of** - “he had his sons.” This does not tell us whether the sons were born on the same day or in different years.
- **Shem, Ham, and Japheth** - These sons may not be listed in the order of their birth. There is disagreement about which one was the oldest. Avoid translating this in a way that implies that the list is in the order of their ages.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 05 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 5 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Beginning in 6:22, the author gives statements summarizing events he tells about again in the text that follows. In the next chapter, the author sometimes gives summary statements that introduce events for the first time. If these statements, and the surrounding events, are not carefully translated, readers can believe that the same events happened twice or three times instead of only one time. Translators should be careful not to give this impression.

Links:

- [Genesis 06:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 6:1-3

UDB:

¹ When people began to become very numerous all over the earth, and many daughters were born to them, ² some of the heavenly beings saw that the human women were very beautiful. So they took whichever ones they chose to become their wives. ³ Then Yahweh said, “My breath will not remain in people forever, to keep them alive. They are made of weak flesh. They will live not more than 120 years before they die.”

ULB:

6 ¹ It came about when mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them, ² that the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were attractive. They took for themselves wives, any of them that they chose. ³ Yahweh said, “My spirit will not remain in mankind forever, for they are flesh. They will live 120 years.”

translationWords:

- [sons of God](#)
- [flesh](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **daughters were born to them** - This can be active. AT: “the women bore daughters” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **sons of God** - Translators could add a footnote saying: “It is not clear whether this refers to heavenly beings or human beings. In either case, they were beings that God created.” Some believe these words refer to angels who rebelled against God, that is, evil spirits or demons. Others think this may refer to powerful political rulers, and others think this may refer to the descendants of Seth.
- **My spirit** - Here Yahweh is talking about himself and his spirit, which is the Spirit of God.
- **flesh** - This means that they have physical bodies that will one day die.
- **They will live 120 years** - Possible meanings are 1) the normal lifespan of people would decrease to 120 years. AT: “They will not live more than 120 years” or 2) in 120 years everyone would die. AT: “They will live only 120 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 06 General Notes
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:4

UDB:

⁴ When these heavenly beings slept with human women, they gave birth to children. These were the giants who lived on the earth at that time and also later. These giants were heroic fighters; they were famous men from long ago.

ULB:

⁴ Giants were on the earth in those days, and also afterward. This happened when the sons of God married daughters of men, and they had children with them. These were the mighty men of old, men of renown.

translationWords:

- [giant](#)
- [sons of God](#)
- [mighty, might](#)
- [renown, renowned](#)

translationNotes:

- **Giants** - very tall, large people
- **This happened when** - “The giants were born because”
- **sons of God** - Translate this as you did in [6:2](#).
- **These were the mighty men of old** - “These giants were the mighty men who lived long ago” or “These children grew to become the powerful fighters who lived long ago”
- **mighty men** - men who are courageous and victorious in battle
- **men of renown** - “famous men”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:5-6

UDB:

⁵ Yahweh saw that people on the earth had become very wicked, and everything they thought in their inner beings was evil continually. ⁶ Yahweh was sorry that he had made people on the earth and it made him sad.

ULB:

⁵ Yahweh saw that the wickedness of mankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. ⁶ Yahweh regretted that he had made mankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

translationNotes:

- **inclination** - “tendency” or “habit”
- **the thoughts of their hearts** - The writer speaks of the heart as if it were the part of the body that thinks. Your language may use a word other than “heart” to talk about the part of people that thinks. AT: “their inner, secret thoughts” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **it grieved him to his heart** - The writer speaks of the heart as if it were the part of the body that feels sadness. Your language may use a word other than “heart” to talk about the emotions. AT: “he was very, very sad about it” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:7-8

UDB:

⁷ So Yahweh said, “I will completely destroy the people I made. I will also destroy all the larger animals and the creatures that move close to the ground and the birds. None of them will remain on the earth, because I regret that I made them.”

⁸ But Yahweh was pleased with Noah.

ULB:

⁷ So Yahweh said, “I will wipe away mankind whom I have created from the surface of the earth; both mankind and the larger animals, and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of Yahweh.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Noah](#)

translationNotes:

- **I will wipe away mankind ... from the surface of the earth** - The writer speaks of God killing people as if God were wiping dirt off a flat surface. AT: “I will destroy mankind ... so that there will not be any people on the earth” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **I will wipe away mankind whom I have created** - Some languages would need to translate this as two sentences. AT: “I created mankind. I will wipe them away” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **wipe away** - “completely destroy.” Here “wipe away” is used in a negative sense, for God is talking about destroying the people because of their sin.
- **Noah found favor in the eyes of Yahweh** - “Yahweh looked favorably on Noah” or “Yahweh was pleased with Noah” (UDB)
- **in the eyes of Yahweh** - Here “eyes” stands for sight or thoughts. AT: “in Yahweh’s sight” or “in Yahweh’s thoughts” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:9-10

UDB:

⁹ This is what happened: Noah was a man whose behavior was always righteous. No one who lived at that time could criticize him about anything. Noah lived in close fellowship with God. ¹⁰ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

ULB:

⁹ These were the events concerning Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and blameless among the people of his time. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

translationWords:

- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [blameless](#)
- [Shem](#)
- [Ham](#)
- [Japheth](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This begins the story of Noah, which continues into chapter 9.
- **These were the events concerning Noah** - “This is the account of Noah”
- **walked with God** - Translate this as you did in [5:21](#).
- **Noah became the father of three sons** - “Noah had three sons” or “Noah’s wife had three sons”
- **Shem, Ham, and Japheth** - Translators may add the following footnote: “The sons are not listed in the order in which they were born.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ God could see that everyone else on earth was very wicked, and everywhere on the earth, people were acting cruelly and violently toward each other. ¹² God looked at everyone and saw how evil people were, because all people on the earth had begun to behave in an evil way.

ULB:

¹¹ The earth was corrupt before God, and it was filled with violence. ¹² God saw the earth; behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

translationWords:

- corrupt, corruption
- God
- flesh

translationNotes:

- **The earth** - Possible meanings are 1) the people who lived on the earth or 2) “The earth itself.” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **was corrupt** - The people doing what is evil is spoken of as if they were food that has become rotten. AT: “was rotten” or “was completely evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **before God** - Possible meanings are 1) “in God’s sight” or 2) “in the presence of Yahweh” as in [4:16](#).
- **and it was filled with violence** - The writer speaks of violence as if it were something that could be put into a container and of the earth as a container. AT: “and there were very many violent people on the earth” or “because it was full of people who did evil things to each other” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **behold** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **all flesh** - Possible meanings are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animal. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **had corrupted their way** - How a person behaves is spoken of as if it were a way or road. AT: “had stopped living the way God wanted” or “had behaved in an evil way” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 06 General Notes
- **Genesis 6 Translation Questions**

Genesis 6:13-15

UDB:

¹³ So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all people, because all over the earth people are acting violently toward each other. So I am about to get rid of them as well as everything else on the earth. ¹⁴ Make for yourself a large boat from cypress wood. Make rooms inside it. Cover the outside and the inside with tar to make it waterproof. ¹⁵ This is how you must make it: It must be 138 meters long, twenty-three meters wide, and fourteen meters high.

ULB:

¹³ God said to Noah, "I can see that it is time to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Indeed, I will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴ Make for yourself an ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch within and without. ¹⁵ This is how you will make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

translationWords:

- God
- ark
- cypress

translationNotes:

- **all flesh** - Translate these words as in [6:12](#).
- **the earth is filled with violence through them** - "people everywhere on earth are violent"
- **I will destroy them with the earth** - "I will destroy both them and the earth" or "I will destroy them when I destroy the earth"
- **an ark** - This refers to a very large box that would be able to float on water even in a very bad storm. "a large boat" or "a ship" or "a barge"
- **cypress wood** - People do not know exactly what kind of tree this was. "wood used for building boats" or "good wood"
- **cover it with pitch** - "spread pitch on it" or "paint tar on it." The reason for doing this can be made explicit: "to make it waterproof" (UDB). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **pitch** - This is a thick, sticky or oily liquid that people put on the outside of a boat to stop water from going through gaps in the wood into the boat.
- **cubits** - A cubit was a unit of measure, a little less than half a meter long. (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

- **three hundred cubits** - “138 meters.” You may use the Hebrew measuring units from the ULB or the metric units from the UDB or your own culture’s units if you know how they compare to the metric units. You may also write a footnote that says: “Three hundred cubits is about 138 meters.” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))
- **fifty cubits** - “twenty-three meters” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))
- **thirty cubits** - “fourteen meters” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ Make a roof for the boat. Leave a space of about half a meter between the sides and the roof to let air and light enter. Make it with three decks inside, and put a door in one side. ¹⁷ Listen carefully! I am about to bring a flood that will destroy everything that lives beneath the sky. Everything on the earth will die.

ULB:

¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark, and finish it at a cubit from the top of the side. Place a door in the side of the ark and make a lower, a second, and a third deck. ¹⁷ Listen, I am about to bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh that has in it the breath of life from under heaven. Everything that is on the earth will die.

translationWords:

- flood
- flesh
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

translationNotes:

- **a roof for the ark** - This was probably a peaked or slanted roof. Its purpose was to protect everything in the ark from the rain.
- **cubit** - A cubit was a little less than half a meter long. See how you translated this in [6:15](#). (See: [Biblical Distance](#))
- **a lower, a second, and a third deck** - “a lower deck, a middle deck, and an upper deck” or “three decks inside” (UDB)
- **deck** - “floor” or “level”
- **Listen** - God said this in order to emphasize that he would do what he was about to say. “Pay attention” or “Listen to what I am saying”
- **I am about to bring the flood of waters** - “I am about to send a flood of waters” or “I am about to cause a flood” (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **all flesh** - Here “flesh” represents all physical beings, including humans and animals. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **that has in it the breath of life** - Here “breath” represents life. AT: “that lives” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ But I will make my covenant with you. You and your wife, your sons and their wives will enter the boat. ¹⁹ You must also bring two of all living creatures, a male and a female, into the boat with you, so that they also may remain alive.

ULB:

¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you. You will come into the ark, you, and your sons, and your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ Of every living creature of all flesh, two of every kind you must bring into the ark, to keep them alive with you, both male and female.

translationWords:

- [covenant](#)
- [creature](#)

translationNotes:

- **establish my covenant with you** - “make a covenant between you and me”
- **with you** - with Noah
- **You will come into the ark** - “You will enter the ark.” Some translations say “You will go into the ark.”
- **Of every living creature of all flesh, two of every kind you must bring into the ark** - “You must bring into the ark two of every kind of living creature”
- **creature** - an animal God created
- **all flesh** - Translate these words as in [6:12](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 6:20-22

UDB:

²⁰ Two of every kind of creature will come to you in order for you to keep them alive. They will include two of each kind of bird and two of each kind of larger animal and two of each kind of creature that moves close to the ground. ²¹ You must also take some of every kind of food that you and all these creatures will need, and store it in the boat.” ²² So Noah did everything that God told him to do.

ULB:

²⁰ Of the birds after their kind, and of the larger animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort will come to you, to keep them alive. ²¹ Gather for yourself every kind of food that is eaten and store it, so that it will be food for you and for them.” ²² So Noah did this. According to all that God commanded him, so he did.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [God](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)

translationNotes:

- **after their kind** - “of each different kind”
- **creeping thing of the ground** - This refers to small animals that move on the ground (UDB).
- **two of every sort** - This refers to two of every kind of bird and animal.
- **to keep them alive** - “so you can keep them alive” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **to you ... yourself ... you** - These refer to Noah and are singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **food that is eaten** - “food that people and animals eat”
- **So Noah did this. According to all that God commanded him, so he did** - These two sentences mean the same thing. The second sentence explains the first and emphasizes that Noah obeyed God. These parallel sentences can be combined into one. AT: “So Noah did everything that God commanded him to do” (See: [Parallelism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 06 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 6 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, the author continues his pattern of statements that summarize events already described, and of repeating events that have already happened. Again, careful translation is necessary so that readers do not think that the same events happened more than one time in the story. Special attention in this regard should be given to 7:5,10,13, and 17.

Special concepts in this chapter

Clean animals and birds

Noah sacrificed to Yahweh some of the “clean” animals and birds that he had with him (8:20). These were animals and birds that the Hebrew people would later consider to be fit to eat and to sacrifice to God. (See: [clean](#), [cleanse](#))

Water underneath and over the earth

The flood is presented as occurring because of rain pouring out of the sky and because of seawater rising from under the earth. This is because the ancient Hebrews pictured the earth as resting on top of the sea. They also pictured the sky as containing water above the earth that poured down through windows in the sky when God allowed it to rain. Translators should not try to change this picture in order to suit what readers believe about the world. (See: [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 07:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 7:1-3

UDB:

¹ Then Yahweh said to Noah, "I have seen that from all the people who are now living, you alone always act righteously. So I want you and all your family to go into the boat. ² Take with you seven pairs of every kind of animal that I have said I will accept for sacrifices. Take seven males and seven females. Also take one male and one female from every kind of animal that I have said that I will not accept for sacrifices. ³ Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird from to keep their descendants alive all over the earth.

ULB:

7 ¹ Yahweh said to Noah, "Come, you and all your household, into the ark, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. ² Of every clean animal you will bring with you seven males and seven females. From the animals that are not clean, of them bring two, the male and his mate. ³ Also of the birds of the sky, bring seven males and seven females, to preserve their offspring upon the surface of all the earth.

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- household
- ark
- righteous, righteousness
- generation
- clean, cleanse
- unclean

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The events in this chapter take place after Noah built the ark, gathered the food, and put it in the ark.
- **Come ... into the ark ... bring** - "Enter ... into the ark ... take." Many translations read "Go ... into the ark ... take." (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **you** - The word "you" refers to Noah and is singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **your household** - "your family"
- **righteous before me** - This means that God saw Noah as righteous.
- **in this generation** - This refers to all the people who were living at that time. AT: "among all the people who are now living"
- **clean animal** - This was an animal that God allowed his people to eat and to sacrifice.

- **animals that are not clean** - These were animals that God did not allow people to eat or to sacrifice.
- **to preserve their offspring** - “so that they will have offspring that will live” or “so that, after the flood, animals will continue to live”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ Do this because seven days from now I will cause rain to fall on the earth. It will rain constantly for forty days and nights. In this way, I will destroy everything that I have made that is on the earth.”

⁵ Noah did everything that Yahweh told him to do.

ULB:

⁴ For in seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. I will destroy from off the surface of the ground every living thing that I have made.” ⁵ Noah did all that Yahweh commanded him.

translationWords:

- [life, live, living, alive](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)

translationNotes:

- **forty days and forty nights** - This was a full forty days. It was not a total of eighty days. AT: “forty days and nights”
- **living** - This refers to physical life.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came on the earth. ⁷ Before it started to rain, Noah and his wife and his sons and his sons' wives all went into the boat to escape from the flood water.

ULB:

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. ⁷ Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood.

translationWords:

- [flood](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in [7:1-5](#). This is not a new event.
- **came upon the earth** - “happened” or “came on the earth”
- **because of the waters of the flood** - “because of the flood that would come” or “to escape the flood water”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:8-10

UDB:

⁸ Pairs of animals, those that God said that he would accept for sacrifices and those that he would not accept for sacrifices, and pairs of birds and pairs of all the kinds of creatures that move close to the ground, ⁹ males and females, came to Noah and then went into the boat, just as God told Noah that they would do. ¹⁰ After seven days had ended, it started to rain and a flood began to cover the earth.

ULB:

⁸ Clean animals and unclean animals, birds, and everything that creeps upon the ground, ⁹ two by two, male and female, came to Noah and went into the ark, just as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ It came about that after the seven days, the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

translationWords:

- [clean, cleanse](#)
- [unclean](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [flood](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in [7:1-5](#). This is not a new event.
- **clean animals** - These were animals that God allowed people to eat and to give to him as sacrifices.
- **unclean animals** - These were animals that God did not allow people to eat or to give to him as sacrifices.
- **two by two** - The animals entered the boat in pairs of one male and one female.
- **It came about that** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story: the start of the flood. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **after the seven days** - “after seven days” or “seven days later”
- **the waters of the flood came upon the earth** - The implicit information, “it started to rain” can be made explicit (UDB). AT: “it started to rain and the waters of the flood came upon the earth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 07 General Notes
- **Genesis 7 Translation Questions**

Genesis 7:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ When Noah was six hundred years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the water that is under the surface of the earth burst out, and it began to rain so hard that it was as though a dam in the sky burst open. ¹² Rain fell on the earth constantly for forty days and nights.

ULB:

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the windows of heaven were opened. ¹² The rain began and fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

translationWords:

- biblical time: year
- Noah
- fountain, spring

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
- **In the six hundredth year of Noah's life** - "When Noah was 600 years old" (UDB) (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month** - Since Moses wrote this book, it is possible he is referring to the second month of the Hebrew calendar. But this is uncertain. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **on the same day** - This refers to the specific day when the rain began. This phrase emphasizes how all of these major events happened quickly when the time arrived.
- **the fountains of the great deep burst open** - "water from under the earth rushed up to the earth's surface"
- **the great deep** - This refers to the sea that was thought to be under the earth.
- **the windows of heaven were opened** - This refers to rain. It describes the sky as a ceiling that keeps the waters above it from falling down to the earth. When the windows, or doors, in the sky were opened, the water came down through them. AT: "the sky opened" or "the doors in the sky opened"
- **rain** - If your language has a word for a great amount of rain, it would be appropriate here.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:13-14

UDB:

¹³ On the day that it started to rain, Noah went into the boat with his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives. ¹⁴ They and some of every kind of wild animal, and every kind of domestic animal, and every kind of creature that moves close to the ground, and every kind of bird, and every other creature that has wings, all entered the boat.

ULB:

¹³ On that very same day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, entered into the ark. ¹⁴ They entered along with each wild animal according to its kind, and each sort of livestock according to its kind, and each creeping thing that creeps upon the earth according to its kind, and every sort of bird according to its kind, each kind of creature with wings.

translationWords:

- [Shem](#)
- [Ham](#)
- [Japheth](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in [7:1-5](#). This is not a new event.
- **On that very same day** - “On that exact day.” This refers to the day that the rain started. Verses 13-16 tell what Noah did immediately before the rain began.
- **wild animal ... livestock ... creeping thing ... bird** - These four groups are listed to show that every kind of animal was included. If your language has another way of grouping all the animals, you can use that, or you can use these groups. See how you translated this in [1:24](#).
- **creeping thing** - This refers to animals that crawl on the ground, like rodents, insects, lizards, and snakes.
- **according to its kind** - “so that each kind of animal will produce more of its own kind.” See how you translated this in [1:24](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 07 General Notes
- **Genesis 7 Translation Questions**

Genesis 7:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ Pairs of all creatures that breathed came to Noah and entered the boat. ¹⁶ There were a male and a female of each creature that came to Noah, just as God had said they would do. After they were all in the boat, Yahweh shut the door.

ULB:

¹⁵ Two of all flesh in which was the breath of life came to Noah and entered into the ark. ¹⁶ The animals that went in were male and female of all flesh; they entered in just as God had commanded him. Then Yahweh shut the door after them.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in [7:1-5](#). This is not a new event.
- **Two of all flesh** - Here “flesh” represents animals. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **in which was the breath of life** - Here “breath” represents life. AT: “that lived” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **came to Noah** - The word “came” can be translated as “went.” (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **of all flesh** - Here “flesh” represents animals. AT: “of every kind of animal” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **after them** - The full meaning can be stated explicitly. AT: “after they entered the ark” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ For forty days the water kept coming and the flood increased and lifted the boat up above the ground. ¹⁸ The rushing water rose higher and higher on the earth, and the boat floated on the surface of the water.

ULB:

¹⁷ Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted the ark and raised it above the earth. ¹⁸ The waters completely covered over the earth, and the ark floated upon the surface of the water.

translationWords:

- [flood](#)
- [ark](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in [7:1-5](#). This is not a new event.
- **and the water increased** - This happened during the forty days while the water kept coming. “and the water became very deep”
- **and lifted the ark** - “and it caused the ark to float”
- **raised it above the earth** - “causes the ark to rise up high over the ground” or “he ark floated on top of the deep water”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ The water rushed higher and higher all over the earth until it covered all the mountains and everything under heaven. ²⁰ Even the highest mountains were covered by more than six meters of water.

ULB:

¹⁹ The waters rose greatly on the earth so that all the high mountains that were under the entire sky were covered. ²⁰ The waters rose fifteen cubits above the tops of the mountains.

translationWords:

- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)

translationNotes:

- **The waters rose greatly on the earth** - “The water totally overwhelmed the earth”
- **fifteen cubits** - “six meters.” See how you translated this in [6:15](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:21-22

UDB:

²¹ As a result, every living being on the surface of the earth died. That included the birds, the domestic animals, the wild animals, and all the other creatures that move around on the ground, as well as all the people. ²² Everything that breathed, that was a creature of the land, died.

ULB:

²¹ All living beings that moved upon the earth died: the birds, the livestock, the wild animals, all the living creatures that lived in great numbers upon the earth, and all mankind. ²² All living creatures who lived on the land, who breathed the breath of life through their noses, died.

translationWords:

- [life, live, living, alive](#)
- [livestock](#)
- [breathe, breath](#)
- [spirit, spiritual](#)
- [death, die, dead](#)

translationNotes:

- **moved upon** - “moved about” or “roamed”
- **all the living creatures that lived in great numbers upon the earth** - This refers to all the animals that move around on the ground in large groups.
- **who breathed the breath of life through their noses** - Here “noses” represent the whole animal or human. AT: “everyone that breathed” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **the breath of life** - The words “breath” and “life” represent the power that causes people and animals to be alive. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **died** - This refers to physical death.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 7:23-24**UDB:**

²³ In this way every living thing on the earth perished—the people, the larger animals, the creatures that crawl, and the birds. The only ones that remained alive were Noah and those who were in the boat with him. ²⁴ The waters remained at full flood like that on the earth for 150 days.

ULB:

²³ So every living thing that was on the surface of the earth was wiped out, from mankind to the larger animals, to creeping things, and to birds of the sky. They were all destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those with him in the ark were left. ²⁴ The water did not go down to the earth for a hundred and fifty days.

translationWords:

- blot out, wipe out

translationNotes:

- **So every living thing ... was wiped out** - If necessary, this can be stated in active form. AT: “So every living thing ... perished” or “So the flood completely destroyed every living thing” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **They were all destroyed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “God destroyed them all” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **from the earth** - “so they were no longer on the earth”
- **and those with him** - “and the people and animals that were with him”
- **were left** - “remained” or “lived” or “remained alive” (UDB)
- **The water dominated the earth** - “The deep water covered all the earth” or “The waters remained at full flood on the earth” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 07 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 7 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 8:22, which is the poetic part of the quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Flood waters

The waters receded after this great flood. Because there was so much water, and it came from God, it is described in a unique way.

The mountains of Ararat

It is unclear where Ararat was located. Many people believe it is located in the modern country of Turkey.

Links:

- [Genesis 08 01 Notes](#)

Genesis 8:1-3

UDB:

¹ But God did not forget about Noah, or about all the wild animals and all the kinds of domestic animals that were with him in the boat. So one day God sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the wind caused the water to begin to recede. ² God caused the water that was under the earth to stop bursting out, and he caused the floodgates of water from the sky to close so that it stopped raining. ³ The water on the earth gradually receded. By one hundred fifty days after the flood began, much of the water was gone.

ULB:

8 ¹ God considered Noah, all the wild animals, and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters started going down. ² The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed, and it stopped raining. ³ The flood waters went down slowly from the earth, and after the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters had gone down.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [fountain, spring](#)

translationNotes:

- **considered** - “remembered” or “thought about”
- **ark** - This refers to a very large box that would be able to float on water even in a very bad storm. AT: “a large boat” or “a ship” or “a barge.” Translate this as in [6:14](#).
- **The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed** - “The water stopped coming out of the ground and the rain stopped falling.” This can be stated in active form. AT: “God closed the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **fountains of the deep** - “water from under the earth.” See how this is translated in [7:11](#).
- **the windows of heaven were closed** - This refers to the rain stopping. It describes the sky as a ceiling that keeps the waters above it from falling down to the earth. When the windows, or doors, in the sky were closed, the water stopped coming through them. AT: “the sky closed” or “the doors in the sky closed.” See how “the windows of heaven” is translated in [7:11](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 8 Translation Questions

Genesis 8:4-5

UDB:

⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the boat came to rest on one of the mountains in the region of Ararat. ⁵ The water continued to recede until, on the first day of the tenth month of that year, the tops of other mountains became visible.

ULB:

⁴ The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ The waters continued to go down until the tenth month. On the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

translationWords:

- [ark](#)
- [biblical time: day](#)
- [Ararat](#)

translationNotes:

- **came to rest** - “landed” or “stopped on solid ground”
- **in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month ... tenth month** - Because Moses wrote this book, it is possible he is referring to the seventh month and tenth month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **On the first day of the month** - “On the first day of the tenth month”
- **appeared** - This can be made more explicit: “appeared above the surface of the water.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Forty days later, Noah opened the window that he had made in the side of the boat, and sent out a raven. ⁷ The raven flew back and forth to and from the boat until the water dried up from the surface of the ground.

ULB:

⁶ It came about after forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. ⁷ He sent out a raven and it flew back and forth until the waters were dried up from the earth.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. AT: “It happened that”
- **It came about ... the window of the ark which he had made** - The phrase “which he had made” tells about the window. Some languages may need to make this phrase a separate sentence: “Noah had made a window in the boat. It came about after forty days that he opened the window” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **raven** - a black bird that eats mainly the flesh of dead animals
- **it flew back and forth** - This means that the raven kept leaving the boat and returning.
- **until the waters were dried up** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “until the wind dried up the waters” or “until the waters dried up” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:8-9

UDB:

⁸ Then Noah sent out a dove to find out if the water had all receded from the surface of the ground.

⁹ But the dove did not find any place to perch, so it flew back to Noah in the boat, because there was still water all over the surface of the earth. So Noah reached out his hand and took the dove back inside the boat.

ULB:

⁸ Then he sent out a dove to see if the waters had gone down from the surface of the earth, ⁹ but the dove found no place to rest her foot, and she returned to him in the ark, for the waters were still covering the whole earth. He reached out with his hand, and took and brought her into the ark with him.

translationWords:

- dove, pigeon
- [ark](#)

translationNotes:

- **to rest her foot** - “to land” or “to perch.” It means to land on something in order to rest from flying.
- **her foot ... she returned ... and brought her** - The word “dove” is feminine in the author’s language. You could translate these phrases with the pronouns “its ... it ... it” or “his ... he ... him,” depending on how your language refers to a dove.
- **he ... him** - If you use masculine pronouns for the word “dove,” you may need to insert Noah’s name here to avoid confusion: “Noah sent out a dove,” “Noah stretched forth his hand,” etc.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:10-12

UDB:

¹⁰ Noah waited seven more days. Then he sent the dove out of the boat again. ¹¹ This time the dove returned to him in the evening and, surprisingly, there was a leaf from an olive tree that the dove had just plucked in its beak. Then Noah knew that the water had truly receded from the surface of the ground. ¹² Noah waited again seven more days. Then he sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

ULB:

¹⁰ He waited another seven days and again he sent out the dove from the ark. ¹¹ The dove returned to him in the evening. Look! In her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had gone down from the earth. ¹² He waited another seven days, and sent out the dove again. She did not return again to him.

translationWords:

- dove, pigeon
- olive

translationNotes:

- **Look** - “Pay attention” or “This is important”
- **a freshly plucked olive leaf** - “a leaf that she had just plucked from an olive tree”
- **plucked** - “broken off”
- **He waited another seven days** - “He again waited for seven days”
- **She did not return again to him** - If people would not understand, you could state the reason explicitly: “She did not return again to him because she found a place to land.” (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:13-14**UDB:**

¹³ Noah was now 601 years old. By the first day of the first month of that year, the water had completely drained away from the ground. Noah removed the covering on top of the boat, and he was surprised to see that the surface of the ground was drying. ¹⁴ By the twenty-seventh day of the next month, the ground was completely dry.

ULB:

¹³ It came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from off the earth. Noah removed the covering of the ark, looked out, and saw that, behold, the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴ In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

translationWords:

- biblical time: year
- biblical time: day

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **in the six hundred and first year** - “when Noah was 601 years old” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **the first month, on the first day of the month** - Since Moses wrote this book it is possible he is referring to the first month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **the waters were dried up from off the earth** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “the waters covering the earth dried up” or “the wind dried up the waters covering the earth” (See [Active or Passive](#)).
- **the covering of the ark** - This refers to a cover that kept the rain water from going into the ark.
- **behold** - The word “behold” tells us to pay attention to the important information that comes next.
- **In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month** - “On the twenty seventh day of the second month.” This may refer to the second month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **the earth was dry** - “the ground was completely dry” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ "Leave the boat, along with your wife, your sons, and their wives. ¹⁷ Bring out with you all the birds, the domestic animals, and all the kinds of creatures that move close to the ground, in order that they can spread all over the earth and become very numerous."

ULB:

¹⁵ God said to Noah, ¹⁶ "Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁷ Take out with you every living creature of all flesh that is with you—the birds, the livestock, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth—so that they may grow unto very large numbers of living creatures throughout the earth, be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth."

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Noah](#)
- [flesh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Go out ... Take out** - "Leave ... Take." Some translations read "Come out ... Bring out." (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **every living creature of all flesh** - "every kind of living creature." See how "all flesh" is translated in [6:12](#).
- **be fruitful, and multiply** - This is an idiom. See how this is translated in [1:28](#). God wanted the humans and animals to reproduce, so there would be many of them. (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ So Noah left the boat, along with his wife, his sons, and their wives. ¹⁹ Then all the creatures, including all those that move close to the ground, all the birds, and every animal that moves on the earth, left the boat. They left the boat in groups of their own kind.

ULB:

¹⁸ So Noah went out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives with him. ¹⁹ Every living creature, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, according to their families, left the ark.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [ark](#)

translationNotes:

- **Noah went out** - Some translations read "Noah came out." (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **according to their families** - "in groups of their own kinds"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 8:20-22**UDB:**

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to Yahweh. He took some of the animals and birds that were acceptable as sacrifices and killed them. Then he burned them whole on the altar. ²¹ When Yahweh smelled the pleasant odor, he was pleased with the sacrifice. Then he said to himself, "I will never again devastate everything on the earth because of the sinful things people do. Even though all that people think in their minds is evil from the time they are young, I will not destroy all the living beings again, as I did this time. ²² As long as the earth exists, the seasons for planting seeds and seasons for harvesting crops, the times when it is cold and times when it is hot, the summer and winter, the daytime and nighttime will continue."

ULB:

²⁰ Noah built an altar to Yahweh. He took some of the clean animals and some of the clean birds, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart, "I will not again curse the ground because of mankind, even though the intentions of their hearts is evil from childhood. Nor will I again destroy everything living, as I have done.

²² While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."

translationWords:

- altar
- Yahweh
- clean, cleanse
- sacrifice, offering
- burnt offering, offering by fire
- heart
- curse, cursed

translationNotes:

- **built an altar to Yahweh** - "built an altar dedicated to Yahweh" or "built an altar for worshipping Yahweh." He may have built it with stones.
- **clean animals ... clean birds** - Here "clean" means that God allowed these animals to be used in sacrifice. Some animals were not used for sacrifices and were called "unclean."
- **offered burnt offerings** - Noah killed the animals and then completely burned them up as an offering to God. AT: "burned the animals as offerings to Yahweh"
- **pleasing aroma** - This refers to the good smell of the roasted meat.

- **said in his heart** - Here the word “heart” refers to God’s thoughts and emotions.
- **curse the ground** - “do very serious harm to the earth” (UDB)
- **because of mankind** - This can be made more explicit: “because mankind is sinful.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **the inclination of their hearts is evil from childhood** - “from their earliest years they tend to do evil things” or “when they are young, they want to do evil things”
- **the inclination of their hearts** - Here the word “hearts” refers to people’s thoughts, emotions, desires, and will. AT: “their tendency” or “their habit”
- **from childhood** - This refers to an older child. AT: “from their youth”
- **While the earth remains** - “While the earth lasts” or “As long as the earth exists”
- **seed time** - “the season for planting”
- **cold and heat, summer and winter** - These expressions both refer to two major weather conditions in the year. Translators may use local expressions. (See: [Merism](#))
- **summer** - the hot, dry time of the year
- **winter** - the cool, wet or snowy time of the year
- **will not cease** - “will not cease to exist” or “will not cease to occur.” This can be expressed in a positive manner. AT: “will continue” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 08 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 8 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 9:6-7, which is the poetic part of the quotation. They also set apart 9:25-27 which contain two quotations.

Special concepts in this chapter

Man's relationship to animals

There is a noticeable shift in man's relationship with the animals on the earth. Before the flood, there apparently was harmony between man and the animals. After the flood, the animals fear man and man is permitted to eat the animals, something he was not allowed to do previously. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).

Life in the blood

This chapter introduces the concept that there is life in the blood of an animal and in man. Blood is said to represent the life present in a living thing. This is an image used throughout Scripture. (See: [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#) and [blood](#))

Covenant with Noah

God made a covenant with Noah. This covenant was an unconditional promise God made to never destroy the whole world with a flood. Rainbows are a perpetual sign of this covenant. (See: [covenant](#) and [promise](#))

A father's nakedness

In Noah's culture, it was unacceptable to see a father's nakedness. It was wrong for Ham to show his brothers their father's nakedness. Ham's actions were insulting or disrespectful. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth"

This is a command that God gives. He expects Noah to obey him.

Links:

- [Genesis 09 01 Notes](#)

Genesis 9:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Then God blessed Noah and his sons. He said to them, "I want you to have many children who will live all over the earth. ² All the larger animals on the earth, all the birds, all the creatures that move close to the ground, and all the fish, will be very afraid of you. I place them under your authority.

ULB:

9 ¹ Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth. ² The fear of you and the dread of you will be upon every living animal on the earth, upon every bird of the sky, upon everything that goes low on the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.

translationWords:

- God
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Noah
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- hand, right hand, to hand over

translationNotes:

- **Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth** - This is God's blessing. He told Noah and his family to produce more humans like themselves, so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how they are to be "fruitful." See how you translated these commands in [1:28](#). (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **The fear of you and the dread of you will be upon every living animal ... and upon all the fish of the sea** - The writer speaks of fear and dread as if they were physical objects that could be upon the animals. AT: "Every living animal ... and all the fish of the sea will be dreadfully afraid of you" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **The fear of you and the dread of you** - The words "fear" and "dread" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how afraid the animals will be of mankind. AT: "A dreadful fear of you" or "A terrible fear of you" (See: [Doublet](#))
- **every living animal on the earth** - This is the first of the four categories of animals that the writer lists, and not a summary of the rest of the animals that he mentions next.
- **bird** - This is a general term for things that fly. See how you translated this in [1:21](#).
- **upon everything that goes low on the ground** - This includes all types of small animals. See how you translated this in [1:25](#).

- **They are given into your hand** - The hand is a metonym for the control that the hand has. This can be made active. AT: “They are given into your control” or “I have put them under your control” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:3-4**UDB:**

³ Previously I allowed you to eat green plants for food, but now you may eat everything that lives and moves. ⁴ But you must not eat meat that still has the blood in it, because the life is in its blood.

ULB:

³ Every moving thing that lives will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. ⁴ But you must not eat meat with its life—that is its blood—in it.

translationWords:

- [life, live, living, alive](#)
- [blood](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.
- **life ... blood** - Translators may add a footnote such as this: “The blood is a symbol for life.” They may also add a footnote that says something like this: “God was commanding people not to eat meat while the blood was still in it. They had to drain out the blood first.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ I punish any creature who kills a human being—that they answer to Yahweh—whether it be an animal or from a human being. I demand that murderers must suffer for their crimes and pay with their own lives. Even when an animal kills a person, that animal must also have their life taken because they have taken the life of a human being. ⁶ For I made people to be like myself. So I insist that if someone murders another human being, another person must kill him. Anyone who pours another’s blood out must himself lose his own blood.

⁷ As for you, I want you to produce many children, in order that they and their descendants may live all over the earth.”

ULB:

⁵ But for your blood, the life that is in your blood, I will require payment. From the hand of every animal I will require it. From the hand of any man, that is, from the hand of one who has murdered his brother, I will require an accounting for the life of that man.

⁶ Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man will his blood be shed,
for it was in the image of God that he made man. ⁷ As for you, be fruitful
and multiply, spread throughout the earth and multiply on it.”

translationWords:

- blood
- life, live, living, alive
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- brother
- bloodshed
- image of God, image
- multiply

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.
- **But for your blood** - This contrasts man’s blood with the blood of animals (9:4).
- **for your blood, the life that is in your blood** - It is implied that the blood is shed, or poured out, or spilled out. AT: “if anyone causes your blood to pour out” or “if anyone spills your blood” or “if anyone kills you” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Metaphor](#))

- **life** - This refers to physical life.
- **I will require payment** - This payment refers to the death of the murderer, not to money. AT: “I will require anyone who kills you to pay”
- **from the hand** - Here the word “hand” refers to the one who is responsible for something happening. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **From the hand of every animal I will require it** - “I will require any animal that takes your life to pay”
- **From the hand of any man, that is, from the hand of one who has murdered his brother, I will require an accounting for the life of that man** - “I will require anyone who takes the life of another person to pay”
- **From the hand of** - This phrase refers to the person in a very personal way. AT: “From that very man” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **brother** - Here “brother” is used as a general reference to relatives, such as members of the same tribe, clan, or people group.
- **Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man will his blood be shed** - The shedding of blood is a metaphor for killing someone. This means that if a person murders someone, someone else must kill the murderer. However, “blood” is very significant in this passage and should be used in the translation if possible. Translate “sheds blood” with words that indicate a major loss of blood that causes death. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **for it was in the image of God that he made man** - “because God made people to be like him” or “because I made people in my own image”
- **be fruitful and multiply** - This is God’s blessing. He told Noah and his family to produce more humans like themselves, so that there would be many of them. The word “multiply” explains how they are to be “fruitful.” See how you translated this in [1:28](#). (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:8-10

UDB:

⁸ God also said to Noah and his sons, ⁹ "Listen carefully. I am now making a covenant with you and with your descendants, ¹⁰ and with every creature with you, that is alive—including the birds, the domestic animals, and the wild animals—every living animal creature on the earth that came out of the boat with you.

ULB:

⁸ Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, ⁹ "As for me, listen! I am going to confirm my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, with the birds, the livestock, and every creature of the earth with you, from all that came out of the ark, to every living creature on the earth.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [covenant](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [ark](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him** - God was already speaking to them. This phrase marks a change in what God was going to speak about. AT: "God continued speaking to Noah and his sons" or "Then God went on to say"
- **As for me** - This phrase is used in English to mark the change from God talking about what Noah and his sons must do to talking about what God would do.
- **confirm my covenant with you** - "make a covenant between you and me." Translate this as in [6:18](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:11-13

UDB:

¹¹ This is the covenant that I am making with you: I will never again destroy all living beings by a flood, or destroy everything else on the earth by a flood.”

¹² Then God said to him, ”This is the sign to guarantee that I will keep the covenant that I am making with you and with all living beings, a covenant that I will keep forever: ¹³ From time to time I will put a rainbow in the sky. It will be the sign of my covenant with you and with everything on the earth.

ULB:

¹¹ I hereby confirm my covenant with you, that never again will all flesh be destroyed by the waters of a flood. Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹² God said, ”This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my rainbow in the cloud, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

translationWords:

- covenant
- flesh
- flood
- generation
- sign, proof, reminder

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.
- **I hereby confirm my covenant with you** - “By saying this, I make my covenant with you.” See how similar words are translated in [6:18](#).
- **all flesh** - Possible meanings are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animals. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth** - “There will never again be a flood that destroys the earth.” There would be floods, but they would not destroy the whole earth.
- **sign** - This means a reminder of something that was promised.
- **covenant ... for all future generations** - The covenant applies to Noah and his family and also to all generations that follow.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:14-15

UDB:

¹⁴ When I cause rain to fall from the clouds, and a rainbow appears in the sky, ¹⁵ it will remind me about the covenant that I have made with you and with all living creatures, my promise that there will never again be a flood that will destroy all living creatures.

ULB:

¹⁴ It will come about when I bring a cloud over the earth and the rainbow is seen in the cloud, ¹⁵ then I will call to mind my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. The waters will never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

translationWords:

- [covenant](#)
- [flesh](#)
- [flood](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.
- **It will come about when** - “Whenever.” It is something that would happen many times.
- **the rainbow is seen** - It is not clear who will see the rainbow, but because the covenant is between Yahweh and people, if you need to say who it is who will see the rainbow, it would be best to name both Yahweh and people. This can be translated in active form. AT: “people and I see the rainbow” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **rainbow** - the colorful strip of light that appears in the rain when the sun shines from behind the viewer
- **I will call to mind my covenant** - This does not mean that God would first forget. AT: “I will think about my covenant”
- **me and you** - The word “you” is plural. God was speaking to Noah and Noah’s sons.
- **every living creature of all flesh** - “every kind of living being”
- **all flesh** - Possible meanings are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animals. See how this is translated in [6:12](#). (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ Whenever there is a rainbow in the sky, I will see it, and I will think about the covenant that I have made with every living being that is upon the earth, a promise that I will keep forever.”

¹⁷ Then God said to Noah, “The rainbow will be the sign of the covenant that I have made with all living beings on the earth.”

ULB:

¹⁶ The rainbow will be in the clouds and I will see it, in order to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”

¹⁷ Then God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have confirmed between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

translationWords:

- [covenant](#)
- [flesh](#)
- [Noah](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.
- **in order to remember** - “so that I will remember” or “so that I will think about”
- **between God and every living creature** - God is speaking here. AT: “between me and every living creature”
- **every living creature of all flesh** - “every kind of living being.” See how you translated this in [9:15](#).
- **Then God said to Noah** - God was already talking to Noah. This phrase marks the final part of what God was saying. AT: “God finished by saying to Noah” or “So God said to Noah”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ The sons of Noah who came out of boat were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham later became the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ All the people on the earth are descended from these three sons of Noah.

ULB:

¹⁸ The sons of Noah that came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

translationWords:

- [Shem](#)
- [Ham](#)
- [Japheth](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 18-19 introduce the three sons of Noah, who will be an important part of the next story.
- **father** - Ham was Canaan's true father.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ Noah began to farm the land. He planted grapevines. ²¹ After they produced grapes, he made wine from them. One day, when he had drunk too much of the wine, he became drunk, and he lay naked in his tent.

ULB:

²⁰ Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. ²¹ He drank some of the wine and became drunk. He was lying uncovered in his tent.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [vineyard](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)

translationNotes:

- **farmer** - “man of the soil”
- **became drunk** - “drank too much wine”
- **uncovered** - The text does not specify how much of Noah’s body was uncovered as he lay drunk. His sons’ reactions show us that it was shameful.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:22-23**UDB:**

²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father lying naked in the tent. So he went outside and told his two older brothers what he had seen. ²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a large cloth and placed it across their backs, and walked backwards into the tent. They covered their father's naked body with the cloth. Their faces were turned away from their father, so they did not see him naked.

ULB:

²² Then Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. ²³ So Shem and Japheth took a robe and laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned the other way, so they did not see their father's nakedness.

translationWords:

- [Ham](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **his father** - This refers to Noah.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:24-25**UDB:**

²⁴ When Noah woke up and was sober again, he found out how badly Ham, his youngest son, had behaved toward him. ²⁵ He said, "I am cursing Ham's son, Canaan, and his descendants. They will be like slaves to their uncles.

ULB:

²⁴ When Noah awoke from his drunkenness, he learned what his youngest son had done to him. ²⁵ So he said,

"Cursed be Canaan. May he be a servant to his brothers' servants."

translationWords:

- Noah
- curse, cursed
- Canaan, Canaanite
- servant, slave, slavery
- brother

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - In verses 25-27 Noah pronounced a curse on Ham's son and blessings on Ham's brothers. What Noah said about them also applied to their descendants, as shown in the UDB.
- **General Information:** - Alternate phrases in these verses are indented to show that this is poetry. If you can, format these verses as they are formatted here to show your readers that this is poetry.
- **awoke from his drunkenness** - "became sober"
- **his youngest son** - This refers to Ham. AT: "his youngest son, Ham"
- **Cursed be Canaan** - "I curse Canaan" or "May bad things happen to Canaan"
- **Canaan** - This was one of Ham's sons. AT: "Ham's son Canaan"
- **a servant to his brothers' servants** - "the lowest servant of his brothers" or "the least important servant of his brothers"
- **his brothers** - This could refer either to Canaan's brothers or to his relatives in general.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ I praise Yahweh, whom Shem worships. May Canaan's descendants be servants to Shem's descendants. ²⁷ But may God make the Japheth's territory larger. May he allow Japheth's descendants to live peacefully among the descendants of Shem. May Canaan's descendants be their slaves."

ULB:

²⁶ He also said,

"May Yahweh, the God of Shem, be blessed, and may Canaan be his servant.

²⁷ May God extend the territory of Japheth, and let him make his home in the tents of Shem. May Canaan be his servant."

translationWords:

- bless, blessed, blessing
- Yahweh
- God
- Shem
- Canaan, Canaanite
- servant, slave, slavery
- Japheth

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - If you can, format these verses as they are formatted here to show your readers that this is poetry.
- **May Yahweh, the God of Shem, be blessed** - "Praised be Yahweh, the God of Shem," or "Yahweh, the God of Shem, is worthy of praise" or "I praise Yahweh, the God of Shem" (UDB)
- **May Canaan be his servant** - "And let Canaan be Shem's servant." This includes Canaan's and Shem's descendants.
- **May God extend the territory of Japheth** - Possible meanings are 1) "May God make Japheth's territory larger" (UDB) or 2) "May God cause Japheth to have many descendants."
- **and let him make his home in the tents of Shem** - "and let him leave peacefully with Shem." This includes Japheth's and Shem's descendants.
- **May Canaan be his servant** - "Let Canaan be Japheth's servant." This includes Canaan's and Japheth's descendants.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 9:28-29

UDB:

²⁸ Noah lived 350 more years after the flood. ²⁹ He died when he was 950 years old.

ULB:

²⁸ After the flood, Noah lived three hundred fifty years. ²⁹ All the days of Noah were nine hundred fifty years, and then he died.

translationWords:

- [flood](#)
- [Noah](#)

translationNotes:

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 09 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 9 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a genealogical record. It also records the location of ancient people groups.

Special concepts in this chapter

Assyria and Nineveh

While these places may be located in the same area as the Assyria mentioned later in Scripture, they are not the same kingdom.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“Sons were born to”

This is an unusual phrase meaning “were sons of.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 10:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 10:1**UDB:**

¹ These are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They became the fathers of many children after the flood.

ULB:

10 ¹ These were the descendants of the sons of Noah, that is, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- Noah
- Shem
- Ham
- Japheth
- flood

translationNotes:

- **These were the descendants of the sons of Noah** - "This is the account of Noah's sons." This sentence introduces the account of Noah's descendants in Genesis 10:1-11:9.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:2-5

UDB:

² The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer were Askenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵ The sons and their families who were descended from Javan lived in the islands and in the lands close to the ocean. Their descendants became people groups, each with its own language, clans, and territory.

ULB:

² The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵ From these the coastland peoples separated and went into their lands, every one with its own language, according to their clans, by their nations.

translationWords:

- [Tubal](#)
- [Meshech](#)
- [Tarshish](#)
- [clan](#)
- [nation](#)

translationNotes:

- **From these the coastland peoples separated and went into their lands** - “Javan’s sons and descendants separated and moved to the coastlands and islands”
- **coastland peoples** - This refers to people who lived along the coast and on the islands.
- **their lands** - “their homelands.” These are the places that the people moved to and lived in.
- **every one with its own language** - “Each people group spoke its own language” or “The people groups divided themselves according to their languages”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ The sons of Ham were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.

⁷ The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

ULB:

⁶ The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

translationWords:

- [Cush](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **Mizraim** - Mizraim is the Hebrew name for “Egypt.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:8-10

UDB:

⁸ Another one of Cush's sons was Nimrod. Nimrod was the first person on earth who became a mighty warrior. ⁹ Yahweh saw that he had become a great hunter. That is why people say to a great hunter, "Yahweh sees that you are a great hunter like Nimrod." ¹⁰ Nimrod became a king who ruled in Babylonia land. The first cities over which he ruled were Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh.

ULB:

⁸ Cush became the father of Nimrod, who was the first conqueror on the earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before Yahweh. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before Yahweh." ¹⁰ The first centers of his kingdom were Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

translationWords:

- [Babel](#)
- [Shinar](#)

translationNotes:

- **conqueror** - Possible meanings are 1) "mighty warrior" or 2) "mighty man" or 3) "powerful ruler."
- **before Yahweh** - Possible meanings are 1) "in Yahweh's sight" or 2) "with Yahweh's help"
- **That is why it is said** - This introduces a proverb. Your language may introduce proverbs and sayings in a different way. AT: "This is the reason people say (See: [Proverbs](#))"
- **The first centers** - Possible meanings are 1) the first centers he developed or 2) the important cities.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:11-14

UDB:

¹¹ From there he went with other people to Assyria, and there they built the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, ¹² and Resen. Resen was a large city between Nineveh and Calah.

¹³ Ham's son, Egypt, became the ancestor of the Lud, Anam, Lehab and Naphtuh, ¹⁴ Pathrus, Casluh and Caphtor people groups. The Philistine people were descended from Casluh.

ULB:

¹¹ Out of that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, ¹² and Resen, which was between Nineveh and Calah. It was a large city.

¹³ Mizraim became the father of the Ludites, the Anamites, the Lehabites, the Naphtuhites, ¹⁴ the Pathrusites, the Casluhites (from whom the Philistines came), and the Caphtorites.

translationWords:

- [Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire](#)
- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)
- [Philistines](#)

translationNotes:

- **he went to Assyria** - "Nimrod went into Assyria"
- **Mizraim became** - The list of Noah's descendants continues.
- **Mizraim** - Mizraim was one of Ham's sons. His descendants became the people of Egypt. Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:15-18

UDB:

¹⁵ Ham's youngest son, Canaan, became the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth, his younger son. ¹⁶ Canaan was also the ancestor of the Jebus, Amor, Girgash, ¹⁷ Hiv, Ark, Sin, ¹⁸ Arved, Zemar and Hamath people groups. Later the descendants of Canaan scattered over a large area.

ULB:

¹⁵ Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and of Heth, ¹⁶ also of the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites spread out.

translationWords:

- [Sidon, Sidonians](#)
- [Jebusites, Jebus](#)
- [Amorite](#)
- [Girgashites](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jebusites ... Amorites ... Girgashites** - These names refer to larger groups of people that descended from Canaan.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ Their land extended from the city of Sidon in the north as far south as Gaza near Gerar, and then east toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim towns, as far as the town of Lasha.

²⁰ Those are the descendants of Ham. They became people groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own lands.

ULB:

¹⁹ The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and as one goes toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. ²⁰ These were the sons of Ham, by their clans, by their languages, in their lands, and in their nations.

translationWords:

- **Canaan, Canaanite**
- **Sidon, Sidonians**
- **Gaza**
- **Sodom**
- **Gomorrah**
- **Ham**
- **nation**

translationNotes:

- **border** - “territory” or “border of their territory”
- **from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza** - The direction south can be stated explicitly if needed. AT: “from Sidon city in the north as far south as Gaza town, which is near Gerar”(See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)
- **as one goes toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha** - The direction “east” or “inland” can be stated explicitly if needed. AT: “then east toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim towns, as far as Lasha” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)]])
- **These were the sons of Ham** - The word “these” refers to the people and people groups who were listed in verses **6-19**.
- **by their languages** - “broken up according to their different languages”
- **in their lands** - “in their homelands”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:21-23**UDB:**

²¹ Shem, the older brother of Japheth, also had sons, and he became the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber. ²² The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

ULB:

²¹ Sons also were born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth. Shem was also the ancestor of all the people of Eber. ²² The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.

translationWords:

- [Shem](#)
- [Japheth](#)

translationNotes:**Links:**

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:24-25**UDB:**

²⁴ Arphachshad became the father of Shelah. Shelah became the father of Eber. ²⁵ Eber became the father of two sons. One of them was named Peleg, which means “division,” because during the time he lived, people on the earth became divided and scattered everywhere. Peleg’s younger brother was Joktan.

ULB:

²⁴ Arpachshad became the father of Shelah, and Shelah became the father of Eber. ²⁵ Eber had two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided. His brother’s name was Joktan.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **Arpachshad** - Arpachshad was one of Shem’s sons.
- **Peleg** - Translators may add a footnote note that says: “The name Peleg means ‘division.’”
- **the earth was divided** - This can be made active. AT: “the people of the earth divided themselves” or “the people of the earth separated from one another” or “God divided the people of the earth” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:26-29**UDB:**

²⁶ Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

ULB:

²⁶ Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **Joktan** - Joktan was one of Eber's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **All these** - "These" here refers to the sons of Joktan.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ The areas in which the clans began to live extended from Mesha to Sephar, which is in the hill country in the east. ³¹ They are descendants from the sons of Shem. They became people groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own land.

ULB:

³⁰ Their territory was from Mesha, all the way to Sephar, the mountain of the east. ³¹ These were the sons of Shem, according to their clans and their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

translationWords:

- [Shem](#)
- [nation](#)

translationNotes:

- **Their territory** - “The land they controlled” or “The land they lived in”
- **These were the sons of Shem** - The word “these” refers to the descendants of Shem ([10:21-29](#)).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 10:32

UDB:

³² All these clans descended from the sons of Noah. Each clan had its own genealogy and each became a separate people group. Those people groups formed after the flood and spread all around the earth.

ULB:

³² These were the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations. From these the nations separated and went over the earth after the flood.

translationWords:

- [Noah](#)
- [generation](#)

translationNotes:

- **These were the clans** - This refers back to all the people listed in [10:1-31](#).
- **according to** - “listed by”
- **From these the nations separated and went over the earth** - “From these clans the nations divided and spread over the earth” or “These clans divided from each other and formed the nations of the earth”
- **after the flood** - This can be stated clearly or more explicitly. AT: “after the flood destroyed the earth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 10 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 10 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a story traditionally referred to as the “Tower of Babel.”

This chapter seeks to answer the questions: why do people speak different languages? how did people become so dispersed across the earth? God’s punishment described in this chapter may also explain why the world has racial and ethnic divisions.

Special concepts in this chapter

Age of people when they die

After the flood, people began to live shorter lives. This chapter begins to record the shortening of the average lifespan.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Personification

The statement “Yahweh came down to see” is a type of personification. Yahweh always knows what happens on earth. This statement indicates that Yahweh is about to bring judgment on mankind. (See: [Personification](#) and [judge, judgment](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“Let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top will reach to the sky”

The people were very full of pride and rebelled against God in this action. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).

Links:

- [Genesis 11:1-2](#)

Genesis 11:1-2

UDB:

¹ At this time, all the people in the world spoke the same language. ² As people moved around in the east, they arrived at a plain in the region of Babylon and began to live there.

ULB:

11 ¹ Now the whole earth used one language and had the same words. ² As they journeyed in the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and they settled there.

translationWords:

- [Shinar](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word shows that the writer is beginning a new part of the story.
- **the whole earth** - all the people on the earth (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **used one language and had the same words** - These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that all people spoke the same language. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **journeyed** - “migrated” or “moved around”
- **in the east** - Possible meanings are 1) “in the east” or 2) “from the east” or 3) “to the east.” The preferred choice is “in the east” because Shinar is to the east of where scholars believe the ark came to rest.
- **settled** - stopped moving from one place to another and began to live at one location

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:3-4

UDB:

³ Then they said to each other, “Let us make bricks and bake them to make them hard, for building!” So they used bricks instead of stones, and used tar instead of mortar to hold them together. ⁴ They said, “Let us build a city for ourselves! We also ought to build a very high tower that reaches up to the sky! In that way people will know who we are! If we do not do this, we will be scattered all over the earth!”

ULB:

³ They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They had brick instead of stone and tar as mortar. ⁴ They said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top will reach to the sky, and let us make a name for ourselves. If we do not, we will be scattered across the surface of the whole earth.”

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **Come** - If your language has a way of urging or commanding people to begin work, like the English “Come on!” you might use it here.
- **bake them thoroughly** - People make bricks out of clay and heat them in a very hot oven to make them hard and strong.
- **tar** - a thick, sticky, black liquid that comes up from the ground
- **mortar** - This is a thick substance made of lime powder, clay, sand, and water used to make stones or bricks stick together.
- **let us make a name for ourselves** - “let us make our reputation great”
- **name** - “reputation”
- **we will be scattered** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “we will separate from each other and live in different places” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ One day Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower that the people were building. ⁶ Yahweh said, "These people are one group that all speak the same language. If they have begun to do this, then there is nothing that they will decide to do that will be impossible for them! ⁷ So, let us go down there and make the people speak different languages, so that they will not be able to understand what each other is saying."

ULB:

⁵ So Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower which the descendants of Adam had built. ⁶ Yahweh said, "Look, they are one people with the same language, and they are beginning to do this! Soon nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that they may not understand each other."

translationWords:

- **Yahweh**
- **descendant, descended from**
- **Adam**

translationNotes:

- **the descendants of Adam** - "the people"
- **came down** - The information about where he came down from can be made explicit: "came down from heaven." This does not tell how he came down. Use a general word meaning "came down." (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)
- **to see** - "to observe" or "to look more closely"
- **one people with the same language** - All the people were one big group and they all spoke the same language.
- **they are beginning to do this** - Possible meanings are 1) "they have begun to do this," meaning that they have begun to build the tower but it is not finished, or 2) "this is just the first thing they have done," meaning that in future they will do greater things.
- **nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: "anything they intend to do will be possible for them" (See: **Double Negatives**)
- **Come** - If your language has a way of urging or commanding people to begin work, like the English "Come on!" you might use it here. See how this is translated in **11:3**.
- **let us go down** - The word "us" is plural even though it refers to God. Some translate it as "let me go down" or "I will go down." If you do this, consider adding a footnote to say that the pronoun is plural. See the note on "Let us make" in **1:26**. (See: **Pronouns**)

- **confuse their language** - This means that Yahweh would cause the people all over the earth to stop speaking the same language. AT: “mix up their language” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **so that they may not understand each other** - This was the purpose of confusing their language. AT: “so that they will not be able to understand what each other is saying” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:8-9

UDB:

⁸ By doing this, Yahweh caused them to scatter all over the earth, and the people stopped building the city. ⁹ The city was called Babel, because there Yahweh caused the people all over the earth to no longer speak only one language. And Yahweh caused them to scatter all over the earth from that place.

ULB:

⁸ So Yahweh scattered them from there across the surface of all the earth and they stopped building the city. ⁹ Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there Yahweh confused the language of the whole earth and from there Yahweh scattered them abroad over the surface of all the earth.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Babel](#)

translationNotes:

- **from there** - “from the city”
- **its name was called Babel, because there Yahweh confused** - The name “Babel” sounds like the word that means “confused.” Translators may want to add a footnote about this.
- **confused the language of the whole earth** - It means that Yahweh caused the people all over the earth to no longer speak the same language. AT: “mixed up the language of the whole earth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ These are those who descended from Shem. Two years after the flood, when Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arpachshad. ¹¹ After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived five hundred more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

¹⁰ These were the descendants of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old, and he became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood. ¹¹ Shem lived five hundred years after he became the father of Arpachshad. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:

- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [Shem](#)
- [flood](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The rest of this chapter lists the line of Shem's descendants down to Abram.
- **These were the descendants of Shem** - This sentence begins the list of Shem's descendants.
- **flood** - This is the flood from Noah's time when people had become so evil that God sent a worldwide flood to cover the earth.
- **became the father of Arpachshad** - "had his son Arpachshad" or "his son Arpachshad was born"
- **Arpachshad** - a man's name (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **a hundred ... two ... five hundred** - Translators may write the words or the numerals "100," "2," and "500." (The ULB and the UDB have words if the number has only one or two words; they have numerals if the number has three or more words. (See: [Numbers](#)))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:12-13**UDB:**

¹² When Arphachshad was thirty-five years old, he became the father of Shelah. ¹³ After Shelah was born, Arphachshad lived 403 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

¹² When Arphachshad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah. ¹³ Arphachshad lived 403 years after he became the father of Shelah. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:

- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **he became the father of Shelah** - “his son Shelah was born”
- **Shelah** - man’s name (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ When Shelah was thirty years old, he became the father of Eber. ¹⁵ After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

¹⁴ When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber. ¹⁵ Shelah lived 403 years after he became the father of Eber. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ When Eber was thirty-four years old, he became the father of Peleg. ¹⁷ After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

¹⁶ When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg. ¹⁷ Eber lived 430 years after he became the father of Peleg. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ When Peleg was thirty years old, he became the father of Reu. ¹⁹ After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

¹⁸ When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu. ¹⁹ Peleg lived 209 years after he became the father of Reu. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ When Reu was thirty-two years old, he became the father of Serug. ²¹ After Serug was born, Reu lived 207 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

²⁰ When Reu had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug. ²¹ Reu lived 207 years after he became the father of Serug. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:22-23**UDB:**

²² When Serug was thirty years old, he became the father of Nahor. ²³ After Nahor was born, Serug lived two hundred more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

ULB:

²² When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor. ²³ Serug lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:24-26**UDB:**

²⁴ When Nahor was twenty-nine years old, he became the father of Terah. ²⁵ After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

²⁶ After Terah was seventy years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

ULB:

²⁴ When Nahor had live twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah. ²⁵ Nahor lived 119 years after he became the father of Terah. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

²⁶ After Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. Translate these the same way as you translated [11:12-13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#)) (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Abram, Nahor, and Haran** - We do not know the birth order of his sons.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:27-28

UDB:

²⁷ This is what happened concerning the descendants of Terah: Terah's sons were Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran's son was named Lot. ²⁸ Haran's father was with him when Haran died in the city of Ur, in the country of the Chaldeans. This is the land where he was born.

ULB:

²⁷ Now these were the descendants of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran became the father of Lot. ²⁸ Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Lot](#)
- [Ur](#)
- [Chaldea, Chaldean](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now these were the descendants of Terah** - This sentence introduces the account of Terah's descendants. Genesis 11:27-25:11 tells about Terah's descendants, particularly his son Abraham. AT: "This is the account of Terah's descendants" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Haran died in the presence of his father Terah** - This means that Haran died while his father was still living. AT: "Haran died while his father, Terah, was with him" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ Abram and Nahor both married. Abram's wife was named Sarai, and Nahor's wife was named Milcah. Milcah and her sister Iscah were the daughters of Haran. ³⁰ Sarai was unable to have any children.

ULB:

²⁹ Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, a daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰ Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [barren](#)

translationNotes:

- **took wives** - "married wives"
- **Iscah** - This is a female name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Now** - This word is used to introduce new information about Sarai that will become important in later chapters.
- **barren** - This term describes a woman who is physically unable to conceive or bear a child. (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 11:31-32

UDB:

³¹ Terah decided to leave Ur and go to live in the land of Canaan. So he took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and Abram's wife Sarai with him. But instead of going to Canaan, they stopped at the town of Haran and lived there. ³² When Terah was 205 years old, he died in Haran.

ULB:

³¹ Terah took Abram his son, Lot the son of his son Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and together they left Ur of the Chaldeans, to go into the land of Canaan. But they came to Haran and stayed there. ³² Terah lived 205 years and then died in Haran.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [Ur](#)
- [Chaldea, Chaldean](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Haran](#)

translationNotes:

- **his** - Here the word "his" refers to Terah.
- **Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife** - "his daughter-in-law Sarai, who was the wife of his son Abram"
- **Haran ... Haran** - These are two different names and they are spelled differently in Hebrew. One refers to a person and the other refers to a city. (The "h" sound in the city's name is louder than the "h" sound in the person's name.) You might choose to spell them differently in your language to show this.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 11 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 11 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abram

When God said, “Go from your country, and from your relatives,” he established several new people groups. These groups descended from Abram.

God’s covenant with Abraham

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abraham needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. (See: [covenant](#), [fulfill](#) and [promise](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“They will kill me”

Abram was afraid the Egyptians would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Sarai to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Abram’s sister, they would have shown favor to him. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [favor, favorable, favoritism](#)).

Links:

- [Genesis 12:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 12:1-3

UDB:

¹ Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Leave this country where you are now living. Leave your father's clan and his family, and go to a land that I will show you. ² I will cause your descendants to become a large nation. I will bless you and cause you to become famous. What I do for you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who do evil things to you. I will bless all the clans on earth through you."

ULB:

12 ¹ Now Yahweh said to Abram, "Go from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's household, to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, but whoever dishonors you I will curse. Through you will all the families of the earth be blessed."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- Abraham, Abram
- household
- nation
- name
- bless, blessed, blessing
- curse, cursed

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used to mark a new part of the story.
- **Go from your country, and from your relatives** - "Go from your land, from your family"
- **I will make of you a great nation** - Here "you" is singular and refers to Abram, but Abram represents his descendants. AT: "I will start a great nation through you" or "I will make your descendants become a great nation" (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **and make your name great** - The word "name" represents the person's reputation. AT: "and make you famous" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **you will be a blessing** - The words "to other people" are understood. AT: "you will be a blessing to other people" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **whoever dishonors you I will curse** - "I will curse whoever treats you in a shameful way" or "if anyone treats you as worthless, I will curse him"
- **Through you will all the families of the earth be blessed** - This can be made active. AT: "I will bless all the families of the earth through you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Through you** - "Because of you" or "Because I have blessed you"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12:4-5

UDB:

⁴ So Abram left Haran, as Yahweh told him to do. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left there along with his family and Lot's family. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot; he also took with himself all the possessions and slaves that they had accumulated in Haran. They left from there and went to the land of Canaan.

ULB:

⁴ So Abram went, as Yahweh had told him to do, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ Abram took Sarai, his wife, Lot, his brother's son, all their possessions that they had accumulated, and the people that they had acquired in Haran. They left to go into the land of Canaan, and came to the land of Canaan.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Lot](#)
- [Haran](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **possessions** - This includes animals and non-living property.
- **the people that they had acquired** - Possible meanings are 1) "slaves that they had accumulated" (UDB) or 2) "the people whom they had gathered to be with them."

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ In Canaan they traveled as far as Shechem and camped by a tall tree called the tree of Moreh. When this happened, the Canaanite people were living in that land.

⁷ Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, “I will give this land to your descendants.” Then Abram built an altar to offer a sacrifice to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.

ULB:

⁶ Abram passed through the land as far as Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites lived in the land. ⁷ Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So there Abram built an altar to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [oak](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [altar](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abram passed through the land** - Only Abram’s name is mentioned because he was the head of the family. God had given him the command to take his family and go there. AT: “So Abram and his family went through the land” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **the land** - “the land of Canaan”
- **the oak of Moreh** - Moreh was probably the name of a place. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Yahweh, who had appeared to him** - “Yahweh, because he had appeared to him”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12:8-9

UDB:

⁸ From Shechem, Abram and his family traveled to the hills that were east of Bethel. Bethel was to the west of where they set up their tent, and Ai was to the east. There he built another altar and offered a sacrifice and worshiped Yahweh there. ⁹ Then they left there and continued traveling south to the Negev desert.

ULB:

⁸ From there he moved to the hill country to the east of Bethel, where he pitched his tent, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built an altar to Yahweh and called on the name of Yahweh. ⁹ Then Abram continued journeying, going toward the Negev.

translationWords:

- [Bethel](#)
- [tent](#)
- [Ai](#)
- [altar](#)
- [God](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Negev](#)

translationNotes:

- **he pitched his tent** - Abram had many people with him as he traveled. People who moved from place to place lived in tents. AT: “they set up their tents”
- **called on the name of Yahweh** - “prayed in the name of Yahweh” or “worshiped Yahweh”
- **Then Abram continued journeying** - “Then Abram took his tent and continued journeying.” (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **toward the Negev** - “toward the Negev region” or “toward the south” or “south to the Negev desert” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12:10-13**UDB:**

¹⁰ There was a famine in that land, so they went further south to live for awhile in the land of Egypt, because the lack of food in the land where they were was very severe. ¹¹ When they were coming near to the land of Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai, "Listen, I know that you are a very beautiful woman. ¹² When the people in Egypt see you, they will say, 'This woman is his wife!' and they will kill me, but they will not kill you. ¹³ So I ask you to tell them that you are my sister, so that I will be safe and so they will spare my life because of you."

ULB:

¹⁰ There was a famine in the land, so Abram went down into Egypt to stay, for the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹ When he was about to enter into Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "See here, I know that you are a beautiful woman. ¹² When the Egyptians see you they will say, 'This is his wife,' and they will kill me, but they will keep you alive. ¹³ Say that you are my sister, so that it may be well with me because of you, and so that my life will be spared because of you."

translationWords:

- [famine](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **There was a famine** - The crops did not grow well that season. This can be made explicit. AT: "There was a shortage of food" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **in the land** - "in the area" or "in the land where Abram was living"
- **went down into** - Possible meanings are 1) "went further south" (UDB) or 2) "went away from Canaan into." It would be best to translate this using your usual words for going from a higher place to a lower place.
- **they will kill me ... you alive** - The reason they would kill Abram can be made explicit: "they will kill me so that they can marry you" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **so that my life will be spared because of you** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "so that, because of you, they will not kill me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 12 General Notes
- **Genesis 12 Translation Questions**

Genesis 12:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ And that was what happened. As soon as they arrived in Egypt, the people in Egypt saw that his wife was indeed very beautiful. ¹⁵ When the king's officials saw her, they told the king how beautiful she was. Then the king took her into his palace. ¹⁶ The king treated Abram kindly because of Sarai, and he gave Abram sheep and cattle and donkeys and male and female slaves and camels.

ULB:

¹⁴ It came about that when Abram entered into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was very beautiful. ¹⁵ The princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's household. ¹⁶ Pharaoh treated Abram well for her sake, and gave him sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- Egypt, Egyptian
- prince, princess
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- sheep, ram, ewe
- donkey, mule
- camel

translationNotes:

- **It came about that** - Possible meanings are 1) This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts, and if your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here, or 2) "And that was what happened" (UDB).
- **The princes of Pharaoh saw her** - "Pharaoh's officials saw Sarai" or "the king's officials saw her" (UDB)
- **the woman was taken into Pharaoh's household** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "Pharaoh took her into his household" or "Pharaoh had his soldiers take her into his household" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **the woman** - Sarai
- **Pharaoh's household** - Possible meanings are 1) "Pharaoh's family," that is, as a wife, or 2) "Pharaoh's house" or "Pharaoh's palace," a euphemism for Pharaoh making her one of his wives. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **for her sake** - "for Sarai's sake" or "because of her"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 12:17-20**UDB:**

¹⁷ But because the king had taken Sarai, Abram's wife, Yahweh caused the king and the others in his household to be inflicted with terrible diseases. ¹⁸ So the king summoned Abram and said to him, "You have done a terrible thing to me! Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say that she is your sister, so that I took her to be my wife? You should not have done that! So now take your wife, leave here and go!" ²⁰ Then the king ordered his officials to take Abram and his wife and all his possessions out of Egypt.

ULB:

¹⁷ Then Yahweh afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸ Pharaoh summoned Abram, and said, "What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now therefore, here is your wife. Take her, and go your way." ²⁰ Then Pharaoh gave orders to his men concerning him, and they sent him away, along with his wife and all that he had.

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- afflict, affliction
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- household
- plague
- Sarah, Sarai

translationNotes:

- **because of Sarai, Abram's wife** - This can be made more explicit. AT: "because Pharaoh intended to take Sarai, Abram's wife, to be his own wife" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Pharaoh summoned Abram** - "Pharaoh called Abram" or "Pharaoh ordered Abram to come to him"
- **What is this that you have done to me?** - Pharaoh used this rhetorical question to show how angry he was about what Abram had done to him. It can also be stated as an exclamation. AT: "You have done a terrible thing to me!" (UDB). (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Then Pharaoh gave orders to his men concerning him** - "Then Pharaoh directed his officials concerning Abram"
- **and they sent him away, along with his wife and all that he had** - "and the officials sent Abram away from Pharaoh, with his wife and all his possessions"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 12 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 12 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abram's faith

Since the land could not support both Lot's and Abraham's family, they each went their own way. Even though good land was not plentiful, Abraham allowed Lot to choose the better land because he trusted in God to fulfill his promises. (See: [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#), [fulfill](#) and [promise](#))

God's covenant with Abram

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abraham needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. This chapter continues the covenant which began in the previous chapter. (See: [covenant](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Built an altar

Abram would have built an altar in order to offer sacrifices to Yahweh. There is an implicit understanding that building an altar was an act of worship. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).

Links:

- [Genesis 13:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 13:1-2**UDB:**

¹ So Abram and Sarai left Egypt and went back to the southern Judean wilderness. They took along all their possessions, and Lot went with them. ² Abram was very rich. He owned a lot of livestock, silver, and gold.

ULB:

13 ¹ So Abram went up from Egypt and went into the Negev, he, his wife, and all that he had. Lot also went with them. ² Now Abram was very rich in animals, in silver, and in gold.

translationWords:

- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Negev](#)
- [Lot](#)

translationNotes:

- **went up from** - “left” or “departed from”
- **went into the Negev** - The Negev was a desert region in southern Canaan, west of Egypt. This can be made explicit. AT: “went back to the Negev desert” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Abram was very rich in animals, in silver, and in gold** - “Abram had many animals, much silver, and much gold”
- **animals** - “livestock” or “cattle”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:3-4

UDB:

³ They continued traveling from place to place from the southern Judean wilderness toward Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where they had previously set up their tents. ⁴ This is also where Abram had built an altar; there he worshiped Yahweh again.

ULB:

³ He continued on his journey from the Negev to Bethel, to the place where his tent had been before, between Bethel and Ai. ⁴ He went to the place where the altar was that he had built previously. Here he called on the name of Yahweh.

translationWords:

- [Negev](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Ai](#)
- [altar](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **He continued on his journey** - Abram and his family traveled by stages, going from place to place. This can be made explicit. AT: “They continued on their journey” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **to the place where his tent had been before** - Translators may add a footnote that says “See Genesis 12:8.” The time of his travel can be made explicit. AT: “to the place where he had set up his tent before he went to Egypt” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **called on the name of Yahweh** - “prayed in the name of Yahweh” or “worshiped Yahweh.” See how you translated this in [12:8](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:5-7

UDB:

⁵ Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle and tents. ⁶ The two of them had so many animals that they could not all stay in the same area. There was not enough land to provide water and food for all their animals. ⁷ Furthermore, the men who took care of Abram's livestock started quarreling with the men who took care of Lot's livestock. The descendants of Canaan and Perez were also living in that area.

ULB:

⁵ Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents. ⁶ The land was not able to support them both living close together, because their possessions were very many, so that they could not stay together. ⁷ Also, there was a dispute between the herdsmen of Abram's animals and the herdsmen of Lot's animals. The Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time.

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Perizzite](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used to show what follows is background information to help the reader understand the events that follow. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **The land was not able to support them** - There was not enough grazing land and water for all their animals.
- **their possessions** - This includes livestock, which need pasture and water.
- **could not stay together** - "could not live together"
- **The Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time** - This is another reason that the land could not support them all.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Since we are close relatives, it is not good for us to quarrel, or for the men who take care of your animals to quarrel with the men who take care of my animals. ⁹ There is plenty of land for both of us. So we should separate. You can choose whatever part you want. If you want the area over there, I will stay here. If you want the area here, I will go over there."

ULB:

⁸ So Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen; after all, we are family. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Go ahead and separate yourself from me. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right. Or if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Lot](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let there be no strife between you and me** - "Let's not quarrel"
- **strife** - "hostility" or "fighting" or "quarreling"
- **and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen** - "and let's stop the men who take care of our animals from quarreling"
- **after all, we are family** - "because we are family"
- **family** - "kinsmen" or "relatives." Lot was Abraham's nephew.
- **Is not the whole land before you?** - This rhetorical question can be translated as a positive statement. AT: "The whole land is available for you to use." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Go ahead and separate yourself from me** - Abraham was speaking kindly to Lot and encouraging him to do something that would help them both. "Let's separate."
- **If you go to the left, then I will go to the right** - Possible meanings are 1) "If you go one way, then I will go the other" or 2) "If you go to the north, I will go to the south." Abram let Lot choose the part of the land he wanted, and Abram would take what remained.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ Lot looked toward Zoar and saw that there was plenty of water all over the plain near the Jordan River. This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah which were on that plain. In those days, it was like the garden of Yahweh, like the land in Egypt near the Nile River. ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself the land in the plain of the Jordan River. He left his uncle, Abram, and moved east.

ULB:

¹⁰ So Lot looked around, and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered everywhere all the way to Zoar, like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt. This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the plain of the Jordan and traveled east, and the relatives separated from each other.

translationWords:

- Lot
- Jordan River
- Zoar
- Yahweh
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Sodom
- Gomorrah

translationNotes:

- **the whole plain of the Jordan** - This refers to the general region of the Jordan River.
- **was well watered** - “had much water”
- **like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt** - “like the garden of Yahweh or like the land of Egypt.” These were two different places.
- **the garden of Yahweh** - This is another name for the garden of Eden.
- **garden** - Use the same word for “garden” as you used in [2:8](#).
- **This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah** - This anticipates something that would happen later. It is important here because it explains why Lot settled in a region that later was not fertile.
- **the relatives** - “the kinsmen” or “the families.” This refers to Lot and Abram with their households.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:12-13

UDB:

¹² Abram stayed in the land of Canaan, and Lot went to live near the cities in the plain of the Jordan River, and he set up his tents near Sodom. ¹³ Now the people who lived in Sodom were extremely wicked and sinned terribly against Yahweh.

ULB:

¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan, and Lot lived among the cities of the plain. He set up his tents as far away as Sodom. ¹³ Now the men of Sodom were very wicked sinners against Yahweh.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Lot](#)
- [Sodom](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **lived** - “settled” or “stayed”
- **the land of Canaan** - “the land of the Canaanites”
- **He set up his tents as far away as Sodom** - Possible meanings are 1) “He set up his tents near Sodom” (UDB) or 2) “He moved his tents around in an area that reached all the way to Sodom.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ After Abram and Lot separated, Yahweh said to Abram, "Look around at this whole area where you are. Look north and south, look east and west. ¹⁵ I will give to you and to your descendants all the land that you see; I will give it to you forever.

ULB:

¹⁴ Yahweh said to Abram after Lot had departed from him, "Look from the place where you are standing to the north, south, east, and west. ¹⁵ All this land which you see, I will give to you and to your descendants forever.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Lot](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)

translationNotes:

- **after Lot had departed from him** - "after Lot left Abraham"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 13:16-18

UDB:

¹⁶ I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as particles of dust! If a man tried to count the particles of dust, it would be the same as if he tried to count your descendants. ¹⁷ Walk through the land in every direction, because I am going to give it all to you.” ¹⁸ So Abram took down his tents and moved to Hebron and settled by the big trees of Mamre. He built a stone altar there to make sacrifices to Yahweh.

ULB:

¹⁶ I will make your descendants as abundant as the dust of the earth, so that if a man could count the dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted. ¹⁷ Arise, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.” ¹⁸ So Abram picked up his tent, and came and lived by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there built an altar to Yahweh.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- oak
- Hebron
- altar
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **walk through the length and breadth of the land** - “walk around all over the whole land”
- **Mamre** - This was the name of the man who owned the oak trees. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Hebron** - place name (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **an altar to Yahweh** - “an altar for worshiping Yahweh”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 13 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 13 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other translations indent the lines 14:19-20, which is an extended quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Names of places

Sometimes the names of places in Scripture are referred to by the name used during the time of the writer. For example, the location referred to as Dan was not yet known by that name because Dan had not yet come to live there. Moses, the author of Genesis, would have known this location as Dan.

Melchizedek

Melchizedek was both a priest and a king. Because of this, he parallels the roles of Jesus. Melchizedek is an important figure in the book of Hebrews. (See: [priest](#), [priesthood](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God Most High

Melchizedek worshiped the God Most High. This is probably a reference to the true and only God who created the heavens and the earth and came to be known as Yahweh. (See: [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 14:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 14:1-2

UDB:

¹ There were four kings who were allies. They were King Amraphel of Babylonia, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim. ² They prepared to attack a group of five kings: King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, the city that is now called Zoar.

ULB:

14 ¹ It came about in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of Goiim, ² that they made war against Bera, king of Sodom, Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinab, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar).

translationWords:

- [king](#)
- [Shinar](#)
- [Sodom](#)
- [Gomorrah](#)
- [Zoar](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The places in [14:1-2](#) are all independent cities. (See [How to Translate Names](#))
- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **in the days of** - “in the time of”
- **they made war** - “they went to war” or “they started a war” or “they prepared for war”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:3-6

UDB:

³ Those five kings and their armies gathered together in the Valley of Siddim, which is also called the Valley of the Dead Sea, to fight against the four kings and their armies. ⁴ For twelve years King Chedorlaomer had ruled them. But in the thirteenth year, they rebelled against King Chedorlaomer and refused to give him any more tribute money. ⁵ The next year, King Chedorlaomer and the other kings that were with him gathered their armies and started coming toward the area of the five kings. They defeated the Rephaite people in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzite people in Ham, and the Emite people in Shaveh Kiriathaim. ⁶ They also defeated the Horite people in their hill area of Seir as far as El Paran near the desert.

ULB:

³ These latter five kings joined together in the Valley of Siddim (also called the Salt Sea). ⁴ Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. ⁵ Then in the fourteenth year, Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, ⁶ and the Horites in their hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is near the desert.

translationWords:

- king
- desert, wilderness

translationNotes:

- **These latter five kings joined together** - The information that their armies were with them can be made explicit. AT: “These latter five kings and their armies joined together” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Twelve years they had served** - The events in verses 4-7 happened before verse 3. Your language may have a way of showing this.
- **they had served Chedorlaomer** - They probably had to pay him taxes and serve in his army. AT: “they had been under the control of Chedorlaomer” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **they rebelled** - “they refused to serve him” or “they stopped serving him”
- **came and attacked** - They did this because the other kings rebelled.
- **the Rephaim ... the Zuzim ... the Emim ... the Horites** - These are the names of people groups. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Ashteroth Karnaim ... Ham ... Shaveh Kiriathaim ... Seir ... El Paran** - These are the names of places. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

- **El Paran, which is near the desert** - This phrase helps readers understand where El Paran was. It can be translated as a separate sentence if necessary. AT: “El Paran. El Paran is near the desert” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:7-9**UDB:**

⁷ Then they turned around and went to En Mishpat, which is now called Kadesh. They conquered all the land belonging to the Amalekite people and the Amorite people who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

⁸ Then the armies of the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim and Bela marched out to fight the armies of the four kings in Siddim Valley. ⁹ They fought against the armies of Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, Tidal the king of Goiim, Amraphel the king of Shinar, and Arioch the king of Ellasar. The armies of four kings were fighting against the armies of five kings.

ULB:

⁷ Then they turned and came to En Mishpat (also called Kadesh), and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who lived in Hazazon Tamar.

⁸ Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar) went out and prepared for battle ⁹ against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, Tidal, king of Goiim, Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar; four kings against the five.

translationWords:

- **Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh**
- **Shinar**

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verses 8 and 9 repeats what was said in **14:3** and continues to tell what happened when the kings came together to fight.
- **they turned and came** - The word “they” refers to the four foreign kings who were attacking the region of Canaan. Their names were Amraphel, Arioch, Chedorlaomer, and Tidal. AT: “they turned and went” (See: **Go and Come**)
- **the Amorites who lived in Hazazon Tamar** - This phrase tells which Amorite people were defeated. There were other Amorite people who lived in other places.
- **and the king of Bela (also called Zoar)** - The city of Bela was also called Zoar. This information could also be put at the end of the sentence. “and the king of Bela went out and prepared for battle. Bela is also called Zoar.”
- **prepared for battle** - “joined battle” or “drew up battle lines.” Some translators may need to also say that the armies fought, as the UDB does in verse 9. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)

- **four kings against the five** - Since the five kings were listed first, some languages might prefer to translate this as “five kings against four.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:10-12

UDB:

¹⁰ The Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits. So when the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah tried to run away, many of the men fell into these pits. The others escaped and ran away to the hills. ¹¹ As they fled, their enemies seized all of the valuable things in Sodom and Gomorrah, including all the food. ¹² They also captured Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom at that time.

ULB:

¹⁰ Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell in there. Those who were left fled to the mountains. ¹¹ So the enemy took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their provisions, and went their way. ¹² When they went, they also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who was living in Sodom, along with all his possessions.

translationWords:

- king
- Sodom
- Gomorrah
- Lot
- Abraham, Abram

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word introduces background information about the valley of Siddim. Your language may have another way of introducing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **was full of tar pits** - "had many tar pits." These were holes in the ground that had tar in them.
- **tar** - a thick, sticky, black liquid that comes up from the ground. See how this is translated in [11:3](#).
- **the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah** - This is a metonym for the kings and their armies. AT: the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and their armies" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **they fell in there** - Possible meanings are 1) some of their soldiers fell in the tar pits or 2) the kings themselves fell in the tar pits. Since [14:17](#) says that the king of Sodom went to meet Abram, the first meaning is more likely correct. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Those who were left** - "Those who did not die in battle and did not fall in the pits"
- **the enemy** - This refers to King Chedorlaomer and the other kings and their armies with him who were attacking Sodom and Gomorrah.

- **the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah** - The words “Sodom” and “Gomorrah” are metonyms for the people who lived in those cities. AT: “the wealth of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah” or “the property of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **their provisions** - “their food and drink”
- **went their way** - “they went away”
- **they also took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who was living in Sodom, along with all his possessions** - The phrases “Abram’s brother’s son” and “who was living in Sodom” remind the reader of things that were written earlier about Lot. AT: “they also took Lot, along with all his possessions. Lot was Abram’s brother’s son and was living in Sodom at that time” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:13-14

UDB:

13-14 At that time, Abram was living near the big trees that belonged to Mamre, who belonged to the Amor clan. Abram had made an agreement with Mamre and his two brothers, Eshcol and Aner, that they would help each other if there was a war. One of the men who escaped from the battle told Abram the Hebrew what had happened and that the enemy had captured his nephew, Lot, and taken him away. So Abram summoned 318 men who were his servants, men who had been with Abram since they were born and who knew how to fight as warriors. They all went together and pursued their enemies as far as the city of Dan.

ULB:

¹³ One who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew. He was living by the oaks that belonged to Mamre, the Amorite, who was the brother of Eshcol and Aner, who were all allies of Abram. ¹⁴ Now when Abram heard that enemies had captured his relative, he led out his 318 trained men who had been born in his house, and he pursued them as far as Dan.

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- Hebrew
- oak
- Amorite
- Dan

translationNotes:

- **One who had escaped came** - “A man escaped from the battle and came”
- **He was living** - “Abram was living.” This introduces background information. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **were all allies of Abram** - “were treaty-partners with Abram” or “had a peace agreement with Abram”
- **his relative** - This is a reference to Abram’s nephew Lot.
- **trained men** - “men who were trained to fight”
- **men who had been born in his house** - “men who were born in Abram’s household.” They were children of Abram’s servants.
- **pursued them** - “chased them”
- **Dan** - This is a city in the far north of Canaan, far from Abram’s camp.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:15-16**UDB:**

¹⁵ During the night, Abram divided the men into several groups, and they attacked their enemies from various directions and defeated them. They pursued them as far as Hobah, which was north of the city of Damascus. ¹⁶ Abram's men recovered all of the goods that had been taken. They also rescued Lot and all his possessions and also the women and others who their enemies had taken.

ULB:

¹⁵ He divided his men against them at night and attacked them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶ Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his relative Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the other people.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Damascus](#)
- [Lot](#)

translationNotes:

- **He divided his men against them at night and attacked them** - This probably refers to a battle strategy. "Abram divided the men into several groups, and they attacked their enemies from various directions" (UDB)
- **all the possessions** - This refers to the things that the enemies had stolen from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- **and his goods** - "and Lot's property that the enemies had stolen from Lot"
- **as well as the women and the other people** - "as well as the women and other people that the four kings had captured"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ As Abram was returning home after he and his men had defeated the armies of King Chedorlaomer and the other kings who had fought alongside him, the King of Sodom went north to meet him in Shaveh Valley, which people also call the King's Valley. ¹⁸ Melchizedek, the king of the city of Salem, was also a priest of the supreme God. He brought some bread and wine to Abram.

ULB:

¹⁷ After Abram returned from defeating Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (also called the King's Valley). ¹⁸ Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Melchizedek](#)
- [king](#)
- [bread](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [priest, priesthood](#)
- [God](#)
- [Most High](#)

translationNotes:

- **returned** - The implied information about where he was returning to can be made explicit. AT: "returned to where he was living" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Melchizedek, king of Salem** - This is the first time this king is mentioned.
- **bread and wine** - People commonly ate bread and wine. See how you translated "bread" in [3:19](#) and "wine" in [9:21](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ Then he blessed Abram and said, "I ask the supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, to bless you. ²⁰ I praise the supreme God, because he has enabled you to defeat your enemies." Then Abram gave to Melchizedek a tenth part of all the things he had captured.

ULB:

¹⁹ He blessed him saying,

"Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

²⁰ Blessed be God Most High, who has given your enemies into your hand."

Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

translationWords:

- bless, blessed, blessing
- Abraham, Abram
- God
- Most High
- create, creation, Creator
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- tenth, tithe

translationNotes:

- **He blessed him** - King Melchizedek blessed Abram.
- **Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "May God Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless Abram" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **heaven** - This refers to the place where God lives.
- **God Most High, who has given** - "God Most High, because he has given." The phrase starting with "who has given" tells us something more about God Most High.
- **Blessed be God Most High** - This is a way of praising God. See how you translated "blessed be" in [9:26](#).
- **into your hand** - "into your control" or "into your power"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 14:21-24

UDB:

²¹ The King of Sodom said to Abram, “You can keep all the goods you recovered. Just let me take back the people from my city whom you captured.” ²² But Abram said to the King of Sodom, “I have solemnly promised Yahweh, the supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, ²³ that I will not take even one thread or a thong of a sandal from anything that belongs to you. As a result, you will never be able to say, ‘I caused Abram to become rich.’ ²⁴ The only thing I will accept is the food that my men have eaten. But Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre went with me and fought alongside me, so let them have a share of the goods we brought back.”

ULB:

²¹ The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people, and take the goods for yourself.” ²² Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted up my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, ²³ that I will not take a thread, a sandal strap, or anything that is yours, so that you can never say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ ²⁴ I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten and the share of the men that went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their portion.”

translationWords:

- king
- Sodom
- Abraham, Abram
- Yahweh
- create, creation, Creator

translationNotes:

- **Give me the people** - The phrase “the people” may refer to the people of Sodom that the enemies had captured. Abram rescued them when he rescued Lot.
- **I have lifted up my hand** - This means “I have taken an oath” or “I have made a promise.”
- **I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten** - “I take from you only what my young men have already eaten.” Abram was refusing to accept anything for himself, but acknowledged that the soldiers had eaten some of the supplies during the journey back to Sodom after the battle.
- **the share of the men that went with me** - The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “the share of the recovered property that belongs to the men who helped me get it back” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre** - These are the allies of Abram (See: [14:13](#)). Because they were Abram's allies they fought battles alongside him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: "my allies Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 14 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 14 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Inheritance

In the ancient Near East, a person's children inherited the property and land of their parents. Abraham doubted the fulfillment of God's covenant because he did not have any children to give his land. This showed a lack of faith. (See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [fulfill](#), [covenant](#) and [faith](#))

Fulfilling a promise

In the ancient Near East, two people performed a similar sacrifice by dividing animals in half. It was a way to say to the other person, "may this happen to me if I do not fulfill my promise." The event recorded here indicates that God will fulfill his promise and only he is responsible for bringing it about. (See: [fulfill](#) and [promise](#))

God's covenant with Abraham

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abraham needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. This covenant has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety.

Links:

- [Genesis 15:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 15:1-3

UDB:

¹ Some time later, Abram had a vision in which Yahweh spoke to him and said, “Do not be afraid of anything, I will protect you and I will give a great reward.” ² But Abram replied, “Lord Yahweh, how can you give me what I truly want, because I have no children, and the one who will inherit all my possessions is my servant Eliezer, from Damascus!” ³ Abram also said, “You have not given me any children, so a servant in my household will inherit everything that I own!”

ULB:

15 ¹ After these things the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Fear not, Abram! I am your shield and your very great reward.” ² Abram said, “Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, since I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ Abram said, “Since you have given me no descendant, see, the steward of my house is my heir.”

translationWords:

- word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture
- Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God
- Abraham, Abram
- vision
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- heir
- Damascus
- manager, steward

translationNotes:

- **After these things** - “These things” refers to when the kings fought and Abram rescued Lot.
- **the word of Yahweh came** - This idiom means Yahweh spoke. AT: “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **the word of Yahweh** - Here “word” represents Yahweh’s message. AT: “the message of Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **shield ... reward** - God used these two metaphors to tell Abram about his character and his relationship to Abram. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **I am your shield** - Soldiers use a shield to protect themselves from their enemies. AT: “I will protect you like shield” or “I am your shield to protect you” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **reward** - “payment.” This refers to the payment a person deserves. Two possible meanings are 1) “I am all that you need” or 2) “I will give you all you need.”
- **Abram said, “Since you have given me** - “Abram continued speaking and said, ‘Since you have given me’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15:4-5

UDB:

⁴ Yahweh replied, “No! He will not be the one who will inherit it. Instead, you yourself will be the father of the one who will inherit everything you own.” ⁵ Then Yahweh took Abram outside of his tent and said, “Look up at the sky! Can you count the stars? No, you cannot count them because there are so many of them, and your descendants will be as numerous as the stars.”

ULB:

⁴ Then, behold, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but rather the one who will come from your own body will be your heir.” ⁵ Then he brought him outside, and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So will your descendants be.”

translationWords:

- [word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture](#)
- [heir](#)
- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then, behold** - The word “behold” emphasizes the fact that the word of Yahweh came to Abraham again.
- **the word of Yahweh came** - This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [15:1](#). AT: “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **the word of Yahweh** - Here “word” represents Yahweh’s message. AT: “the message of Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **This man** - This refers to Eliezer of Damascus.
- **the one who will come from your own body** - “the one that you will father” or “your very own son.” Abram’s own son would become his heir.
- **number the stars** - “count the stars”
- **So will your descendants be** - Just as Abram would not be able to count all the stars, he would not be able to count all his descendants because there would be so many.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 15 Translation Questions

Genesis 15:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ Abram believed that what Yahweh said would happen. Because of that, Yahweh considered him as good. ⁷ Yahweh also said to him, “I am Yahweh. I am the one who brought you from Ur in the land of Chaldea. I brought you here to give you this land to possess.” ⁸ But Abram replied, “Lord Yahweh, how can I know for sure that this land will belong to me?”

ULB:

⁶ He believed Yahweh, and he counted it to him as righteousness. ⁷ He said to him, “I am Yahweh, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.” ⁸ He said, “Lord Yahweh, how will I know that I will inherit it?”

translationWords:

- [believe, believe in, belief](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [Ur](#)
- [Chaldea, Chaldean](#)
- [inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir](#)
- [Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God](#)

translationNotes:

- **He believed Yahweh** - This means he accepted and trusted what Yahweh said was true.
- **he counted it to him as righteousness** - “Yahweh counted Abram’s belief as righteousness” or “Yahweh considered Abram righteous because Abram believed him”
- **I am Yahweh, who brought you out of Ur** - Yahweh was reminding Abraham of what he had already done so that Abraham would know that Yahweh had the power to give Abram what he promised him.
- **to inherit it** - “to receive it” or “so that you will possess it”
- **how will I know** - Abram was asking for more proof that Yahweh would give him the land.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ God said to him, “Bring a three year old heifer and a three year old goat to me, and a dove and a pigeon.” ¹⁰ So Abram brought all of them. He killed them and cut each of the animals in half. He arranged the halves of each one, side by side. But he did not cut the pigeon and dove in half. ¹¹ Birds that eat dead animals came down to eat the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

ULB:

⁹ Then he said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a dove, and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰ He brought him all these, and cut them in two, and placed each half opposite the other, but he did not divide the birds. ¹¹ When the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

translationWords:

- [heifer](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)

translationNotes:

- **the carcasses** - “the dead bodies of the animals and birds”
- **Abram drove them away** - “Abram chased the birds away.” He made sure the birds did not eat the dead animals.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15:12-13

UDB:

¹² As the sun was going down, Abram fell sound asleep, and suddenly everything around him became dark and frightening. ¹³ Then Yahweh said to Abram, "I want you to know that your descendants will become foreigners living in a land that does not belong to them. They will become slaves of the owners of that land. The owners of the land will mistreat them for four hundred years.

ULB:

¹² Then when the sun was going down, Abram fell sound asleep and, behold, a deep and terrifying darkness overwhelmed him. ¹³ Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [enslave, in bondage](#)
- [oppress, oppression, oppressor](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abram fell sound asleep** - This is an idiom. AT: "Abraham slept deeply" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **a deep and terrifying darkness** - "an extreme darkness that terrified him"
- **overwhelmed him** - "surrounded him"
- **strangers** - "aliens" or "foreigners"
- **and will be enslaved and oppressed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "and the owners of that land will enslave your descendants and oppress them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ But then I will punish the people of that country where they are slaves. Then your descendants will leave that country, taking many possessions with them. ¹⁵ But as for you, you will die peacefully and be buried when you are very old. ¹⁶ After your descendants have been slaves for four hundred years, they will come back here. They will take control of this land and defeat the Amor people. This will not happen before that time, because the Amor people have not yet sinned to the degree that I would punish them like that for it.”

ULB:

¹⁴ I will judge that nation that they will serve, and afterward they will come out with abundant possessions. ¹⁵ But you will go to your fathers in peace, and you will be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶ In the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit.”

translationWords:

- judge, judgment
- nation
- serve, service
- ancestor, father, forefather
- peace, peaceful
- generation
- iniquity
- Amorite

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Yahweh continued to speak to Abram while Abram dreamed.
- **I will judge** - Here “judge” is a metonym for what will happen after God makes the judgment. AT: “I will punish” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **that they will serve** - The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “that your descendants will serve” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **abundant possessions** - This is an idiom. AT: “many possessions” or “great wealth” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **you will go to your fathers** - This is a polite way of saying “you will die.” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **fathers** - The word “fathers” is a synecdoche for all ancestors. AT: “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

- **you will be buried in a good old age** - “you will be very old when you die and your family buries your body”
- **In the fourth generation** - Here one generation refers to a lifespan of 100 years. “After four hundred years”
- **they will come here again** - “your descendants will come back here.” Abraham’s descendants would come to the land where Abram was then living, the land that Yahweh had promised to give to him.
- **has not yet reached its limit** - “is not yet complete” or “will get much worse before I punish them”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 15:17-21**UDB:**

¹⁷ When the sun had set and it was dark, unexpectedly a blazing torch and a clay pot containing burning coals from which smoke was rising appeared and went between the halves of the animals. ¹⁸ On that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram. Yahweh told him, "I will give to your descendants all the land between the river that is on the eastern border of Egypt to the south, and north to the Euphrates River. ¹⁹ That is the land where the Ken, the Keniz, the Kidmon, ²⁰ the Heth, the Perez, the Repha, ²¹ the Amor, the Canaan, the Girgash, and the Jebus people groups live."

ULB:

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between the pieces. ¹⁸ On that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I hereby give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—¹⁹ the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaites, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

translationWords:

- God
- covenant
- Abraham, Abram
- descendant, descended from
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Euphrates River

translationNotes:

- **behold** - The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between the pieces** - God did this to show Abram that he was making a covenant with him.
- **passed between the pieces** - "passed through between the two rows of animal pieces"
- **covenant** - In this covenant God promises to bless Abram, and he will continue to bless him as long as Abram follows him.
- **I hereby give this land** - By saying this, God was giving the land to Abram's descendants. God was doing this then, but the descendants would not go into the land until many years later.
- **the great river, the Euphrates** - "the large river, the Euphrates." These are two ways of referring to the same river.

- **the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites** - These are the names of groups of people who lived in that land. God would allow Abraham's descendants to conquer these people and take their land. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 15 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 15 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 16:11-14, which is an extended quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Plural marriage

Abram married Hagar while he was also married to Sarai. Even though Abram had his wife's permission, this was an immoral and sinful action. It also showed a lack of faith in God. Sarai quickly became jealous of Hagar. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [faith](#), [jealous](#), [jealousy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).

Links:

- [Genesis 16:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 16:1-4**UDB:**

¹ Up to that time, Abram's wife Sarai had not given birth to any children for Abram. But she had a female slave from Egypt, whose name was Hagar. ² Sarai said to Abram, "Listen to me! Yahweh has not allowed me to become pregnant. So sleep with my slave Hagar. Perhaps she will bear children whom I can consider to be mine." Abram agreed to do what Sarai said. ³ This happened ten years after Abram and Sarai went to live in Canaan land. In this way Abram took Hagar, Sarai's slave from Egypt, to be his second wife. ⁴ So he slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she realized that she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress Sarai.

ULB:

16 ¹ Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not borne any children for him, but she had a female servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, "See, Yahweh has kept me from having children. Go sleep with my servant. It may be that I will have children by her." Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³ It was after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan that Sarai, Abram's wife, gave Hagar, her Egyptian servant, to her husband as a wife. ⁴ So he had relations with Hagar, and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

translationWords:

- Sarah, Sarai
- Abraham, Abram
- servant, slave, slavery
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Hagar
- Yahweh
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking
- Canaan, Canaanite

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story and background information about Sarai. (See: **Background Information**)
- **female servant** - "slave-girl." This type of slave would serve the woman of the household.
- **from having children** - "from giving birth to children"
- **I will have children by her** - "I will build my family through her"
- **Abram listened to the voice of Sarai** - "Abram did what Sarai said"

- **she looked with contempt on her mistress** - “she despised her mistress” or “she thought that she was more valuable than her mistress”
- **her mistress** - Here this refers to Sarai. A mistress has authority over her slave. AT: “her owner” or “Sarai”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “It is your fault! I put my servant into your arms so that you could sleep with her. Now she is pregnant, and she despises me because I have no children. May Yahweh find you guilty for doing this to me!” ⁶ So Abram said to Sarai, “Listen to me! She is your servant, so act toward her in the way you consider best.” Then Sarai started to mistreat her, so Hagar ran away.

ULB:

⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “This wrong on me is because of you. I gave my servant woman into your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes. Let Yahweh judge between me and you.” ⁶ But Abram said to Sarai, “See here, your servant woman is in your power, do to her what you think best.” So Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

translationWords:

- Sarah, Sarai
- Abraham, Abram
- wrong, mistreat, hurt
- servant, slave, slavery
- Yahweh
- judge, judgment

translationNotes:

- **This wrong on me** - “This injustice against me”
- **is because of you** - “is your responsibility” or “is your fault”
- **I gave my servant woman into your embrace** - Sarai used the word “embrace” here to refer to him sleeping with her. AT: “I gave you my servant so that you would sleep with her” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **I was despised in her eyes** - This can be active. AT: “she hated me” or “she began to hate me” or “she thought she was better than me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Let Yahweh judge between me and you** - “I want Yahweh to say whether this is my fault or your fault” or “I want Yahweh to decide which one of us is right.” The phrase “to judge between” means to decide which person is right in a dispute between them.
- **See here** - “Listen to me” or “Pay attention”
- **in your power** - “under your authority”
- **Sarai dealt harshly with her** - “Sarai treated Hagar very badly”
- **and she fled from her** - “and Hagar fled from Sarai”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:7-8

UDB:

⁷ The angel of Yahweh went to her as she was near a spring of water in the desert. It was the spring that was alongside the road to Shur. ⁸ He said to her, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?” She replied, “I have run away from Sarai, my mistress.”

ULB:

⁷ The angel of Yahweh found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring that is on the way to Shur. ⁸ He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s servant, where did you come from and where are you going?” Then she said, “I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai.”

translationWords:

- [angel, archangel](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)
- [Hagar](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **The angel of Yahweh** - Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh’s angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as “the angel of Yahweh” using the normal word that you use for “angel.”
- **wilderness** - The wilderness area she went to was a desert. AT: “desert”
- **Shur** - This was the name of a place south of Canaan and east of Egypt.
- **my mistress** - Here this refers to Sarai. A mistress has authority over her slave. AT: “my owner.” See how “her mistress” is translated in [16:4](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ The angel of Yahweh said, “Go back to your mistress and continue to obey her.” ¹⁰ The angel of Yahweh also said to her, “I will enable you to bear so many descendants that no one will be able to count them!”

ULB:

⁹ The angel of Yahweh said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”
¹⁰ Then the angel of Yahweh said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants, so that they will be too numerous to count.”

translationWords:

- [angel, archangel](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [authority](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)

translationNotes:

- **The angel of Yahweh said to her** - “The angel of Yahweh said to Hagar”
- **the angel of Yahweh** - See the note about this phrase in [16:7](#).
- **your mistress** - Sarai. See how “her mistress” is translated in [16:4](#).
- **the angel of Yahweh said to her, ”I** - When he said “I,” he was referring to Yahweh. When translating what is in the quote, do it as the angel of Yahweh did and use the word “I” when referring to Yahweh.
- **I will greatly multiply your descendants** - “I will give you very many descendants”
- **too numerous to count** - “so many that no one will be able to count them”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ The angel of Yahweh also said to her, "Listen to this! You are pregnant. You will give birth to a son. You must name him Ishmael, which means 'God listens,' because Yahweh has heard you crying because you feel so miserable. ¹² But your son will be as uncontrollable as a wild donkey. He will oppose everyone, and everyone will oppose him. He will live far away from all his relatives."

ULB:

¹¹ The angel of Yahweh also said to her,

"Behold, you are pregnant, and will bear a son, and you will call his name
Ishmael,

because Yahweh has heard your affliction.

¹² He will be a wild donkey of a man. He will be hostile against every man,
and every man will be hostile to him,

and he will live apart from all his brothers."

translationWords:

- angel, archangel
- Ishmael
- afflict, affliction
- donkey, mule
- brother

translationNotes:

- **The angel of Yahweh** - See the note about this phrase in [16:7](#).
- **Behold** - "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention"
- **bear a son** - "give birth to a son"
- **you will call his name** - "you will name him." The word "you" refers to Hagar.
- **Ishmael, because Yahweh has heard** - Translators may add a footnote that says "The name 'Ishmael' means 'God has heard.'"
- **affliction** - She has been afflicted by distress and suffering.
- **He will be a wild donkey of a man** - This was not an insult. It may mean that Ishmael would be independent and strong like a wild donkey. AT: "He will be like a wild donkey among men" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **He will be hostile against every man** - "He will be every man's enemy"
- **every man will be hostile to him** - "everyone will be his enemy"

- **he will live apart from** - This can also mean “he will live in hostility with.”
- **brothers** - “relatives” or “kin”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:13-14

UDB:

¹³ Hagar said to herself, “I continue to live, even though Yahweh has seen me!” So she called Yahweh, “God, the one who sees me.” ¹⁴ That is why people call the well there “Beer Lahai Roi,” which means, “the well of the living one who sees me!” It is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

ULB:

¹³ Then she gave this name to Yahweh who spoke to her, “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” ¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Yahweh who spoke to her** - “Yahweh, because he spoke to her”
- **Do I really continue to see, ... me?** - Hagar used this rhetorical question to express her amazement that she was still alive even after she met God. People expected that if they met God, they would die. AT: “I am surprised that I am still alive, ... me.” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi** - Translators may add a footnote that says “Beerlahairoi means ‘the well of the living one who sees me.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered** - The word “behold” here draws attention to the fact that the well was in a place that the author and his readers knew. AT: “in fact, it is between Kadesh and Bered” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 16:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ So Hagar later gave birth to a son for Abram, and she named him Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Abram's son Ishmael.

ULB:

¹⁵ Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

translationWords:

- [Hagar](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Ishmael](#)

translationNotes:

- **Hagar gave birth** - Hagar's return to Sarai and Abram is implicit. You can make this more explicit. AT: "So Hagar went back and gave birth" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **named his son, whom Hagar bore** - "named his son by Hagar" or "named his and Hagar's son"
- **Abram was** - This introduces background information about Abram's age when these things happened. Your language may have a special way to mark background information. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **bore Ishmael to Abram** - This means "gave birth to Abram's son, Ishmael." The focus is on Abram having a son.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 16 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 16 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

“The father of a multitude of nations”

Abram came to have many descendants. He had so many descendants that many of his immediate descendants became large people groups and nations

God’s covenant with Abraham

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abraham needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. It is important to note in this chapter that Isaac is the son who receives the promises associated with the covenant and not Ishmael. (See: [covenant](#), [fulfill](#) and [promise](#))

Circumcision

Circumcision was an unusual practice in the ancient Near East. It served to separate the Hebrew people from the rest of the world. This chapter records the beginning of this practice among Abraham and his descendants. (See: [circumcise](#), [circumcision](#))

Name change

In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly significant point in a person’s life. The beginning of the practice of circumcision was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Links:

- [Genesis 17:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 17:1-2

UDB:

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram again and said to him, "I am God Almighty. I want you to live your life in the way that I want. I want you to not do anything wrong. ² I will confirm my covenant between us, and I will cause you to have a very great number of descendants."

ULB:

17 ¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty. Walk before me, and be blameless. ² Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Almighty](#)
- [walk](#)
- [blameless](#)
- [covenant](#)

translationNotes:

- **When Abram was ninety-nine years old** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **God Almighty** - "the all-powerful God" or "the God who has all power"
- **Walk before me** - Walking is a metaphor for living, and "before me" or "in my presence" here is a metaphor for obedience. AT: "Live the way I want you to" or "Obey me" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Then I will confirm** - "If you do this, then I will confirm"
- **I will confirm my covenant** - "I will give my covenant" or "I will make my covenant"
- **covenant** - In this covenant God promises to bless Abram, but he also requires Abram to obey him.
- **multiply you exceedingly** - "greatly increase the number of your descendants" or "give you very many descendants" (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 17 General Notes
- **Genesis 17 Translation Questions**

Genesis 17:3-6**UDB:**

³ Abram bowed down with his face on the ground. Then God said to him, ⁴ "Listen to this! This is the covenant I am making with you: You will be the father of many groups of people. ⁵ Your name will be Abram no longer. Instead, your name will be Abraham, because I will make you the father of many groups of people. ⁶ I will cause you to have very, very many descendants, and I will cause nations and kings to be among them.

ULB:

³ Abram bowed low with his face to the ground and God talked with him, saying, ⁴ "As for me, behold, my covenant is with you. You will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer will your name be Abram, but your name will be Abraham—for I appoint you to be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you.

translationWords:

- bow, bow down
- covenant
- nation
- ancestor, father, forefather
- nation
- king

translationNotes:

- **Abram bowed low with his face to the ground** - "Abram threw himself face down on the ground" or "Abraham immediately lay down with his face to the ground." He did this to show that he respected God and would obey him.
- **As for me** - God used this phrase to introduce what he would do for Abram as part of his covenant with Abram.
- **behold, my covenant is with you** - The word "behold" here says that what comes next is certain: "my covenant is certainly with you."
- **the father of a multitude of nations** - "the father of a great number of nations" or "the one after whom many nations name themselves"
- **Abraham** - Translators may add the following footnote: The name "Abram" means "exalted father" and the name "Abraham" sounds like "father of a multitude."
- **I will make you exceedingly fruitful** - "I will cause you to have very many descendants"
- **I will make nations of you** - "I will cause your descendants to become nations"

- **kings will descend from you** - “among your descendants there will be kings” or “some of your descendants will be kings”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:7-8

UDB:

⁷ I will make this covenant between me and you and the generations of your descendants after you forever. Because of this covenant, you will worship and follow me as God, and so will your descendants. ⁸ I will give to you and to your descendants the land of Canaan, the whole land of Canaan, where you are now living. It will be an everlasting possession for them, and I will be their God.”

ULB:

⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you, throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. ⁸ I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land where you have been living, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

translationWords:

- [covenant](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [generation](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [God](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Abraham.
- **throughout their generations** - “for each generation”
- **for an everlasting covenant** - “as a covenant that will last forever”
- **to be God to you and to your descendants after you** - “to be your God and your descendants’ God” or “covenant”
- **Canaan, for an everlasting possession** - “Canaan, as an everlasting possession” or “Canaan, to possess forever”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:9-11

UDB:

⁹ Then God said to Abraham, "Now you must keep your part of the covenant that I am making with you, and your descendants must also obey it, for all generations. ¹⁰ This is a requirement of the covenant that I am making between myself and you and all your descendants: Every male among you must be circumcised. ¹¹ Cutting the foreskins of them will be the sign that you have accepted the covenant that I am making with you.

ULB:

⁹ Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ This is my covenant, which you must keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you must be circumcised. ¹¹ You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and this will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

translationWords:

- covenant
- descendant, descended from
- generation
- circumcise, circumcision
- sign, proof, reminder

translationNotes:

- **As for you** - God uses this phrase to introduce what Abram would have to do as part of God's covenant with him.
- **keep my covenant** - "observe my covenant" or "honor my covenant" or "obey my covenant"
- **This is my covenant** - "This is a requirement of my covenant" or "This is part of my covenant." This sentence introduces the part of the covenant that Abram must do.
- **Every male among you must be circumcised** - This can be stated in an active form. AT: "You must circumcise every male among you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Every male** - This refers to human males.
- **You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin** - Some communities may prefer a less descriptive expression such as "You must be circumcised." If your translation of "be circumcised" already includes the word for "foreskin", you do not need to repeat it. This can be made active. AT: "You must circumcise every male among you" (See: [Euphemism](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **the sign of the covenant** - "the sign that shows that the covenant exists"

- **the sign** - Possible meanings are 1) “the sign” or 2) “a sign.” The first means that there was one sign, and the second means that there may have been more than one sign. Here the word “sign” means a reminder of something that God had promised.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:12-14

UDB:

¹² Every male child among you must be circumcised when he is eight days old, in all future generations. That includes baby boys in your household and those born from slaves that have been bought, and foreigners who live among you but do not belong to your household. ¹³ It does not matter whether their parents are members of your household or slaves that you have bought; they must all be circumcised. Your bodies will have this mark to show you have accepted this everlasting covenant that I am making. ¹⁴ You must drive out from your community any male who has not been circumcised, because that person has disobeyed my covenant.”

ULB:

¹² Every male among you that is eight days old must be circumcised, throughout your people’s generations. This includes him who is born into your household and him who is bought with money from any foreigner who is not one of your descendants. ¹³ He who is born into your household and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised. Thus my covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin will be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant.”

translationWords:

- circumcise, circumcision
- generation
- household
- descendant, descended from
- everlasting, eternal, eternity
- covenant
- cut off

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues speaking to Abraham.
- **Every male** - “Every human male”
- **throughout your people’s generations** - “in every generation”
- **him who is bought with money** - This refers to slaves. This can be stated in active form. AT: “any male that you buy” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **my covenant will be in your flesh** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “you will mark my covenant in your flesh” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **for an everlasting covenant** - “as a permanent covenant.” Because it was marked in flesh, no one could easily erase it.

- **uncircumcised male who is not circumcised** - This can be stated in active form, and you may leave out words that will give wrong meaning in your language. AT: “male whom you have not circumcised” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Any uncircumcised male ... foreskin will be cut off from his people** - Possible meanings are 1) “I will cut off any uncircumcised male ... foreskin from his people” or 2) “I want you to cut off any uncircumcised male ... foreskin from his people.”
- **cut off from his people** - Possible meanings are 1) “killed” or 2) “sent away from the community.” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **He has broken my covenant** - “He has not obeyed the rules of my covenant.” This is the reason that he would be cut off from his people.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai, your wife, you must not call her Sarai any longer. I will change her name also. Her name will now be Sarah. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and she will surely give birth to a son for you. And I will bless her so much that she will be the ancestor of people of many nations. Kings and people groups will be descended from her."

ULB:

¹⁵ God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, do not call her Sarai any more. Instead, her name will be Sarah. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will become the mother of nations. Kings of peoples will come from her."

translationWords:

- Sarah, Sarai
- bless, blessed, blessing
- nation
- king

translationNotes:

- **As for Sarai** - The words "As for" introduce the next person God talks about.
- **I will give you a son by her** - "I will make her bear a son for you"
- **she will become the mother of nations** - "she will be the ancestor of many nations" (UDB) or "her descendants will become nations"
- **Kings of peoples will come from her** - "Kings of peoples will descend from her" or "Some of her descendants will be kings of peoples"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ Abraham lay down with his face on the ground in respect before God. But then he laughed as he said to himself, “Can a man who is a hundred years old become a father of a son? And since Sarah is ninety years old, how can she bear a child?” ¹⁸ Then Abraham said to God, “Perhaps you will let Ishmael receive your blessing and inherit all I possess.”

ULB:

¹⁷ Then Abraham bowed low with his face to the ground, and laughed, and said in his heart, “Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? How can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son?” ¹⁸ Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [Ishmael](#)

translationNotes:

- **said in his heart** - “thought to himself” or “said to himself silently”
- **Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old?** - Abraham used this rhetorical question because he did not believe that this could happen. AT: “Surely a man who is a hundred years old cannot father a child!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **How can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son?** - Again Abraham used a rhetorical question because he did not believe this could happen. The phrase “who is ninety years old” tells why Abraham did not believe that Sarah could bear a son. AT: “Sarah is ninety years old. Could she bear a son?” or “Sarah is ninety years old. Surely she could not bear a son!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **Oh that Ishmael might live before you** - “Please let Ishmael inherit the covenant that you have made with me” or “Perhaps Ishmael could receive your covenant blessing.” Abraham suggested something that he believed really could happen.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:19-21

UDB:

¹⁹ Then God replied, "No! Your wife Sarah will bear a son for you. You must name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him, one that will be an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants. ²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard what you asked me to do for him. I will bless him so that he also will have many descendants. Among his descendants will be the leaders of twelve tribes. And I will cause his descendants to become a great nation. ²¹ But it is with Isaac that I will establish my covenant—Isaac, the son whom Sarah will give birth to at this time next year."

ULB:

¹⁹ God said, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you must name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant with his descendants after him. ²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I hereby bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him abundantly. He will be the father of twelve leaders of tribes, and I will make him become a great nation. ²¹ But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time in the next year."

translationWords:

- Sarah, Sarai
- Isaac
- everlasting, eternal, eternity
- covenant
- descendant, descended from
- Ishmael
- tribe
- nation

translationNotes:

- **No, but Sarah your wife will bear** - God said this to correct Abraham's belief that Sarah could not have a son.
- **you must name him** - The word "you" refers to Abraham.
- **As for Ishmael** - The words "As for" show that God is switching from talking about the baby that would be born to talking about Ishmael.
- **Behold** - "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
- **will make him fruitful** - This is an idiom that means "will cause him to have many children." (See: [Idiom](#))
- **and will multiply him abundantly** - "and I will cause him to have many descendants"

- **leaders of tribes** - “chiefs” or “rulers.” These leaders are not the twelve sons and grandsons of Jacob that will lead the twelve tribes of Israel.
- **But my covenant I will establish with Isaac** - God returns to talking about his covenant with Abraham and emphasizes that he would fulfill his promise with Isaac, not with Ishmael.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:22-23

UDB:

²² When God finished talking to Abraham, God disappeared from his sight.

²³ On that same day, Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the males that were in his household, including the sons of all the slaves he had bought, and circumcised them. He cut off their foreskins, just as God told him to do.

ULB:

²² When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. ²³ Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all those who were born into his household, and all those who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in that same day, as God had said to him.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Ishmael](#)
- [circumcise, circumcision](#)

translationNotes:

- **When he had finished talking with him** - "When God had finished talking with Abraham"
- **God went up from Abraham** - "God left Abraham"
- **every male among the men of Abraham's household** - "every human male in Abraham's household" or "every male person in Abraham's household." It refers to human males of all ages: babies, boys, and men.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 17:24-27

UDB:

²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, ²⁵ and Ishmael was thirteen years old when Abraham circumcised him. ²⁶ It was on that very same day that Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. ²⁷ All the males in his household, the ones who had been born there and those Abraham had bought from foreigners, were also circumcised.

ULB:

²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ On the very same day Abraham and Ishmael his son were both circumcised. ²⁷ All the men of his household were circumcised with him, including those born into the household and those bought with money from a foreigner.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Ishmael](#)
- [circumcise, circumcision](#)
- [household](#)
- [foreigner, foreign, alien](#)

translationNotes:

- **including those born into the household and those bought with money from a foreigner** - “This includes those who were born in his household and those he had bought from foreigners”
- **those bought with money from a foreigner** - This refers to servants or slaves.
- **those bought** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “those whom he had bought” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 17 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 17 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Three men

The three men who looked at Abraham were probably angels. This is evident from Abraham's reaction to them. Also, it appears Abraham knew that he was speaking directly to Yahweh through these men. (See: [angel](#), [archangel](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).

Disbelief

When Sarah heard the news that she was going to have a baby, she laughed in disbelief because she was considered too old to have a baby. She also asked a rhetorical question in order to further show her disbelief. This would have been considered an insult to God. (See: [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

In his exchange with God, Abraham did not show any sign of unbelief. Instead, he is asking God for mercy because he trusted in the character of God. He does not question God's power to accomplish things as Sarah had done. (See: [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sarah's age

It should be apparent that Sarah was physically no longer able to have children because of her age. There is a natural period in a woman's life when she stops being able to have children. The text assumes the reader understands that Sarah has already experienced this event. In English, this is called "menopause." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 18:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 18:1-2**UDB:**

¹ One day during that year, at the time of day when it was hot, Yahweh appeared to Abraham again near the big trees that belonged to Mamre. Abraham was sitting in the entrance to his tent. ² Abraham looked up and was surprised to see three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran to meet them. He prostrated himself with his face on the ground in respect.

ULB:

18 ¹ Yahweh appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent doorway in the heat of the day. ² He looked up and, behold, he saw three men standing across from him. When he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door and bowed low to the ground.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [oak](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)

translationNotes:

- **Mamre** - This was the name of the man who owned the oak trees.
- **in the tent doorway** - “at the opening of the tent” or “at the entrance of the tent”
- **heat of the day** - “hottest time of day”
- **He looked up and, behold, he saw three men standing** - “He looked up and saw, and behold, three men were standing”
- **behold** - “suddenly.” The word “behold” here shows us that what follows was surprising to Abraham.
- **across from him** - “nearby” or “there.” They were near him, but far enough away for him to run to them.
- **bowed** - This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:3-5

UDB:

³ He said to one of them, "Lord, if you are pleased with me, stay here for a little while. ⁴ Allow my servants to bring a little water and wash your feet, and then rest under this tree. ⁵ Since you have come here to me, allow me to bring you some food so that you can gain strength before you leave." The men replied, "All right, do as you have said."

ULB:

³ He said, "Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by and leave your servant. ⁴ Let a little water be brought, wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵ Let me bring a little food, so that you may refresh yourselves. Afterwards you can go your way, since you have come to your servant." They replied, "Do as you have said."

translationWords:

- [Lord](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **Lord** - This is a title of respect. Possible meanings are 1) Abraham knew that one of these men was God or 2) Abraham knew that these men came on behalf of God.
- **in your sight** - Abraham is speaking to one of the men. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **do not pass by** - "please do not keep on going"
- **your servant** - "me." Abraham refers to himself this way in order to show respect to his guest.
- **Let a little water be brought** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "Let me bring you some water" or "My servant will bring you some water" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **a little water ... a little food** - "some water ... some food." Saying "little" was a polite way of showing generosity. Abraham would give them more than enough water and food.
- **wash your feet** - This custom helped tired travelers to refresh themselves after walking long distances.
- **your ... you** - Abraham speaks to all three of the men, so "you" and "your" are plural. (See: [Forms of You](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 18 Translation Questions

Genesis 18:6-8

UDB:

⁶ Then Abraham hurried into the tent and said to Sarah, “Quick, get twenty kilograms of our best flour and make some bread!” ⁷ Then he ran to the herd of cattle and selected a calf whose meat would be tender and tasty. He gave it to one of his servants, who hurried to kill and cook it. ⁸ When the meat was cooked, Abraham brought some curds, milk, and the meat that the servant had prepared. He placed them in front of them. Then he stood near them under a tree while they ate.

ULB:

⁶ Then Abraham quickly went into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Hurry, get three seahs of fine flour, knead it, and make bread.” ⁷ Then Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf that was tender and good, and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. ⁸ He took curds and milk, and the calf that had been prepared, and placed the food before them, and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **three seahs** - about 22 liters (See: [Biblical Volume](#))
- **bread** - This bread was probably cooked quickly on a hot stone. It may have been flat or round like small loaves or rolls.
- **he hurried** - “the servant hurried”
- **to prepare it** - “to cut it up and roast it”
- **curds** - This refers to the solid part of fermented milk. It may have been yogurt or cheese.
- **the calf that had been prepared** - “the roasted calf”
- **before them** - “before the three visitors”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ After they ate, they asked him, “Where is Sarah, your wife?” He replied, “She is in the tent.” ¹⁰ Then the leader of the group said, “I will return to you in the springtime next year, and listen, your wife Sarah will have an infant son.” It happened that Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind the man who was speaking.

ULB:

⁹ They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” He replied, “There, in the tent.” ¹⁰ He said, “I will certainly return to you in the springtime, and see, Sarah your wife will have a son.” Sarah was listening in the tent doorway, which was behind him.

translationWords:

- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **They said to him** - “Then they said to Abraham”
- **He said, ”I will certainly return to you** - The word “He” refers to the man whom Abraham called “Lord” in [18:3](#).
- **in the springtime** - “when this same season comes next year” or “about this time next year” (UDB)
- **and see** - The word “see” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **in the tent doorway** - “at the opening of the tent” or “at the entrance of the tent”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were very old, and Sarah was far past the time of childbearing. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, thinking, “My body is worn out, and my husband is old. So how can I have the pleasure of having a baby?”

ULB:

¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, very advanced in age, and Sarah had passed the age when women could bear children. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, saying to herself, “After I am worn-out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **After I am worn-out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?** - You may want to add “of having a baby” (UDB). Sarah used this rhetorical question because she did not believe that she could have a child. AT: “I cannot believe that I will experience the joy of having a child. My master is also too old” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **my master is old** - This means “since my husband is also old.”
- **my master** - This is a title of respect that Sarah gave to her husband Abraham.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:13-15**UDB:**

¹³ Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why was she thinking, 'I am too old, so how can I bear a child'?" ¹⁴ Is there anything too difficult for me? I will return about this time next year in the springtime, the time I have fixed, and Sarah will have an infant son." ¹⁵ Then Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But Yahweh said, "Do not deny it! You did laugh."

ULB:

¹³ Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really bear a child, when I am old'?" ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for Yahweh? At the time appointed by me, in the spring, I will return to you. About this time next year Sarah will have a son." ¹⁵ Then Sarah denied it and said, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He replied, "No, you did laugh."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- Abraham, Abram
- Sarah, Sarai

translationNotes:

- **Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really bear a child, when I am old'?** - God used this rhetorical question to show that he knew what Sarah was thinking and that he was not pleased with it. He repeats Sarah's rhetorical question (18:12) using different words. AT: "Sarah was wrong to laugh and say, 'I will not bear a child because I am too old!'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Is anything too hard for Yahweh?** - "Is there anything that Yahweh cannot do?" Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were speaking of someone else to remind Abraham that he, Yahweh, is great and can do anything. AT: "There is nothing that I, Yahweh, cannot do!" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **At the time appointed by me, in the spring** - "At the time I have appointed, which is in the spring"
- **Then Sarah denied it and said** - "The Sarah denied it by saying"
- **He replied** - "Yahweh replied"
- **No, you did laugh** - "Yes, you did laugh." This means "No, that is not true; you did in fact laugh."

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:16-19**UDB:**

¹⁶ When the three men got up to leave, they looked down into the valley toward the city of Sodom. Abraham was walking with them to say “Farewell” to them. ¹⁷ Yahweh said to himself, “It is not right for me to prevent Abraham from knowing what I plan to do. ¹⁸ Abraham’s descendants will become a great and powerful people group. And people of all people groups will be blessed because of what I do for him. ¹⁹ I have chosen him in order that he will direct his children and their families so that they will obey me and do what is right and fair, so that I will do for Abraham what I have promised to do for him.”

ULB:

¹⁶ Then the men arose to leave and looked down toward Sodom. Abraham went with them to see them on their way. ¹⁷ But Yahweh said, “Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸ since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have chosen him so that he may instruct his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh, to do righteousness and justice, so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham what he has said to him.”

translationWords:

- Sodom
- Abraham, Abram
- God
- nation
- bless, blessed, blessing
- household
- righteous, righteousness
- just, justice, justly

translationNotes:

- **to see them on their way** - “to send them on their way” or “to say ‘Farewell’ to them” (UDB). It was polite to go some distance with guests as they were leaving.
- **Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do ... him?** - God used this rhetorical question to say that he was going to talk to Abraham about something very important and that it was best for him to do so. AT: “I should not and will not hide from Abraham what I am about to do ... him.” or “I should and will tell Abraham what I am about to do ... him” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Should I ... do, since ... him?** - “I should not ... do. This is because ... him”

- **all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “I will bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **will be blessed in him** - “will be blessed because of Abraham” or “will be blessed because I have blessed Abraham.” For translating “in him” see how you translated “through you” in [12:3](#).
- **that he may instruct** - “that he will direct” or “so that he will command”
- **to keep the way of Yahweh ... Yahweh may bring ... he has said** - Yahweh is speaking about himself as if he were another person. AT: “to obey what I, Yahweh, require ... I, Yahweh, may bring ... I have said” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **to keep the way of Yahweh** - “to obey the commands of Yahweh”
- **to do righteousness and justice** - “by doing righteousness and justice.” This tells how to keep the way of Yahweh.
- **so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham what he has said to him** - “so that Yahweh may bless Abraham just as he said he would.” This refers to the covenant promise to bless Abraham and make him a great nation.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ So Yahweh said to Abraham, "I have heard the terrible things that some people have been saying about the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their sins are very great. ²¹ So I will go down now, and I will see if all the terrible things that I have heard are true or not true."

ULB:

²⁰ Then Yahweh said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and because their sin is so serious, ²¹ I will now go down there and see the outcry against her that has come to me, whether they have really done it. If not, I will know."

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Sodom](#)
- [Gomorrah](#)
- [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

translationNotes:

- **the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great** - This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "outcry" is expressed as the verb "accuse." AT: "so many people have been accusing the people of Sodom and Gomorrah of doing evil things" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **their sin is so serious** - "they have sinned so much"
- **I will now go down there** - "I will now go down to Sodom and Gomorrah"
- **go down there and see** - "go down there to find out" or "go down there to decide"
- **see the outcry ... that has come to me** - Yahweh speaks as if he knew about this matter because he had heard the cries and accusations coming from the people who had suffered. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "outcry" is expressed as the verb "accuse." AT: "as wicked as those who are accusing them say that they are" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **If not** - "If they are not as wicked as the outcry suggests"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:22-23

UDB:

²² Then the two other men turned and started walking toward Sodom. But Abraham kept standing in front of Yahweh. ²³ Abraham came closer to him and said, "Will you really destroy people who have done nothing wrong along with the wicked ones?"

ULB:

²² So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before Yahweh. ²³ Then Abraham approached and said, "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"

translationWords:

- [Sodom](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [God](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

translationNotes:

- **turned from there** - "went out from Abraham's camp"
- **Abraham remained standing before Yahweh** - "Abraham and Yahweh remained together"
- **approached** - "approached Yahweh" or "stepped closer to Yahweh"
- **sweep away** - Abraham speaks of destroying people as if it were sweeping dirt with a broom. AT: "destroy" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **the righteous with the wicked** - "the righteous people with the wicked people"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:24-26**UDB:**

²⁴ What will you do if there are fifty people in the city who have done nothing wrong? Will you really destroy them all, and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people who have done nothing wrong? ²⁵ Certainly you would not do such a thing, to kill good people along with wicked ones, and treat good people and wicked people the same way. You could not do that, because you, who are the judge of everyone on the earth, will certainly do what is right regarding the people of Sodom!" ²⁶ Yahweh replied, "If I find fifty people in Sodom who have done nothing wrong, I will spare the whole place for their sake."

ULB:

²⁴ Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there? ²⁵ Far be it from you to do such a thing, killing the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be treated the same as the wicked. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" ²⁶ Yahweh said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sake."

translationWords:

- righteous, righteousness
- sweep, swept
- judge
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- God

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham continues talking to Yahweh.
- **Perhaps there are** - "Suppose there are"
- **Will you sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there?** - Abraham was hoping that Yahweh would say, "I will not sweep it away." AT: "I think you would not sweep it away. Instead, you would spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **sweep it away** - "destroy it." Abraham speaks of destroying people as if it were sweeping dirt with a broom. AT: "destroy the people who live there" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there?** - Abraham was hoping that God would say "I will spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people there."
- **spare the place** - "let the people live"

- **for the sake of** - “because of”
- **Far be it from you to do such a thing** - “I would never want you to do something like that” or “You should not want to do something like that” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **such a thing, killing** - “such a thing as killing” or “such a thing, that is, killing”
- **the righteous should be treated the same as the wicked** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “you should treat the righteous the same way you treat the wicked” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?** - Abraham used this rhetorical question to say what he expected God to do. AT: “The Judge of all the earth will certainly do what is just” or “Since you are the Judge of all the earth, you will surely do what is right!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Judge** - God is often referred to as a judge because he is the one perfect judge who makes the final decisions about what is right or wrong.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:27-28

UDB:

²⁷ Abraham replied, "I should not be bold like this and speak to you, my Lord, because I am as worthless as dust and ashes. ²⁸ But what will you do if there are only forty-five people who have done nothing wrong? Will you destroy everyone in the whole city because there are only forty-five and not fifty good people?" Yahweh replied, "I will not destroy it if I find that there are forty-five good people."

ULB:

²⁷ Abraham answered and said, "Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes! ²⁸ What if there are five less than fifty righteous? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" Then he said, "I will not destroy it, if I find there forty-five."

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)

translationNotes:

- **Look** - The phrase "Look" here draws attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **I have undertaken to speak** - "Pardon me for being so bold as to speak to you" or "Excuse me for daring to speak"
- **to my Lord** - Abraham shows his respect to Yahweh by speaking to Yahweh as if he were speaking to someone else. AT: "to you, my Lord" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **only dust and ashes** - This metaphor describes Abraham as a human being, who will die and whose body will turn into to dust and ashes. AT: "only a mortal man" or "as unimportant as dust and ashes" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **five less than fifty righteous** - "only forty-five righteous people"
- **for lack of five** - "if there are five fewer righteous people"
- **I will not destroy it** - "I will not destroy Sodom"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 18:29-31

UDB:

²⁹ Abraham continued to speak to him like this, saying, “What will you do if you find that there are only forty good people there?” Yahweh replied, “I will not destroy them all, for the sake of the forty.” ³⁰ Abraham said, “Please do not be angry now. Let me speak again. What will you do if there are only thirty good people?” He replied, “I will not do it if I find that there are thirty there.” ³¹ Abraham said, “I should not be bold and speak to you like this, my Lord. But what will you do if you find that there are only twenty good people there?” He replied, “I will not destroy the whole city, for the sake of those twenty.”

ULB:

²⁹ He spoke to him yet again, and said, “What if there are forty found there?” He replied, “I will not do it for the forty’s sake.” ³⁰ He said, “Please do not be angry, Lord, so I may speak. Perhaps thirty will be found there.” He replied, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” ³¹ He said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord! Perhaps twenty will be found there.” He replied, “I will not destroy it for the twenty’s sake.”

translationWords:

- [Lord](#)

translationNotes:

- **He spoke to him** - “Abraham spoke to Yahweh”
- **if there are forty found there** - This means “if you find forty righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah.”
- **He replied** - “Yahweh answered”
- **I will not do it for the forty’s sake** - “I will not destroy the cities if I find forty righteous people there”
- **thirty** - “thirty righteous people” or “thirty good people”
- **Look** - The phrase “Look” here draws attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **I have undertaken to speak** - “Pardon me for being so bold as to speak to you” or “Excuse me for daring to speak.” See how this is translated in [18:27](#).
- **twenty** - “twenty righteous people” or “twenty good people”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 18 Translation Questions

Genesis 18:32-33

UDB:

³² Finally, Abraham said, “My Lord, do not be angry now. Just let me speak one time more. What will you do if you find that there are only ten good people there?” Yahweh answered, “I will not destroy the city for the sake of those ten.” ³³ Abraham said no more. As soon as Yahweh finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham went home.

ULB:

³² He said, “Please do not be angry, Lord, and I will speak this one last time. Perhaps ten will be found there.” Then he said, “I will not destroy it for the ten’s sake.” ³³ Yahweh went on his way as soon as he had finished talking with Abraham, and Abraham returned home.

translationWords:

- [Lord](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **Perhaps ten will be found there** - “Perhaps you will find ten righteous people there”
- **ten** - “ten righteous people” or “ten good people”
- **Then he said** - “And Yahweh answered”
- **for the ten’s sake** - “if I find ten righteous people there”
- **Yahweh went on his way** - “Yahweh departed” or “Yahweh left” (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 18 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 18 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The evil desires of the Sodomites

The men of Sodom desired to have sexual relations with the angels who came to the city appearing as men. It is possible that they were trying to do this against the angel's desires. This is known as "rape." This was also view as especially evil because he was willing to sacrifice his own children for the sake of protecting his guests. (See: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#))

Hospitality

Hospitality, or being kind to a visitor, was very important in the ancient Near East. Lot showed these men great kindness and did his utmost to protect them from the homosexual attacks of the people of Sodom. Lot put the principal of hospitality over all other matters. He did not stand up to the evil actions of the Sodomites or protect his children. Instead, he avoided offending his guest. This should have been less important to him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Contrasts

It is probable that Abraham's faith and actions in chapter 18 are intended to contrast Lot's actions. It is also probable that his actions supposed to contrast with the actions of the worldly Sodomites. (See: [faith](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Gentile nations

The sinful actions of Lot's daughters explain why Yahweh viewed the Moabites and the Ammonites nations as evil. These Gentile nation would constantly cause the Israelites, descendants of Abraham, difficulties in the future. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 19:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 19:1-3

UDB:

¹ That evening, the two angels arrived in Sodom. Lot was sitting at the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to greet them and prostrated himself with his face on the ground. ² He said to them, “Gentlemen, please stay in my house tonight. You can wash your feet, and early tomorrow you can continue your journey.” But they said, “No, we will just sleep in the city square.” ³ But Lot kept insisting strongly that they sleep in his house. So they entered his house with him, and he prepared a meal for them. He baked some bread without yeast, and they ate it.

ULB:

19 ¹ The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, while Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. Lot saw them, arose to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground. ² He said, “Please my masters, I urge you to turn aside into your servant’s house, stay for the night, and wash your feet. Then you can rise up early and go on your way.” They replied, “No, we will spend the night in the town square.” ³ But he urged them strongly, so they went with him, and entered into his house. He prepared a meal and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

translationWords:

- angel, archangel
- Sodom
- Lot
- gate, gate bar
- bow, bow down
- lord, master, sir
- servant, slave, slavery
- unleavened bread, Festival of Unleavened Bread

translationNotes:

- **The two angels** - Genesis 18 says that two men went to Sodom. Here we learn that they are really angels. (See: 18:22)
- **the gate of Sodom** - “the entrance to the city of Sodom.” The city had a wall around it, and people had to go through a gate to get into it. This was a very important place in a city. Important people often spent time there.
- **bowed down with his face to the ground** - He put his knees on the ground then touched his forehead and nose to the ground.
- **my masters** - This was a term of respect Lot used for the angels.

- **I urge you to turn aside into your servant's house** - "Please come and stay in your servant's house"
- **your servant's house** - Lot refers to himself as their servant in order to show them respect. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **wash your feet** - People liked to wash their feet after traveling.
- **rise up early** - "wake up early"
- **we will spend the night** - When the two angels said this, they were referring only to themselves, not to Lot. The two of them planned to spend the night in the square. Some languages would use the exclusive form of "we" here. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **town square** - This is a public, outdoor place in the town.
- **they went with him** - "they turned and went with him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:4-5

UDB:

⁴ After they finished eating, before they went to bed, the men of the city of Sodom, all of them, from the young ones to the old ones, surrounded the house. ⁵ They called out to Lot, saying, “Where are the men who came to your house this evening? Bring them out, so that we can sleep with them!”

ULB:

⁴ But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the men from every part of the city. ⁵ They called to Lot, and said to him, “Where are the men that came in to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may sleep with them.”

translationWords:

- [Sodom](#)
- [Lot](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **before they lay down** - “before the people in Lot’s house lay down to go to sleep”
- **the men of the city, the men of Sodom** - “the men of the city, that is, the men of Sodom” or just “the men of the city of Sodom”
- **the house** - “Lot’s house”
- **both young and old** - “from the youngest to the oldest.” This means “men of all ages” and refers to the men of Sodom who were surrounding Lot’s house.
- **that came in to you** - “that went into your house”
- **sleep with them** - “engage in sex with them.” Your language may have a more polite way of saying this. AT: “know them intimately or sexually” (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ Lot went outside the house and shut the door behind him, so that they could not go inside. ⁷ He said to them, "My friends, do not do such an evil thing! ⁸ Listen to me. I have two daughters who have never slept with any man. Let me bring them out to you now, and you can do with them whatever pleases you. But do not do anything to these men, because they are guests in my house, so I must protect them!"

ULB:

⁶ So Lot went out the door to them and shut the door after himself. ⁷ He said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. ⁸ Look, I have two daughters who have not slept with any man. Let me, I beg you, bring them out to you, and you do to them whatever is good in your eyes. Only do nothing to these men, because they have come under the shadow of my roof."

translationWords:

- Lot
- brother
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking
- shadow

translationNotes:

- **after himself** - "behind him" or "after he went through"
- **I beg you, my brothers** - "I plead with you, my brothers"
- **my brothers** - Lot spoke in a friendly way to the men of the city hoping that they would listen to him. AT: "my friends" (See: **Idiom**)
- **do not act so wickedly** - "do not do something so wicked" or "do not do such a wicked thing"
- **Look** - "Pay attention" or "Look here"
- **have not slept with** - "have not engaged in sex with." Your language may have a more polite way of saying this. AT: "have not known" (See: **Euphemism**)
- **whatever is good in your eyes** - "whatever you desire" or "whatever you think is right"
- **under the shadow of my roof** - The two men were guests in Lot's home, so he needed to protect them. The word "roof" is a synecdoche for the whole house and a metaphor for Lot protecting them. AT: "into my house, and God expects me to protect them" (See: **Synecdoche** and **Metaphor**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:9

UDB:

⁹ But they replied, “Get out of our way! You are a foreigner; so you have no right to tell us what is right! We will do worse things to you than we will do to them!” Then they lunged toward Lot, and tried forcefully to break down the door.

ULB:

⁹ They said, “Stand back!” They also said, “This one came here to live as a foreigner, and now he has become our judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” They pressed hard against the man, against Lot, and came near to break down the door.

translationWords:

- **foreigner, foreign, alien**
- **judge**
- **Lot**

translationNotes:

- **Stand back!** - “Step aside!” or “Get out of our way!” (UDB)
- **This one came here to live as a foreigner** - “This one came here as an outsider” or “This foreigner came to live here”
- **This one** - “Lot.” The men are speaking to each other. If this would be unclear in your language, you may have the men speak to Lot here, as in UDB.
- **and now he has become our judge** - “and now he thinks he has the right to tell us what is right and what is wrong” or “but we are not going to allow him to stop us from doing what we want to do” (See: **Idiom**)
- **and now he** - “and even though he has no good reason to, he” (See: **Idiom**)
- **Now we** - “Because you are telling us that what we are doing is wrong, we”
- **we will deal worse with you than with them** - The men are angry that Lot said, “Do not act so wickedly” (19:7), so they are threatening to act more wickedly than Lot had feared at first. AT: “we will act more wickedly with you than we will with them” (See: **Idiom**)
- **They pressed hard against the man, against Lot, and came near to break down the door** - Possible meanings are 1) “They kept coming closer to the man, to Lot, until they were close enough to break down the door” or 2) they physically pushed Lot up against the wall or door of the house and were about to break the door down.
- **the man ... Lot** - This is two ways of referring to Lot.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ But the two angels opened the door carefully, reached out their hands, and pulled Lot inside the house. Then they quickly shut the door. ¹¹ Then they caused all the men who were outside the door of the house, young and old, to become blind, so that they could not find the door.

ULB:

¹⁰ But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door. ¹¹ Then Lot's visitors struck with blindness the men who were outside the door of the house, both young and old, so that they became exhausted when they were trying to find the door.

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)

translationNotes:

- **But the men** - "But Lot's two guests" or "But the two angels"
- **the men reached out their hands and brought ... them and shut** - Your language may need to add that the men opened the door first. AT: "the men opened the door far enough so they could reach out their hands and pull ... them, and then they shut" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Lot's visitors struck with blindness the men** - The phrase "struck with blindness" is a metaphor; the visitors did not physically hit the men. AT: "Lot's visitors blinded the men" or "they took away their sight" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **both young and old** - "men of all ages." This merism emphasizes that the visitors blinded all the men. This could indicate social standing rather than age. AT: "both small and great" (See: [Merism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:12-13

UDB:

¹² Then the two angels said to Lot, "Who else is with you here? If you have sons or sons-in-law or daughters or anyone else in the city who is related to you, take them out of the city, ¹³ because we are going to destroy this place. Yahweh has heard many terrible things that some people have said about this city, and he has sent us to destroy it."

ULB:

¹² Then the men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here? Any sons-in-law, your sons and your daughters, and whoever you have in the city, get them out of here. ¹³ For we are about to destroy this place, because the accusations against it before Yahweh have become so loud that he has sent us to destroy it."

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then the men said** - "Then the two men said" or "Then the angels said"
- **Do you have anyone else here?** - "Are there any other members of your family in the city?" or "Do you have any other family members in this place?"
- **whoever you have in the city** - "any other members of your family living in this city"
- **we are about to destroy** - The word "we" here is exclusive. Only the two angels would destroy the city; Lot would not destroy it. If your language has an exclusive form of "we," use it here. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **the accusations against it before Yahweh have become so loud** - This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "accusations" is expressed as a verb. AT: "so many people have been telling Yahweh that the people of this city are doing evil things" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and how similar words are translated in [18:20](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ So Lot went and spoke to the men who had pledged to marry his daughters. He said to them, “Hurry! Get out of this city, because Yahweh is about to destroy it!” But his future sons-in-law thought he was joking. ¹⁵ As it was about to dawn the next morning, the two angels urged Lot, saying, “Get up quickly! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here with you and leave! If you do not, you will be swept away when we destroy the city!”

ULB:

¹⁴ Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, the men who had promised to marry his daughters, and said, “Quick, get out of this place, for Yahweh is about to destroy the city.” But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking. ¹⁵ When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Get going, take your wife and your two daughters that are here, so you are not swept away in the punishment of the city.”

translationWords:

- Lot
- Yahweh
- angel, archangel
- sweep, swept
- punish, punishment

translationNotes:

- **Lot went out** - “So Lot left the house”
- **his sons-in-law, the men who had promised to marry his daughters** - The phrase “the men who had promised to marry his daughters” explains what “sons-in-law” means here. AT: “the men who were going to marry his daughters” or “his daughters’ fiancés” (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **When the morning dawned** - “Just before the sun came up”
- **Get going** - “Go now”
- **you are not swept away in the punishment of the city** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “so Yahweh does not also destroy you when he punishes the people of this city” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **not swept away in the punishment** - God destroying the people of the city is spoken of as if a person were sweeping away dust. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **of the city** - Here “city” stands for the people. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ When Lot hesitated, the angels grasped his hand and his wife's hand and the hands of his two daughters. They led them outside the city safely. The angels did that because Yahweh was acting mercifully toward them. ¹⁷ When they were outside the city, one of the angels said, "If you want to stay alive, run away quickly! Do not look back! And do not stop anywhere in the valley! Flee to the hills! If you do not, you will die!"

ULB:

¹⁶ But he lingered. So the men grabbed his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hands of his two daughters, because Yahweh was merciful to him. They brought them out, and set them outside the city. ¹⁷ When they had brought them out, one of the men said, "Run for your lives! Do not look back, or stay anywhere on the plain. Escape to the mountains so you are not swept away."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- mercy, merciful
- sweep, swept

translationNotes:

- **But he lingered** - "But Lot hesitated" or "But Lot did not start to leave"
- **So the men grabbed** - "So the two men grabbed" or "So the angels grabbed"
- **was merciful to him** - "had compassion on Lot." Yahweh is described as being "merciful" because he was sparing the lives of Lot and his family instead of destroying them when he destroyed the people of Sodom for the wrong they had done.
- **When they had brought them out** - "When the two men had brought Lot's family out"
- **Run for your lives!** - This is a way of telling them to run so that they do not die. AT: "Run away and save your lives!" (See: **Idiom**)
- **Do not look back** - The phrase "at the city" is understood. AT: "Do not look back at the city" or "Do not look back at Sodom" (See: **Ellipsis**)
- **on the plain** - This means the plain of the Jordan River. This refers to the general region of the Jordan River.
- **so you are not swept away** - It is understood that they would swept away with the people of the city. This can be stated in active form. AT: "or else God will destroy you along with the people of the city" (See: **Ellipsis** and **Active or Passive**)
- **not swept away** - God destroying the people of the city is spoken of as if a person were sweeping away dust. (See: **Metaphor**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:18-20

UDB:

¹⁸ But Lot said to one of them, "No, sir, do not make me do that! ¹⁹ Please, listen. You have been pleased with me and have been very kind to me and spared my life. But I cannot flee to the mountain. If I try to do that, I will die in this disaster. ²⁰ Listen to me. There is a town nearby. Let me run there now. It is only a small town, and if you do not destroy it, our lives will be saved if we go there."

ULB:

¹⁸ Lot said to them, "No, please, my masters! ¹⁹ Your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life, but I cannot escape to the mountains, because the disaster will overtake me, and I will die. ²⁰ Look, that city over there is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Please, let me escape there (is it not a little one?), and my life will be saved."

translationWords:

- Lot
- lord, master, sir
- favor, favorable, favoritism
- servant, slave, slavery

translationNotes:

- **Your servant has found favor in your sight** - To be pleased with someone is spoken as if "favor" were an object that is found. Also, "sight" is a metonym that represents a person's thoughts or opinions. AT: "You have been pleased with me" (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))
- **Your servant has** - Lot was showing respect by referring to himself as "your servant." AT: "I, your servant, have" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **you have shown me great kindness in saving my life** - The abstract noun "kindness" can be stated as "kind." AT: "you have been very kind to me by saving my life" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **I cannot escape to the mountains, because the disaster will overtake me, and I will die** - Being unable to get far enough away from Sodom when God destroys the city is spoken of as if "disaster" is a person that will chase and catch up with Lot. AT: "My family and I will certainly die when God destroys the people of Sodom, because the mountains are too far away for us to get there safely" (See: [Personification](#))
- **my life ... I cannot escape ... overtake me, and I will die** - It is implied that Lot's family would die along with him. AT: "our lives ... we cannot escape ... overtake us, and we will die" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **let me escape there (is it not a little one?), and my life will be saved** - Lot used this rhetorical question to get the angels to notice that the city really is a small one. AT: “let me escape there. You can see how small it is. If you let us go there we will live” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **let me escape there** - Lot’s full request can be made explicit. AT: “instead of destroying that city, let me escape there” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **my life will be saved** - It is implied that the lives of Lot’s family will be saved along with his. This can also be stated in active form. AT: “so that we will live” or “so that we will survive” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:21-22

UDB:

²¹ One of the angels said to Lot, "I will allow you to do what you have requested. And I will not destroy the town you are talking about. ²² But hurry! Run there, because I cannot destroy anything until you arrive." People later called the name of the town Zoar, which means 'not-important,' because Lot said that it was a small village.

ULB:

²¹ He said to him, "Alright, I am granting this request also, that I will not destroy the city which you have mentioned. ²² Hurry! Escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the city was called Zoar.

translationWords:

- [Zoar](#)

translationNotes:

- **I am granting this request also** - "I will do what you have asked"
- **cannot do anything** - This can be made more explicit. AT: "cannot destroy the other cities" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Zoar** - Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Zoar sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'little.' Lot called this town 'little' in Genesis 19:20."

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:23-25

UDB:

²³ As the sun was rising, Lot and his family arrived in the town which is now called Zoar. ²⁴ Then Yahweh caused fire and burning sulfur to fall down on Sodom and Gomorrah like rain from the sky. ²⁵ In that way, he destroyed those cities and all the people who were living in those cities. He also destroyed everything in the valley, including all the plants.

ULB:

²³ The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot reached Zoar. ²⁴ Then Yahweh rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of the sky. ²⁵ He destroyed those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the plants that grew on the ground.

translationWords:

- Lot
- Zoar
- Yahweh
- Sodom
- Gomorrah
- sulfur

translationNotes:

- **The sun had risen upon the earth** - “The sun had risen over the earth.” The phrase “upon the earth” can be left implicit as it is in the UDB where it is not translated. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **when Lot reached Zoar** - It is implied that Lot’s family is with him. AT: “when Lot and his family arrived at Zoar” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Yahweh rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of the sky** - The phrase “from Yahweh” stands for God’s power to cause the sulfur and fire to fall on the city. AT: “Yahweh caused sulfur and fire to fall from the sky onto Sodom and Gomorrah” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **sulfur and fire** - These two words are used together to describe one object. AT: “burning sulfur” or “fiery rain” (See: [Hendiadys](#))
- **those cities** - This refers primarily to Sodom and Gomorrah, but also to three other towns.
- **the inhabitants of the cities** - “the people who lived in the cities”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:26-28

UDB:

²⁶ But Lot's wife stopped and looked back to see what was happening, so she died, and her body later became a pillar of salt.

²⁷ That morning, Abraham got up and went to the place where he had stood in front of Yahweh. ²⁸ He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and he was surprised to see that all over the valley, smoke was rising, like the smoke of a huge furnace.

ULB:

²⁶ But Lot's wife, who was behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

²⁷ Abraham got up early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before Yahweh.

²⁸ He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain. He looked and behold, smoke was rising from the land like the smoke of a furnace.

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Sodom](#)
- [Gomorrah](#)
- [furnace](#)

translationNotes:

- **she became a pillar of salt** - “she became like a statue of salt” or “her body became like a tall stone of salt.” Because she disobeyed the angel who told them not to look back at the city, God caused her to become something like a statue made out of rock salt.
- **behold** - The word “behold” draws attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **like the smoke of a furnace** - This shows that it was a very large amount of smoke. AT: “like the smoke from a very large fire” (See: [Simile](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:29

UDB:

²⁹ So when God destroyed those cities in the valley, he did not forget to help Abraham, and he rescued Lot from the disaster that occurred in the cities where Lot lived.

ULB:

²⁹ So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God called Abraham to mind. He sent Lot out of the midst of the destruction when he destroyed the cities in which Lot had lived.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [mind](#)
- [Lot](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verse 29 is a summary of this chapter.
- **God called Abraham to mind** - This tells why God rescued Lot. To “call to mind” is a way of saying “remember.” This does not imply that God forgot about Abraham. It means he considered Abraham and had mercy on him. AT: “God thought about Abraham and had mercy on him” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **out of the midst of the destruction** - “away from the destruction” or “away from danger”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:30**UDB:**

³⁰ Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar, so he left there and moved with his two daughters to the mountain, and they lived in a cave.

ULB:

³⁰ But Lot went up from Zoar to live in the mountains with his two daughters, because he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave, he and his two daughters.

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)
- [Zoar](#)

translationNotes:

- **Lot went up from Zoar to live in the mountains** - The phrase “went up from” is used because Lot went to a higher elevation in the mountains.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:31-33

UDB:

³¹ One day the older daughter said to the younger daughter, "Our father is old, and there is no man in this area who will sleep with us, as people all over the earth do. ³² Let us make our father drink wine until he gets drunk. Then we can sleep with him without him knowing it. In that way he will cause us to become pregnant and we can bear children who will be our father's descendants." ³³ So that night they caused their father to become drunk. And the older daughter went in and slept with her father, but he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up.

ULB:

³¹ The firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man anywhere to sleep with us according to the way of all the world. ³² Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will sleep with him, so that we may extend our father's line." ³³ So they made their father drink wine that night. Then the firstborn went in and slept with her father; he did not know when she lay down, nor when she arose.

translationWords:

- wine, wineskin, new wine
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

translationNotes:

- **The firstborn** - "Lot's first daughter" or "The older daughter" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **the younger** - "the younger daughter" or "her younger sister" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **according to the way of all the world** - Here "the world" stands for the people. AT: "as people everywhere do" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **drink wine** - It can be made explicit that their goal was to get him drunk. AT: "drink wine until he gets drunk" (UDB) or "get drunk with wine" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **so that we may extend our father's line** - This speaks about giving Lot descendants as if his family were a line that they are making longer. AT: "so that we can bear children who will be our father's descendants" (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **he did not know when she lay down, nor when she arose** - "he did not know anything about it" or "he did not know that she had slept with him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:34-35

UDB:

³⁴ The next day, his older daughter said to his younger daughter, “Listen to me. Last night I slept with our father. Let us cause him to become drunk again tonight! This time you can go and sleep with him. If he sleeps with you, you can become pregnant, and that way you can have a child, too.”

³⁵ So that night, they caused their father to become drunk with wine again, and then his younger daughter went and slept with him. But again, he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up.

ULB:

³⁴ The next day the firstborn said to the younger, “Listen, last night I slept with my father. Let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you should go in and sleep with him, so that we may extend our father’s line.” ³⁵ So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger went and slept with him. He did not know when she lay down, nor when she arose.

translationWords:

- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let us make him drink wine ... nor when she arose** - Translate these phrases as you did in [19:32-33](#).
- **drink wine** - It can be made explicit that their goal was to get him drunk. AT: “drink wine until he gets drunk” (UDB) or “get drunk with wine” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **so that we may extend our father’s line** - This speaks about giving Lot descendants as if his family were a line that they are making longer. AT: “so that we can bear children who will be our father’s descendants” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **He did not know when she lay down, nor when she arose** - “he did not know anything about it” or “he did not know that she had slept with him”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 19:36-38

UDB:

³⁶ So Lot caused his two daughters to become pregnant. ³⁷ The older one later gave birth to a son, whom she named Moab. He became the ancestor of the Moab people group. ³⁸ The younger one also gave birth to a son, whom she named Ben Ammi. He became the ancestor of the people that are now called the Ammon people group.

ULB:

³⁶ So both the daughters of Lot were pregnant by their father. ³⁷ The firstborn gave birth to a son, and named him Moab. He became the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸ As for the younger daughter, she also gave birth to a son, and named him Ben Ammi. He became the ancestor of the people of Ammon of today.

translationWords:

- [Lot](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [Ammon, Ammonites, Ammonites](#)

translationNotes:

- **were pregnant by their father** - “became pregnant by their father” or “conceived children with their father”
- **He became** - “He is”
- **the Moabites of today** - “the Moab people who are now living”
- **of today** - The word “today” refers to the time when the author of Genesis was living. The author was born and wrote this many years after Lot’s family lived and died.
- **Ben Ammi** - This is a male name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the people of Ammon** - “the descendants of Ammon” or “the Ammon people”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 19 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 19 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

“She is my sister”

Abraham was afraid the people of Gerar would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Sarai to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Abraham’s sister, they would have shown favor to him. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [favor, favorable, favoritism](#)).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Irony

Abraham believed that the people of Gerar did not fear Yahweh, but when confronted by Yahweh the king showed that he feared Yahweh. Instead, it was Abraham who did not show any fear of Yahweh when he sinned. This is irony. (See: [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 20:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 20:1-3

UDB:

¹ Abraham left Mamre and moved southwest to the Negev desert. There he lived between Kadesh and Shur. He lived as a foreigner in the town of Gerar. ² While he was there, he told people that Sarah was his sister, not his wife. Then King Abimelech of Gerar sent some of his men to get Sarah, and they brought her to him to be his wife. ³ But God appeared to Abimelech in a dream during the night and said to him, “Listen to me! You are going to die because the woman you took is another man’s wife.”

ULB:

20 ¹ Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and lived between Kadesh and Shur. He was a foreigner living in Gerar. ² Abraham said concerning Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” So Abimelech king of Gerar sent his men and they took Sarah. ³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream in the night, and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.”

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- Negev
- Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh
- foreigner, foreign, alien
- Gerar
- Sarah, Sarai
- Abimelech
- God
- dream

translationNotes:

- **Shur** - This is a desert region on the eastern border of Egypt. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **sent his men and they took Sarah** - “made his men go get Sarah and bring her to him”
- **God came to Abimelech** - “God appeared to Abimelech”
- **Behold** - Here the word “behold” adds emphasis to what follows. “Listen to me” (UDB)
- **you are a dead man** - This is a strong way of saying the king will die. AT: “you will certainly die soon” or “I will kill you” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **a man’s wife** - “a married woman”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:4-5

UDB:

⁴ But Abimelech had not slept with her, so he said, "Lord, since the people of my nation and I are innocent, will you kill us?" ⁵ Abraham told me, 'She is my sister,' and she also said, 'He is my brother.' I did not intend to do anything wrong; neither have I done anything wrong."

ULB:

⁴ Now Abimelech had not come near her and he said, "Lord, would you kill even a righteous nation?" ⁵ Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?' Even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' I have done this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands."

translationWords:

- Abimelech
- Lord
- righteous, righteousness
- nation
- heart
- innocent

translationNotes:

- **Now ... her** - This word is used here to mark a change from the story to information about Abimelech. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Abimelech had not come near her** - This is a polite way of saying he did not have sex with her. AT: "Abimelech had not slept with Sarah" or "Abimelech had not touched Sarah" (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **even a righteous nation** - Here "nation" stands for the people. Abimelech is worried that God will punish not only him, but his people also. AT: "even a people who are innocent" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?' Even she herself said, 'He is my brother'** - This has quotations within a quotation. They can be stated as indirect quotations. AT: "Did he himself not tell me that she is his sister? Even she herself told me that he is her brother" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?'** - Abimelech used this rhetorical question to remind God of something God already knew. This can be translated as a statement. AT: "Abraham himself told me 'She is my sister.'" or "Abraham said that she is his sister." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

- **Did he not himself say ... Even she herself** - The words “he himself” and “she herself” are used for emphasis to bring attention to Abraham and Sarah and to blame them for what happened. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))
- **I have done this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands** - Here “heart” stands for his thoughts or intentions. Also “hands” stands for his actions. AT: “I have done this with good intentions and actions” or “I have done this with no evil thoughts or actions” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ God said to him, "Yes, I know that you did not want to do anything wrong. That is why I prevented you from sinning against me. I did not allow you to touch her. ⁷ Therefore, return this man's wife to her husband, because he is a prophet. He will pray for you so that you may live. But if you do not return her to him, you will certainly die, and all the members of your household will also certainly die."

ULB:

⁶ Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I also know that in the integrity of your heart you did this, and I also kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not allow you to touch her. ⁷ Therefore, return the man's wife, for he is a prophet. He will pray for you, and you will live. But if you do not restore her, know that you and all who are yours will surely die."

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [dream](#)
- [heart](#)
- [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#)
- [pray, prayer](#)
- [restore, restoration](#)

translationNotes:

- **God said to him** - "God said to Abimelech"
- **in the integrity of your heart you did this** - Here "heart" stands for his thoughts or intentions. AT: "you did this with good intentions" or "you did this without evil intentions" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **to touch her** - This is a euphemism for having sex with Sarah. AT: "to sleep with her" (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **the man's wife** - "Abraham's wife"
- **you will live** - "I will let you live"
- **all who are yours** - "all of your people"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 20 General Notes
- **Genesis 20 Translation Questions**

Genesis 20:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ Early the next morning, Abimelech summoned all his officials and told them everything that had happened. When they heard that, his men were very afraid that God would punish them. ⁹ Abimelech then summoned Abraham, and said to him, "You should not have done that to us! Did I do something wrong to you? Did I make you want me and my people to become guilty of a great sin? You have done things to me that you should not have done!"

ULB:

⁸ Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all of his servants to himself. He told all these things to them, and the men were very afraid. ⁹ Then Abimelech called for Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me that which ought not to be done."

translationWords:

- Abimelech
- servant, slave, slavery
- Abraham, Abram
- sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

translationNotes:

- **He told all these things to them** - "He told them everything that God had told him"
- **What have you done to us?** - Abimelech used this rhetorical question to accuse Abraham. AT: "You have done something bad to us!" or "Look what you have done to us!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **to us** - The word "us" here is exclusive and does not include Abraham and Sarah. If your language uses an exclusive form of "we" or "us," use it here. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **How have I sinned against you, that you have brought ... sin?** - Abimelech used this rhetorical question to remind Abraham that he had not sinned against Abraham. AT: "I have done nothing against you to cause you to bring ... sin." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin** - To cause someone to be guilty of sinning is spoken of as if "sin" was a thing that could be placed on a person. AT: "that you should make me and my kingdom guilty of such a terrible sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **on my kingdom** - Here "kingdom" stands for the people. AT: "on the people of my kingdom" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **You have done to me that which ought not to be done** - "You should not have done this to me"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:10-12

UDB:

¹⁰ Why did you do this?" ¹¹ Abraham replied, "I said that she was my sister because I thought, 'The people in this place certainly do not respect God. Certainly they do whatever wrong things they wish. So they will kill me to get my wife.' ¹² Besides, Sarah really can be considered my sister, because she is the daughter of my father, although she is not the daughter of my mother. She is the daughter of another woman, and I married her.

ULB:

¹⁰ Abimelech said to Abraham, "What prompted you to do this thing?" ¹¹ Abraham said, "Because I thought, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.' ¹² Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

translationWords:

- Abimelech
- Abraham, Abram
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- God

translationNotes:

- **What prompted you to do this thing?** - "What caused you to do this?" or "Why did you do this?" What Abraham did can be stated explicitly. AT: "Why did you tell me that Sarah is your sister?" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Because I thought, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "Because I thought that since no one here fears God, someone may kill me so they can take my wife." (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **no fear of God in this place** - Here "place" refers to the people. AT: "no one here in Gerar fears God" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **fear of God** - This means to deeply respect God and show that respect by obeying him.
- **Besides, she is indeed my sister** - "Also, it is true that Sarah is my sister" or "Also, Sarah really is my sister"
- **the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother** - "we have the same father, but we have different mothers"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:13-14

UDB:

¹³ Later, when God told me to move away from my father's household, I said to her, "This is the way you can show that you are faithful to me: Everywhere we go, say about me, "This is my brother." "

¹⁴ So Abimelech brought some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abraham. He also gave him some male and female slaves. Then he returned Abraham's wife Sarah to him.

ULB:

¹³ When God caused me to leave my father's house and travel from place to place, I said to her, "You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "He is my brother." "

¹⁴ Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham. Then he returned Sarah, Abraham's wife, to him.

translationWords:

- God
- faithful, faithfulness
- Abimelech
- sheep, ram, ewe
- ox, oxen
- servant, slave, slavery
- Abraham, Abram
- Sarah, Sarai

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verse 13 is a continuation of Abraham's answer to Abimelech.
- **my father's house** - Here "house" stands for Abraham's family. AT: "my father and the rest of my family" or "my father's household" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "He is my brother."'** - This has quotations within quotations. They can be stated as indirect quotations. AT: "I said to Sarah that I wanted her to be faithful to me by telling people everywhere we go that I am her brother" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Abimelech took** - "Abimelech brought some" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 20 General Notes
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ And Abimelech said to him, “Look! My land is in front of you. Live in whatever place you wish!”

¹⁶ And he said to Sarah, “Look! I am giving a thousand pieces of silver to your brother. This is to ensure that no one will bring up this matter again and say that you have done anything wrong.”

ULB:

¹⁵ Abimelech said, “Look, my land is before you. Settle wherever it pleases you.” ¹⁶ To Sarah he said, “Look, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is to cover any offense against you in the eyes of all that are with you, and before everyone, you are completely made right.”

translationWords:

- [Abimelech](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [silver](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abimelech said** - “Abimelech said to Abraham”
- **Look** - Here and in verse 16 the word “look” adds emphasis to what follows.
- **my land is before you** - This is a way of saying “I make all of my land available to you” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Settle wherever it pleases you** - “Live wherever you want”
- **a thousand** - “1,000” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **It is to cover any offense against you in the eyes of all that are with you** - Giving money to prove to others that Sarah is innocent is spoken of as if he is placing a cover over an offense so no one can see it. AT: “I am giving this to him, so that those who are with you will know that you have done nothing wrong” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **in the eyes** - Here “eyes” stands for a person’s thoughts or opinion. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **before everyone, you are completely made right** - The passive phrase “made right” can be stated in active form. AT: “everyone will know that you are innocent” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 20:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech's wife and his slave girls so that they could have children. ¹⁸ This was because Yahweh had caused it to be impossible for any of the women in Abimelech's household to bear children, because Abimelech had taken Abraham's wife Sarah.

ULB:

¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female slaves so that they were able to have children. ¹⁸ For Yahweh had caused all the women of the household of Abimelech to be completely infertile, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [pray, prayer](#)
- [God](#)
- [heal, cure](#)
- [Abimelech](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [household](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **completely infertile** - "totally unable to have children"
- **because of Sarah, Abraham's wife** - The full meaning can be stated explicitly. AT: "because Abimelech had taken Abraham's wife Sarah" (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 20 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 20 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sarah's anger

After Sarah was able to have her own child, and he survived infancy, she began to get angry with Abraham's other son Ishmael. He would have been a constant reminder of her own sin. God blessed Ishmael but he was not able to inherit the promises given to Abraham. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [promise](#) and [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Abandoning Ishmael

According to the law at this time, Hagar was able gain her freedom from slavery by abandoning any claim to receive an inheritance. This is why Hagar would have abandoned her son under the tree. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Treaty

The Gentile king, Abimelech, made a covenant or treaty with Abraham. It is possible that he did this because he recognize the power of Abraham's God, but his exact reasons are unknown. (See: [covenant](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 21:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 21:1-4**UDB:**

¹ Yahweh acted very kindly toward Sarah, just as he said he would do. He did for Sarah exactly what he promised to do, ² for she became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham when he was very old, at the time God promised it would happen. ³ Abraham gave the name “Isaac” to the son Sarah delivered. ⁴ He also circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had commanded him to do.

ULB:

21 ¹ Yahweh paid attention to Sarah as he had said he would, and Yahweh did for Sarah just as he had promised. ² Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. ³ Abraham named his son, the one who had been born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. ⁴ Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had commanded him.

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- Sarah, Sarai
- promise
- conceive, conception
- Abraham, Abram
- God
- Isaac
- circumcise, circumcision
- biblical time: day
- command, to command, commandment

translationNotes:

- **Yahweh paid attention to Sarah** - Here the phrase “paid attention to” refers to Yahweh helping Sarah have a baby. AT: “Yahweh helped Sarah” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **bore a son to Abraham** - “gave birth to Abraham’s son”
- **in his old age** - “when Abraham was very old”
- **at the set time of which God had spoken to him** - “at the exact time that God had told him it would happen”
- **Abraham named his son, the one who had been born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac** - “Abraham named his newborn son, the one Sarah gave birth to, Isaac” or “Abraham named their newborn son Isaac”

- **Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old** - “When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him”
- **eight days** - “8 days” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **had commanded him** - “had commanded Abraham to do”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born. ⁶ Sarah said, “Although I was sad before because I did not have any children, God has now enabled me to laugh with joy, and everyone who hears about what God has done for me will laugh with me.” ⁷ She also said, “No one would have said to Abraham that some day I would nurse a child, but I have given birth to a son when Abraham is very old.”

ULB:

⁵ Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ Sarah said, “God has made me laugh; every one who hears will laugh with me.” ⁷ She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children, and yet I have borne him a son in his old age!”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **one hundred** - “100” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **God has made me laugh** - Sarah was laughing because she was surprised and happy. This can be made explicit. AT: “God has caused me to laugh joyfully” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **every one who hears** - What people would hear can be stated explicitly. AT: “everyone who hears about what God has done for me” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children** - This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: “No one would have ever said to Abraham that Sarah will nurse children” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **nurse children** - This is a polite way of referring to breast-feeding babies. AT: “feed a baby her own milk” (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 21 General Notes
- **Genesis 21 Translation Questions**

Genesis 21:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ The baby grew. The day came when he was taken off his mother's milk. On that day, Abraham prepared a large feast to celebrate. ⁹ One day Sarah noticed that Hagar's son Ishmael was making fun of Isaac.

ULB:

⁸ The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [feast](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [Hagar](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at](#)

translationNotes:

- **The child grew and ... Isaac was weaned** - "Wean" is a polite way of saying the child was finished with breast feeding. AT: "Isaac grew, and when he no longer needed his mother's milk, Abraham had a large feast" (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham** - The name of Hagar's son can be stated explicitly. AT: "Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian and Abraham" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **mocking** - It can be stated explicitly that he was jeering or laughing at Isaac. AT: "laughing at Isaac" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman from Egypt and her son! I do not want the son of that slave woman to take what my son Isaac will inherit.” ¹¹ Abraham was very upset about the matter, because he was also concerned about his son Ishmael.

ULB:

¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, “Drive out this slave woman and her son: for the son of this slave woman will not be heir with my son, with Isaac.” ¹¹ This thing was very grievous to Abraham because of his son.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [cast out, drive out, throw out](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [heir](#)
- [Isaac](#)

translationNotes:

- **she said to Abraham** - “Sarah said to Abraham”
- **Drive out** - “send away” or “get rid of” (UDB)
- **this slave woman and her son** - This refers to Hagar and Ishmael. Sarah probably did not refer to them by name because she was angry with them.
- **with my son, with Isaac** - “with my son Isaac”
- **This thing was very grievous to Abraham** - “Abraham was very unhappy about what Sarah said”
- **because of his son** - “because it was about his son.” It is implied that this means his son, Ishmael. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:12-13**UDB:**

¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be upset about your son, Ishmael, and about your servant Hagar. Listen to everything that Sarah tells you to do, and do it, because Isaac is the one who will be the forefather of the descendants I promised to give you. ¹³ But I will also cause the son of your servant Hagar to be the ancestor of a great people group, because he is also your son."

ULB:

¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be grieved because of the lad, and because of your servant woman. Listen to her words in all she says to you about this matter, because it is through Isaac that your descendants will be named. ¹³ I will also make the son of the servant woman into a nation, because he is your descendant."

translationWords:

- God
- Abraham, Abram
- Sarah, Sarai
- servant, slave, slavery
- Isaac
- descendant, descended from
- nation

translationNotes:

- **Do not be grieved because of the lad, and because of your servant woman** - "Do not be upset about the boy and your handmaid"
- **Listen to her words in all she says to you about this matter** - Here "words" stands for what is said. AT: "Do everything that Sarah says to you about them" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **it is through Isaac that your descendants will be named** - The phrase "will be named" means those born through Isaac are the ones God considers to be the descendants that he promised Abraham. This can be stated in active form. AT: "Isaac is the one who will be the forefather of the descendants I promised to give you" (UDB) (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **I will also make the son of the servant woman into a nation** - The word "nation" means God will give him many descendants so that they become a great nation of people. AT: "I will make the servant woman's son also become the father of a great nation" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ So Abraham got up early the next morning. He got some food ready, put water in a bag, and gave it to Hagar. He put the bag on her shoulder, handed her Ishmael, and sent them away into the wilderness of Beersheba.

¹⁵ After Hagar and her son had drunk all the water in the bag, she put the boy under one of the bushes there. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat nearby, about as far as someone can shoot an arrow. She thought, "I cannot endure seeing my son die!" As she sat there, she began to cry loudly.

ULB:

¹⁴ Abraham rose up early in the morning, took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder. He gave her the boy and sent her away. She departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. ¹⁵ When the water in the waterskin was gone, she abandoned the child under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went, and sat down a short distance from him, about the distance of a bowshot away, for she said, "Let me not look upon the death of the child." As she sat there across from him, she lifted up her voice and wept.

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- bread
- Hagar
- desert, wilderness
- Beersheba
- bow and arrow
- voice

translationNotes:

- **took bread** - Possible meanings are 1) this refers to food in general or 2) this refers to bread specifically. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **a skin of water** - "a bag of water." The water container was made out of animal skin.
- **When the water in the waterskin was gone** - "When the water bag was empty" or "When they had drunk all of the water"
- **about the distance of a bowshot away** - This refers to the distance that a person could shoot an arrow with a bow. This is about 100 meters.
- **Let me not look upon the death of the child** - The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "die." AT: "I do not want to watch the boy die" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

- **she lifted up her voice and wept** - Here “voice” stands for the sound of her crying. To “lift up her voice” means to cry loudly. AT: “she cried out loudly and wept” or “she wept loudly” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ Soon God heard the sound of Ishmael, so he sent one of his angels to call out from heaven to Hagar. He said, "Hagar, what is the matter with you? Do not be afraid, because God has heard the boy crying there. ¹⁸ Go lift the boy up and help him be brave, because I will cause his descendants to become a great people group."

ULB:

¹⁷ God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. ¹⁸ Get up, raise up the lad, and encourage him; for I will make him into a great nation."

translationWords:

- God
- voice
- angel, archangel
- Hagar
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- encourage, encouragement
- nation

translationNotes:

- **the voice of the lad** - "the boy's voice." Here "voice" stands for the sound of the boy crying or speaking. AT: "the sound of Ishmael" (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the angel of God** - "a messenger from God" or "God's messenger"
- **out of heaven** - Here "heaven" means the place where God lives.
- **What troubles you** - "What is wrong" or "Why are you crying"
- **the voice of the lad where he is** - Here "voice" stands for the sound of the boy crying or speaking. AT: "the sound of the boy lying over there" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **raise up the lad** - "help the boy stand up"
- **I will make him into a great nation** - To make Ishmael into a great nation means God will give him many descendants who will become a great nation. AT: "I will make his descendants become a great nation" or "I will make him become the ancestor of a great nation" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ Then God showed her a well of water. So she went to the well and filled the container with water, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God helped the boy as he grew up in the wilderness, and he became a good archer. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran. Hagar got a wife for him from Egypt.

ULB:

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. ²⁰ God was with the lad, and he grew. He lived in the wilderness and became an archer. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)
- [archer](#)
- [Paran](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **God opened her eyes, and she saw** - God making Hagar aware of the well is spoken of as if he literally opened her eyes. AT: “God caused Hagar to see” or “God showed her” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **the skin** - “the container made of skin” or “the bag”
- **the lad** - “the boy” or “Ishmael”
- **God was with the lad** - Here the phrase “was with” is an idiom that means God helped or blessed the boy. AT: “God guided the boy” or “God blessed the boy” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **became an archer** - “became very skilled at using a bow and arrows”
- **got a wife** - “found a wife”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:22-24

UDB:

²² At that time, King Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "It is clear that God helps you in all that you do. ²³ So now, solemnly promise to me here, as God is listening, that you will not deceive me and my children, or my descendants. Act faithfully toward me and toward all the people here in the country where you are now living. Act faithfully toward me, as I have acted toward you." ²⁴ So Abraham swore an oath to do that.

ULB:

²² It came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol the captain of his army spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do. ²³ Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, nor with my children, nor with my descendants. Show to me and to the land in which you have been staying the same covenant faithfulness that I have shown to you." ²⁴ Abraham said, "I swear."

translationWords:

- [Abimelech](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about at that time** - This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **Phicol** - This is the name of a man. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **captain of his army** - "commander of his army" (UDB)
- **his army** - The word "his" refers to Abimelech.
- **God is with you in all that you do** - Here the phrase "is with you" is an idiom that means God helps or blesses Abraham. AT: "God blesses everything you do" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Now therefore** - The word "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows. AT: "Therefore" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **swear to me here by God** - This is an idiom meaning to make a solemn oath witnessed by a higher authority, in this instance, God. AT: "promise me with God as your witness" (See: [Idiom](#))

- **that you will not deal falsely with me** - “that you will not lie to me”
- **will not deal falsely ... with my descendants** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: “will deal honestly with me and my descendants” (See: [Double Negatives](#))
- **Show to me ... covenant faithfulness that I have shown to you** - The two men had made a covenant with each other. The abstract noun “faithfulness” can be stated as “faithful” or “loyal.” AT: “Be as faithful to me and to the land as I have been to you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **to the land** - Here “land” stands for the people. AT: “to the people of the land” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **I swear** - This can be stated with the understood information. AT: “I swear to be as faithful to you and your people as you have been to me” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:25-27

UDB:

²⁵ Abraham also complained to Abimelech about one of Abraham's wells of water that Abimelech's servants had taken control of. ²⁶ But Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done that. You did not tell me previously, and I did not hear about it until today." ²⁷ So Abraham brought some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them solemnly agreed to have peace between themselves.

ULB:

²⁵ Abraham also complained to Abimelech concerning a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized from him. ²⁶ Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing. You did not tell me before now; I have not heard of it until today." ²⁷ So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two men made a covenant.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Abimelech](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [seize](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [ox, oxen](#)
- [covenant](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abraham also complained to Abimelech** - Possible meanings are 1) Abraham was complaining about what happened or 2) "Abraham also rebuked Abimelech"
- **concerning a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized from him** - "because Abimelech's servants had taken one of Abraham's wells"
- **seized from him** - "taken from Abraham" or "had taken control of" (UDB)
- **I have not heard of it until today** - "This is the first time I have heard about it"
- **Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech** - This is a sign of friendship and that Abraham agrees to make covenant with Abimelech. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 21 General Notes
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:28-30

UDB:

²⁸ Abraham went to his flock and chose seven female lambs from it. ²⁹ Abimelech asked Abraham, “Why have you taken these seven female lambs from your flock?” ³⁰ Abraham replied, “I want you to accept these female lambs from me. In this way, my gift to you will be proof to everyone that this well belongs to me because I dug it.”

ULB:

²⁸ Then Abraham set seven female lambs of the flock by themselves. ²⁹ Abimelech said to Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven female lambs that you have set by themselves?” ³⁰ He replied, “These seven female lambs you will receive from my hand, so that it may be a witness for me, that I dug this well.”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [lamb, Lamb of God](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [Abimelech](#)
- [witness, eyewitness](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abraham set seven female lambs of the flock by themselves** - “Abraham separated seven female lambs from the flock”
- **seven** - “7” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **What is the meaning of these seven female lambs that you have set by themselves?** - “Why have you separated these seven lambs from the flock?”
- **you will receive** - “you will take”
- **from my hand** - Here “hand” stands for Abraham. AT: “from me” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **it may be a witness** - The word “it” refers to the gift of seven lambs.
- **so that it may be a witness for me** - The abstract noun “witness” can be stated as “to prove.” AT: “to prove to everyone” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:31-32

UDB:

³¹ So Abimelech accepted the lambs. Then Abraham named that place Beersheba, which means ‘Well of the oath,’ because he and Abimelech had sworn an oath there to be peaceful toward each other. ³² After they made the treaty at Beersheba, Abimelech and his army commander, Phicol, left and returned to the land of the Philistines.

ULB:

³¹ So he called that place Beersheba, because there they both swore an oath. ³² They made a covenant at Beersheba, and then Abimelech and Phicol, the captain of his army, returned to the land of the Philistines.

translationWords:

- [Beersheba](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [covenant](#)
- [Abimelech](#)
- [Philistines](#)

translationNotes:

- **he called that place** - “Abraham called that place”
- **Beersheba** - Translators may add a footnote saying “Beersheba can mean either ”well of the oath” or “well of seven.”
- **they both** - “Abraham and Abimelech”
- **Phicol** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [21:22](#).
- **returned to the land of the Philistines** - “went back to the land of the Philistines” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 21:33-34

UDB:

³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree there, and there he worshiped Yahweh, the eternal God. ³⁴ Abraham stayed as an outsider in the land of the Philistine people for a long time.

ULB:

³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba. There he worshiped Yahweh, the eternal God.
³⁴ Abraham remained as a foreigner in the land of the Philistines many days.

translationWords:

- [Beersheba](#)
- [worship](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [God](#)
- [foreigner, foreign, alien](#)
- [Philistines](#)
- [biblical time: day](#)

translationNotes:

- **a tamarisk tree** - This is an evergreen tree that can grow in the desert. It can be stated more generally. AT: “a tree” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **the eternal God** - “the God who lives forever”
- **many days** - This stands for a longer period of time. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 21 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 21 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrificing his son

Although Isaac was not Abraham's only son, he was the son who was to inherit Abraham's promised blessings. It is possible this parallels God's actual sacrifice of his son, Jesus, for the sins of man. (See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [promise](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Covenant affirmation

After important events, it is common for Scripture to affirm the tenants of a covenant. This serves as a reminder of the covenant and affirms it. (See: [covenant](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God tests Abraham

Extra care should be taken when translating "testing." It is best to avoid using the same word used for "tempting" even though they overlap in meaning. This is because Scripture also says God does not tempt anyone. (See: [test](#), [tempt](#), [temptation](#) and James 2:13)

Links:

- [Genesis 22:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 22:1-3

UDB:

¹ Several years later, God tested Abraham to find out whether Abraham would obey him. He called out to Abraham, and Abraham replied, "I am here." ² God said, "Your son, Isaac, whom you love very much, is the only son I promised to give you. Take him with you and go together to the land of Moriah, and go up a mountain I will show you, and offer him as a burnt offering." ³ So Abraham got up early the next morning, put a saddle on his donkey, and took with him two of his servants along with his son, Isaac. He also chopped some wood for a fire for a burnt offering. Then they started traveling to the place God told him about.

ULB:

22 ¹ It came about after these things that God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" Abraham said, "Here I am." ² Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains there, which I will tell you about." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, along with Isaac his son. He cut the wood for the burnt offering, then set out on his journey to the place that God had told him about.

translationWords:

- God
- test
- Abraham, Abram
- Isaac
- love
- burnt offering, offering by fire
- donkey, mule

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **after these things** - This phrase refers to the events in chapter 21.
- **God tested Abraham** - It is implied that God tests Abraham to learn if Abraham will be faithful to him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: God tested Abraham's faithfulness" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Here I am** - "Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?"

- **your only son** - It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “your only son whom I have promised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **whom you love** - This emphasizes Abraham’s love for his son, Isaac.
- **the land of Moriah** - “the land called Moriah” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **saddled his donkey** - “loaded his donkey” or “put on his donkey what he needed for the journey”
- **young men** - “servants” (UDB)
- **set out on his journey** - “started his journey” or “started traveling” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:4-6

UDB:

⁴ On the third day that they were traveling, Abraham looked up and saw in the distance the place where God wanted him to go. ⁵ Abraham said to his servants, “You two stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go over there. We will worship God there, and then we will come back to you.” ⁶ Then Abraham took the wood to start a fire for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac for him to carry. Abraham carried in his hand something for starting a fire. He also carried a knife, and the two of them walked along together.

ULB:

⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place afar off. ⁵ Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there. We will worship and come again to you.” ⁶ Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on Isaac his son. He took in his own hand the fire and the knife; and they went both of them together.

translationWords:

- biblical time: day
- Abraham, Abram
- worship
- burnt offering, offering by fire
- Isaac

translationNotes:

- **On the third day** - The word “third” is the ordinal number for three. AT: “After traveling for three days” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **saw the place afar off** - “saw far away the place that God had spoken of”
- **young men** - “servants” (UDB)
- **We will worship** - The word “we” refers only to Abraham and Isaac. (See: [Exclusive “We”](#))
- **come again to you** - “return to you”
- **put it on Isaac his son** - “had Isaac, his son, carry it”
- **He took in his own hand** - Here “his own hand” emphasizes that Abraham himself carried these things. AT: “Abraham himself carried” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **the fire** - Here “fire” stands for a pan containing burning coals or a torch or lamp. AT: “something for starting a fire” (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **they went both of them together** - “they left together” or “the two of them went together”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:7-8

UDB:

⁷ Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, saying, “My father.” Abraham replied, “Yes, my son, I am here!” Isaac said, “Look, we have wood and coals to light a fire, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham replied, “My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.” So the two of them continued walking along together.

ULB:

⁷ Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father,” and he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “See, here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” So they went on, both of them together.

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [lamb, Lamb of God](#)
- [burnt offering, offering by fire](#)

translationNotes:

- **My father** - This is a loving way for a son to speak to his father.
- **Here I am** - “Yes, I am listening” or “Yes, what is it?” See how you translated this in [22:1](#).
- **my son** - This is a loving way for a father to speak to his son.
- **the fire** - Here “fire” stands for a pan containing burning coals or a torch or lamp. See how you translated this in [22:6](#). (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the lamb for the burnt offering** - “the lamb that you will give as a burnt offering”
- **God himself** - Here “himself” emphasizes that it is God who will provide the lamb. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))
- **will provide** - “will give us”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ They arrived at the place God had told him about. There, Abraham built a stone altar and arranged the wood on top of it. Then he tied his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham took the knife and reached out to kill his son.

ULB:

⁹ When they came to the place that God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood on it. Then he bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Abraham reached out with his hand and took up the knife to kill his son.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [altar](#)
- [bind, bond, bound](#)
- [Isaac](#)

translationNotes:

- **When they came to the place** - “When Abraham and Isaac arrived at the place”
- **he bound** - “he tied up”
- **on the altar, on top of the wood** - “on top of the wood that was on the altar”
- **reached out with his hand and took up the knife** - “picked up the knife”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ But the angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham! Abraham!” Abraham replied, “I am here!” ¹² The angel said, “Do not harm the boy, because now I know that you respect and obey God. I know this because you have not refused to sacrifice your only son.”

ULB:

¹¹ Then the angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” and he said, “Here I am.” ¹² He said, “Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to harm him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

translationWords:

- angel, archangel
- Yahweh
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- Abraham, Abram
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **the angel of Yahweh** - Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh’s angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as “the angel of Yahweh” using the normal word that you use for “angel.” See the note about this phrase in [16:7](#).
- **from heaven** - This refers to the place where God lives.
- **Here I am** - “Yes, I am listening” or “Yes, what is it?” See how you translated this in [22:1](#).
- **Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to harm him** - The phrase “Do no lay your hand upon” is a way of saying “do not harm.” God said basically the same thing twice to emphasize that Abraham should not hurt Isaac. AT: “Do not hurt the boy in any way” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Parallelism](#))
- **now I know ... from me** - The words “I” and “me” refer to Yahweh. When translating what is in the quote, do it as the angel of Yahweh did and use the words “I” and “me” when referring to Yahweh.
- **you fear God** - This refers to deeply respecting God and showing that respect by obeying him.
- **seeing that** - “because I see that”

- **you have not withheld your son ... from me** - “you have not held back your son ... from me.” This can be stated in positive form. AT: “you were willing to offer your son ... to me” (See: [Double Negatives](#))
- **your son, your only son** - It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. See how you translated a similar phrase in [22:2](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:13-14

UDB:

¹³ Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram nearby, in a thicket that had caught its horns. So Abraham went over and grabbed the ram and killed it, and sacrificed it on the altar as a burnt offering, instead of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham named that place “Yahweh will provide.” To the present day people say, “On Yahweh’s mountain, he will provide.”

ULB:

¹³ Abraham looked up and behold, behind him was a ram caught in the bushes by his horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place, “Yahweh will provide,” and it is said to this day, “On the mountain of Yahweh it will be provided.”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [burnt offering, offering by fire](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **behold** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **was a ram caught in the bushes by his horns** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “was a ram whose horns were stuck in the bushes” or “was a ram stuck in the bushes” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **went and took the ram** - “Abraham went over to the ram and took it”
- **will provide ... will be provided** - Use the same word for “provide” as you used in [22:8](#).
- **to this day** - “even now.” This means even to the time that the author was writing this book.
- **it will be provided** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “he will provide” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ The angel of Yahweh called out to Abraham from heaven a second time. ¹⁶ He said, "I, Yahweh, declare to you that you did what I told you, and you have not held back your only son. So I solemnly swear, with myself as my witness, ¹⁷ that some day your descendants will be as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will defeat their enemies and capture their cities.

ULB:

¹⁵ The angel of Yahweh called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said—this is an oracle of Yahweh, "By myself I have sworn that because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you and I will greatly multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and your descendants will possess the gate of their enemies.

translationWords:

- angel, archangel
- Yahweh
- Abraham, Abram
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- oath, swear, swear by
- bless, blessed, blessing
- multiply
- descendant, descended from
- gate, gate bar

translationNotes:

- **The angel of Yahweh** - Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh's angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as "The angel of Yahweh" using the normal word that you use for "angel." See the note about this phrase in [16:7](#).
- **a second time** - The word "second" is the ordinal number for two. AT: "again" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **from heaven** - Here the word "heaven" refers to the place where God lives.
- **and said—this is an oracle of Yahweh** - "and spoke this message from Yahweh" or "and declared these words of Yahweh." This is a formal way of saying that the words that follow come directly from Yahweh.

- **By myself I have sworn** - “I have promised and I am my witness.” The term “swear by” means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made. There is nothing more powerful for Yahweh to swear by than himself.
- **you have done this thing** - “you obeyed me”
- **have not withheld your son** - “have not kept back your son.” This can be stated in positive form. AT: “were willing to offer your son to me” (See: [Double Negatives](#))
- **your son, your only son** - It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. See how you translated a similar phrase in [22:2](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **surely bless** - “certainly bless”
- **I will greatly multiply your descendants** - “I will cause your descendants to increase again and again” or “I will cause your descendants to be very many”
- **as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore** - God compared Abraham’s descendants to the stars and the sand. Just as people cannot count the huge number of stars or the grains of sand, so there would be so many of Abraham’s descendants that people would not be able to count them. AT: “beyond what you can count” (See: [Simile](#))
- **as the stars of the heavens** - Here the word “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars.
- **will possess the gate of their enemies** - Here “gate” represents the whole city. To “possess the gate of their enemies” means destroying their enemies. AT: “will completely triumph over their enemies” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ You obeyed me, so by means of your descendants the people of all the nations on the earth will be blessed.” ¹⁹ Then Abraham and Isaac returned to where his servants were waiting, and they went back together to Beersheba, and Abraham and his people continued to stay there.

ULB:

¹⁸ Through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they departed and went together to Beersheba, and he lived at Beersheba.

translationWords:

- offspring
- nation
- bless, blessed, blessing
- obey, obedient, obedience
- voice
- Abraham, Abram
- Beersheba

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The angel of Yahweh continues speaking to Abraham.
- **all the nations of the earth will be blessed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “I, the Lord, will bless all the people living everywhere” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **nations of the earth** - Here “nations” stands for the people of the nations. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **you have obeyed my voice** - Here “voice” stands for what God said. AT: “you have obeyed what I said” or “you have obeyed me” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Abraham returned** - Only Abraham was named because he was the father, but it was implied that his son went with him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “Abraham and his son went back” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **young men** - “servants” (UDB)
- **they departed** - “they left that place”
- **he lived at Beersheba** - Only Abraham was mentioned because he was the leader of his family and servants, but it was implied that they were with him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “Abraham and his people stayed in Beersheba” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:20-22**UDB:**

²⁰ After these things happened, someone told Abraham, “Your brother Nahor’s wife, Milcah, has also given birth to children.” ²¹ Now the oldest son was Uz. The next was Buz. After him was Kemuel, the father of Aram. ²² After Kemuel was Chesed, then Hazo, then Pildash, then Jidlaph, then Bethuel.

ULB:

²⁰ It came about after these things that Abraham was told, “Milcah has borne children, as well, to your brother Nahor.” ²¹ They were Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, ²² Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Nahor](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about after these things** - “After these events.” The phrase “these things” refers to the events of Genesis 22:1-19. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **Abraham was told** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “someone told Abraham” (UDB) (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Milcah has borne children, as well** - “Milcah has also borne children”
- **Milcah** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **They were Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother** - “The name of his first born was Uz, and the names of the rest of his children were Buz his brother”
- **Uz ... Buz ... Kemuel ... Aram ... Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel** - These are all names of men. Translate this so that it is clear that all of these except Aram are the sons of Nahor and Milcah. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 22:23-24

UDB:

²³ Bethuel was the father of Rebekah. Those were the eight sons of Milcah, wife of Abraham's brother, Nahor. ²⁴ Nahor also had a concubine, whose name was Beumah. She gave birth to four sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

ULB:

²³ Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. These were the eight children that Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. ²⁴ His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

translationWords:

- [Rebekah](#)
- [concubine](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bethuel became the father of Rebekah** - "Later Bethel became the father of Rebekah"
- **These were the eight children that Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother** - "These were the eight children of Milcah and Nahor, Abraham's brother." This refers to the children that were listed in [22:21-22](#).
- **eight** - "8" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **His concubine** - "Nahor's concubine"
- **Reumah** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **also bore** - "also gave birth to"
- **Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah** - These are all names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 22 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 22 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abraham's character

Abraham's interaction with the people show that he was greatly respected. This would have been unusual for a foreigner and indicates that Abraham was a man of great character. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Burial

Burial was a common practice when Abraham lived, but only the wealthy were able to bury their dead relatives in this way.

Links:

- [Genesis 23:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 23:1-2

UDB:

¹ When Sarah was 127 years old, ² she died at the city of Kiriath Arba, which is now called Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Then Abraham mourned over her.

ULB:

23 ¹ Sarah lived a hundred and twenty-seven years. These were the years of the life of Sarah. ² Sarah died in Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Abraham mourned and wept for Sarah.

translationWords:

- Sarah, Sarai
- biblical time: year
- Hebron
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Abraham, Abram
- mourn, mourning

translationNotes:

- **Sarah lived a hundred and twenty-seven years** - “Sarah lived 127 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **These were the years of the life of Sarah** - Some translations do not include this sentence. (See: [Doublet](#))
- **Kiriath Arba** - This is the name of a city. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Abraham mourned and wept for Sarah** - “Abraham was very sad and cried because Sarah died”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:3-4**UDB:**

³ He left the body of his wife and spoke to some of the descendants of Heth. He said, ⁴ “I am a temporary settler living among you, so I do not own any land here. Sell me some land here so that I can bury my wife’s body.”

ULB:

³ Then Abraham rose up and went from his dead wife, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, ⁴ “I am a foreigner among you. Please grant me a property for a burial place among you, so that I may bury my dead.”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [foreigner, foreign, alien](#)
- [tomb, grave, burial place](#)

translationNotes:

- **rose up and went from his dead wife** - “got up and left his wife’s body”
- **the sons of Heth** - Here “sons” stands for those who descended from Heth. AT: “the descendants of Heth” (UDB) or “the Hittites” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **among you** - This idea may be expressed in terms of location. “in your country” or “here”
- **Please grant me a property** - “Sell me some land” or “Allow me to buy a piece of land”
- **my dead** - The nominal adjective “dead” can be stated as an adjective or a verb. AT: “my dead wife” or “my wife who has died” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:5-6

UDB:

⁵ They replied to him, ⁶ “Sir, you are a powerful man among us. Choose one of our finest tombs and bury your wife’s body in it. None of us will refuse to sell land to you for a tomb for your wife’s body.”

ULB:

⁵ The sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying, ⁶ “Listen to us, my master. You are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb, so that you may bury your dead.”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [God](#)
- [tomb, grave, burial place](#)

translationNotes:

- **The sons of Heth** - Here “sons” stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: “The descendants of Heth” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **my master** - This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.
- **a prince of God** - This is an idiom. This probably means “a powerful man” (UDB) or “a mighty leader.” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **your dead** - The nominal adjective “dead” can be stated as a verb or simply as “wife.” AT: “your wife who has died” or “your wife” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **the choicest of our tombs** - “the best of our burial places”
- **refuse you his tomb** - “withhold his burial place from you” or “refuse to give to you his tomb”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:7-9**UDB:**

⁷ Then Abraham stood up and bowed in respect in front of the people who owned the land, the descendants of Heth. ⁸ He said to them, "If you say that you are willing for me to bury my wife's body here, listen to me, and ask Ephron son of Zohar, ⁹ to sell me the cave in the Machpelah area, which is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price he wants, and to sell it to me in front of you all. In this way I can have a burial ground."

ULB:

⁷ Abraham arose and bowed down to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth. ⁸ He spoke to them, saying, "If you agree that I should bury my dead, then hear me and plead with Ephron son of Zohar, for me. ⁹ Ask him to sell me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns, which is at the end of his field. For the full price let him sell it to me publicly as a property for a burial place."

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- bow, bow down
- tomb, grave, burial place

translationNotes:

- **bowed down** - This means to bend over or kneel down very low to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. (See: [Symbolic Language](#))
- **to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth** - "to the sons of Heth who lived in the area"
- **the sons of Heth** - Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: "the descendants of Heth" See how you translated this in [23:3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **my dead** - The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." AT: "my wife who has died" or "my wife" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **Ephron ... Zohar** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the cave of Machpelah, which he owns, which is at the end of his field** - "his cave that is at the end of his field in Machpelah"
- **the cave of Machpelah** - "the cave in Machpela." Machpela was the name of an area or region. Ephron owned a field in Machpela and the cave that was in the field. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **which he owns** - This tells something about the cave. Ephron owned the cave. (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))

- **which is at the end of his field** - This also tells something about the cave. The cave was at the end of Ephron's field. (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **sell it to me publicly** - "sell it to me in front of you all" (UDB) or "sell it to me in your presence"
- **as a property** - "as a piece of land that I may own and use"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:10-11**UDB:**

¹⁰ Now Ephron was sitting among the people at the city gate where many descendants of Heth had gathered. He had heard what Abraham said to them. ¹¹ Ephron said, “No, sir, listen to me. I will give to you the field and the cave in it, without charge, with the people here as witnesses. Please bury your wife there.”

ULB:

¹⁰ Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth, and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth, of all those who had come into the gate of his city, saying, ¹¹ “No, my master, hear me. I give you the field, and the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you to bury your dead.”

translationWords:

- [Hittite](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth** - Here “Now” is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Ephron. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Ephron** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [23:8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the sons of Heth** - Here “sons” stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: “the descendants of Heth” See how you translated this in [23:3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **in the hearing of the sons of Heth** - The abstract noun “the hearing” can be stated as “hear” or “listening.” AT: “so that all the sons of Heth could hear him” or “while all the sons of Heth were listening” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **all those who had come into the gate of his city** - This tells which sons of Heth were listening. AT: “all those who had gathered at the gate of his city” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **gate of his city** - The city gate was where the leaders of the city would meet to make important decisions.
- **his city** - “the city where he lived.” This phrase shows that Ephron belonged to that city. It does not mean that he owned it.

- **my master** - This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.
- **in the presence of the sons of my people** - Here “presence” stands for the people serving as witnesses. AT: “with my fellow countrymen as my witnesses” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **sons of my people** - This means “my fellow countrymen” or “my fellow Hittites”
- **my people** This phrase shows that Ephron was part of that group of people. It does not mean that he was their leader.
- **I give it to you to bury your dead** - “I give it to you. Bury your dead”
- **your dead** - The nominal adjective “dead” can be stated as a verb or simply as “wife.” AT: “your wife who has died” or “your wife” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:12-13

UDB:

¹² Abraham again bowed before the people who lived in the land, ¹³ and said to Ephron, as all the others were listening, “No, listen to me. If you are willing, I will pay for the field. You tell me what the price is, and I will give it to you. If you accept it, the field will become mine, and I can bury my wife’s body there.”

ULB:

¹² Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land. ¹³ He spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, “But if you are willing, please hear me. I will pay for the field. Take the money from me, and I will bury my dead there.”

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)

translationNotes:

- **bowed himself down** - This means to bend over or kneel down very low to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. (See: [Symbolic Language](#))
- **people of the land** - “people who lived in that area”
- **in the hearing of the people of the land** - The abstract noun “the hearing” can be stated as “hear” or “listening” AT: “so that the people who lived in the area could hear” or “while the people who lived in the area were listening” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **But if you are willing** - The word “but” shows a contrast. Ephron wanted to give the field to Abraham; Abraham wanted to pay for it. AT: “No, but if you are willing” or “No, but if you agree with this”
- **I will pay for the field** - “I will give you money for the field”
- **my dead** - The nominal adjective “dead” can be stated as a verb or simply as “wife.” AT: “my wife who has died” or “my wife” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:14-16

UDB:

¹⁴ Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, ¹⁵ “Sir, listen to me. The land is worth four hundred pieces of silver. But the price is not important to you and me. Give me the money and bury your wife’s body there.” ¹⁶ Abraham agreed with Ephron about the price, and weighed for Ephron the four hundred pieces of silver he had suggested, as everyone was listening. He used the standard weights for silver used by people who sold things.

ULB:

¹⁴ Ephron answered Abraham, saying, ¹⁵ “Please, my master, listen to me. A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you? Bury your dead.” ¹⁶ Abraham listened to Ephron and Abraham weighed out to Ephron the amount of silver that he had spoken in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the standard measurement of the merchants.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)

translationNotes:

- **Ephron** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [23:8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Please, my master, listen to me** - “Hear me, my master” or “Listen to me, kind sir”
- **my master** - This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.
- **A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you?** - Ephron meant that since he and Abraham were both so wealthy, 400 pieces of silver was a small amount. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: “The piece of land is worth only four hundred shekels of silver. For you and me, that is nothing.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **four hundred shekels of silver** - This is about 4.5 kilograms of silver. (See: [Biblical Weight](#))
- **four hundred** - “400” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Bury your dead** - The nominal adjective “dead” can be stated as a verb or simply as “wife.” AT: “Go bury your wife who has died” or “Go bury your wife” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- **Abraham weighed out to Ephron the amount of silver** - “Abraham weighed the silver and gave Ephron the amount” or “Abraham counted out to Ephron the amount of silver”
- **the amount of silver that he had spoken** - “the amount of silver that Ephron had said”
- **in the hearing of the sons of Heth** - The abstract noun “the hearing” can be stated as “hear” or “listening.” AT: “so that all the sons of Heth could hear him” or “while all the sons of Heth were listening” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

- **the sons of Heth** - Here “sons” stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: “the descendants of Heth” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **according to the standard measurement of the merchants** - “using the standard measurement of weight that merchants used.” This can be stated as a new sentence. AT: “He weighed the silver the same way that the merchants used to weigh it”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ So Ephron's field in the Machpelah area, near Mamre, and the cave in the field, and all the trees that were in the field and those marking the land's boundary, they all became Abraham's possession. ¹⁸ This is how Abraham bought the property, as all the descendants of Heth were listening there at the city gate.

ULB:

¹⁷ So the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was next to Mamre, that is, the field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field and all around its border, passed ¹⁸ to Abraham by purchase in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all those who had come into the gate of his city.

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- gate, gate bar

translationNotes:

- **Machpelah** - Machpela was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [23:9](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Mamre** - This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **that is, the field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees** - This phrase explains what the author meant when he wrote "the field of Ephron." It was not only the field, but also the cave and trees in the field.
- **passed to Abraham by purchase** - "became Abraham's possession when he purchased it" or "belonged to Abraham after he bought it"
- **in the presence of the sons of Heth** - Here "presence" stands for the people serving as witnesses. AT: "with the people of Heth watching as witnesses" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the sons of Heth** - Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: "the descendants of Heth" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **all those who had come into the gate of his city** - This tells which sons of Heth saw Abraham buy the property. See how you translated this in [23:10](#). (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))
- **gate of his city** - The city gate was where the leaders of the city would meet to make important decisions.
- **his city** - "the city where he lived." This phrase shows that Ephron belonged to that city. It does not mean that he owned it.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 23:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ After that, Abraham buried his wife Sarah's body in the cave in the field in the Machpelah area near Mamre, which is now called Hebron, in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ So the field and the cave in it were officially sold to Abraham by the descendants of Heth, for him to use as a burial ground.

ULB:

¹⁹ After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which is next to Mamre, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ So the field and the cave in it passed to Abraham as a property for a burial place from the sons of Heth.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [Hebron](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [tomb, grave, burial place](#)

translationNotes:

- **After this** - "After he bought the field"
- **the cave of the field** - "the cave in the field"
- **the field of Machpelah** - "the field in Machpelah"
- **that is, Hebron** - Possible meanings are 1) Mamre was another name for Hebron or 2) Hebron was formerly called Mamre or 3) Mamre was very near the larger city of Hebron, so people usually called it Hebron.
- **passed to Abraham as a property for a burial place from the sons of Heth** - "became Abraham's property for a burial ground when he bought it from the sons of Heth"
- **the sons of Heth** - Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [23:3](#). AT: "the descendants of Heth" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 23 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 23 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended or special quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 24:60, which is a quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriage

Abraham forbid any marriage between his son and the people of Canaan. This is because it would cause him to worship other gods. Intermarriage and worshiping false gods are things that frequently caused Abraham's descendants to struggle. (See: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#))

Abraham's wealth

There are many instances recorded in this chapter which highlight Abraham's significant wealth. He owned more than 10 camels and had large amounts of gold.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Put your hand under my thigh"

Many scholars believe this is a euphemism. Putting one's hand on a man's genitals was a way to make an important oath. It represented power and progeny. (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 24:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 24:1-4

UDB:

¹ Abraham was now a very old man. Yahweh had blessed Abraham in many ways. ² One day Abraham said to the chief servant of his household, the man who was in charge of all Abraham owned, "Put your hand between my thighs to solemnly promise you will do what I tell you. ³ Knowing that Yahweh, God who created the heavens and the earth, is listening, promise that you will not get a wife for my son, Isaac, from the daughters of the Canaan people among whom I am now living. ⁴ Instead, go to my country and to my relatives. Get a wife for my son Isaac from among them."

ULB:

24¹ Now Abraham was very old and Yahweh had blessed Abraham in all things. ² Abraham said to his servant, the one who was the oldest of his household and who was in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh ³ and I will make you swear by Yahweh, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I make my home. ⁴ But you will go to my country, and to my relatives, and get a wife for my son Isaac."

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- servant, slave, slavery
- household
- oath, swear, swear by
- God
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Isaac

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a break in the main storyline. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.
- **Put your hand under my thigh** - Abraham was about to ask the servant to swear to do something. Putting his hand under Abraham's thigh would show that he would certainly do what he would swear to do. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

- **I will make you swear** - This can be expressed as a command. AT: “swear” (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **swear by Yahweh** - The term “swear by” means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made. “promise me with Yahweh as your witness”
- **the God of heaven and the God of the earth** - “the God of heaven and earth.” The words “heaven” and “earth” are used together to mean every thing that God created. AT: “the God of everything in heaven and earth” (See: [Merism](#))
- **heaven** - This refers to the place where God lives.
- **from the daughters of the Canaanites** - “from the Canaanite women” or “from the Canaanites.” This refers to Canaanite females.
- **among whom I make my home** - “among whom I live.” Here, “I” stands for Abraham and all of his family and servants. AT: “among whom we live” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **But you will go** - This can be stated as a command. AT: “Swear that you will go” or “But go” (See: [Imperatives - Other Uses](#))
- **my relatives** - “my family”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ The servant asked him, “If I find a woman among your relatives, what should I do if she is not willing to come back with me to this land? Should I take your son back there to the country you came from, so he can find a wife and live there?” ⁶ Abraham replied to him, “No! Be certain that you do not take my son there! ⁷ Yahweh, the God who created the heavens, brought me here. He brought me from my father’s household and from the land where my relatives lived. He spoke to me and made a solemn promise to me. He said, ‘I will give this land of Canaan to your descendants.’ He will send an angel who will go there ahead of you and enable you to get a wife for my son and bring her to live here.

ULB:

⁵ The servant said to him, “What if the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land? Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?” ⁶ Abraham said to him, “Make sure that you do not take my son back there! ⁷ Yahweh, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my relatives, and who promised me with a solemn oath saying, ‘To your offspring I will give this land,’ he will send his angel before you, and you will get a wife for my son from there.

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- Yahweh
- God
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- promise
- oath, swear, swear by
- offspring
- angel, archangel

translationNotes:

- **What if** - “What should I do if”
- **will not be willing to follow me** - “will not follow me” or “refuses to come back with me”
- **Must I take your son back to the land from which you came** - “Should I take you son to live in the land from which you came”
- **Make sure that you do not take my son back there** - The phrase “Make sure” emphasizes the command that follows. “Be careful not to take my son back there” or “You definitely must not take my son there”

- **who took me from my father's house** - Here "house" stands for the people in his family. AT: "who took me from my father and the rest of my family" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **promised me with a solemn oath** - "swore an oath to me"
- **saying, 'To your offspring I will give this land,'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "saying that he would give this land to my offspring" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **he will send his angel** - The words "he" and "his" refer to Yahweh.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:8-9

UDB:

⁸ But if the woman you find will not come back with you, you are free to disregard the promise you are making. The only thing that you must not do is to take my son to live there.” ⁹ So the servant put his hand between Abraham’s thighs and made a solemn promise about the matter.

ULB:

⁸ But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine. Only you are not to take my son back there.” ⁹ So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

translationWords:

- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Verse 8 is a continuation of the instructions Abraham gave his servant.
- **But if the woman is not willing to follow you** - “But if the woman refuses to come with you.” Abraham was answering the servant’s question from 24:5. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))
- **you will be free from this oath of mine** - “you will be released from the oath you made to me.” Not having to fulfill an oath is spoken of as if the person is free from an object to which he was bound. AT: “you will not have to do what you swore to me that you would do” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master** - This was to show that he would certainly do what he was swearing to do. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **swore to him** - “made an oath to him”
- **concerning this matter** - “concerning Abraham’s request” or “that he would do what Abraham said”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and loaded them with all kinds of goods that his master gave him to take along. Then he left to go to Aram Naharaim, which is in northern Mesopotamia. He arrived in the city of Nahor. ¹¹ When the servant arrived at Nahor, it was in late afternoon, at the time when the women go to the well to get water. He made the camels kneel down near the well, which was outside the city.

ULB:

¹⁰ The servant took ten of his master's camels and departed. He also took with him all kinds of gifts from his master. He departed and went to the region of Aram Naharaim, to the city of Nahor. ¹¹ He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water. It was evening, the time that women go out to draw water.

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- camel
- Mesopotamia, Aram Naharaim
- Nahor

translationNotes:

- **and departed. He also took** - The sentence starting with “He also took” gives additional information about what the servant took with him on the journey. He gathered them before he departed.
- **He also took with him all kinds of gifts from his master** - This means he also took many good things that his master wanted to give to the woman's family.
- **departed and went** - “set out and went” or “he left and went”
- **the city of Nahor** - Possible meanings are 1) the city where Nahor lived” or 2) “the city called Nahor.” If you can translate it without choosing a meaning, do so. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **He made the camels kneel down** - Camels are tall animals with long legs. He made them bend their legs and lower their bodies to the ground. “He made the camels lie down”
- **well of water** - “water well” or “well” (UDB)
- **draw water** - “get water” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:12-14

UDB:

¹² The servant prayed, "Yahweh, God whom my master Abraham worships, enable me to be successful today! Keep faith with my master, Abraham! ¹³ Listen to me. I am standing near a well of water, and the daughters of the people of the city are coming to get water. ¹⁴ I am asking you this: I will say to one of the girls, 'Please lower your jar so that I may drink some water.' If she says, 'Drink some water, and I will draw some water for your camels, too,' I will know that she is the woman whom you chose to be a wife for your servant, Isaac, and I will know that you have kept faith with my master."

ULB:

¹² Then he said, "Yahweh, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today and show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham. ¹³ Look, here I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴ Let it happen like this. When I say to a young woman, 'Please lower your pitcher so that I may drink,' and she says to me, 'Drink, and I will water your camels too,' then let her be the one that you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown covenant faithfulness to my master."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- God
- lord, master, sir
- covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love
- Abraham, Abram
- fountain, spring
- appoint, appointed
- servant, slave, slavery
- camel
- Isaac

translationNotes:

- **Then he said** - "Then the servant said"
- **grant me success today and show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham** - You can state this with the connecting word "by." This makes clear how the servant wants God to show covenant faithfulness. AT: "Show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham by granting me success today" (See: [Connecting Words](#))

- **grant me success** - “give me success.” The servant wanted to find a good wife for Abraham’s son. The abstract noun “success” can be stated as a verb. AT: “help me to succeed” or “make me able to do what I have come here to do” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham** - This is faithfulness because of the covenant that God made with Abraham. The abstract noun “faithfulness” can be stated as “be faithful.” AT: “be faithful to my master Abraham because of your covenant” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **Look** - Here the word “Look” adds emphasis to what follows.
- **the spring of water** - “the spring” or “the well”
- **the daughters of the men of the city** - “the young women of the city”
- **Let it happen like this** - “Let it happen this way” or “Make this happen”
- **When I say to a young woman, ‘Please lower your pitcher so that I may drink,’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. This can be expressed with an indirect quote. AT: “When I ask a young woman to let me have a drink of water from her jar” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Please lower your pitcher** - The women carried the pitchers on their shoulder. She would have to lower it to give the man a drink.
- **pitcher** - a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids
- **that you have shown covenant faithfulness to my master** - The abstract noun “faithfulness” can be stated as “been faithful.” AT: “that you have been faithful to my master because of your covenant” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ Before he finished praying, a young woman named Rebekah arrived there, carrying a jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's younger brother Nahor. ¹⁶ She was very beautiful and a virgin. No man had ever slept with her. She went down to the edge of the well, filled her jar with water, and then came back up.

ULB:

¹⁵ It came about that even before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah came out with her water pitcher on her shoulder. Rebekah was born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother. ¹⁶ The young woman was very beautiful and a virgin. No man had slept with her. She went down to the spring and filled her pitcher, and came up.

translationWords:

- [Rebekah](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)
- [fountain, spring](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about that** - This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **behold** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **pitcher** - This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in [24:14](#).
- **Rebekah was born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother** - “Rebekah's father was Bethuel. Bethuel's parents were Milcah and Nahor. Nahor was Abraham's brother”
- **Bethuel** - Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [22:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Nahor** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated his name in [11:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Milcah** - Milcah was Nahor's wife and Bethuel's mother. See how you translated this name in [11:29](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **She went down to the spring ... and came up** - The spring was somewhere lower in elevation than where the servant was standing.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ Abraham's servant immediately ran to meet her, and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." ¹⁸ She replied, "Drink some, sir!" She lowered her jar from her shoulder to her hands and gave him a drink.

ULB:

¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little drink of water from your pitcher." ¹⁸ She said, "Drink, my master," and she quickly let down her pitcher on her hand, and gave him a drink.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **to meet her** - "to meet the young woman"
- **a little drink of water** - "a little water"
- **pitcher** - This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in [24:14](#).
- **my master** - "sir." Here the woman uses this term of respect to refer to the man, though she is not his slave.
- **she quickly let down her pitcher on her hand** - "she quickly lowered her pitcher." She was carrying the pitcher on her shoulder. She had to lower it to get water for the servant.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ After she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will also get some water for your camels, until they have had enough to drink.” ²⁰ She quickly emptied the water in her jar into the animals’ water trough. Then she ran back to the well, and kept getting water for all the camels.

ULB:

¹⁹ When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” ²⁰ So she hurried and emptied her pitcher into the trough, then ran again to the well to draw water, and drew water for all his camels.

translationWords:

- [camel](#)

translationNotes:

- **I will draw water** - “I will get water”
- **So she hurried and emptied her pitcher** - “So she quickly emptied her pitcher”
- **the trough** - “the animals’ water trough” (UDB). A trough is a long open container for holding water for animals to drink.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:21-23**UDB:**

²¹ The servant just watched her, without saying anything. He wanted to know if Yahweh had caused his trip to be successful or not. ²² Finally, after the camels finished drinking, the servant took out a gold nose ring that weighed six grams, and two gold bracelets for her arms, each weighing about 110 grams, gave them to Rebekah, and told her to put them on. ²³ Then he said, “Tell me whose daughter you are. Also, tell me, is there room in your father’s house for me and my men to sleep there tonight?”

ULB:

²¹ The man watched her in silence to see whether Yahweh had prospered his journey or not. ²² As the camels finished drinking, the man brought out a gold nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two gold bracelets for her arms weighing ten shekels, ²³ and asked, “Whose daughter are you? Tell me please, is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?”

translationWords:

- **Yahweh**
- **camel**

translationNotes:

- **The man** - “The servant” (UDB)
- **watched her** - “watched Rebekah” or “watched the young woman”
- **to see** - Learning something is often spoken of as if it were seeing. AT: “to know” (UDB) or “to determine” (See: **Metaphor**)
- **had prospered his journey** - “had fulfilled the purpose of his journey” or “had made his journey successful.” You can make explicit what specifically the servant was trying to determine. AT: “was showing him the woman who would become Isaac’s wife” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)
- **or not** - You can state clearly the understood information. AT: “or not prospered his journey” (See: **Ellipsis**)
- **a gold nose ring weighing half a shekel** - “a gold nose ring that weighed six grams” (UDB). The weight indicates the value of the ring. AT: “an expensive gold nose ring” (See: **Biblical Weight**)
- **two gold bracelets for her arms weighing ten shekels** - “two gold bracelets for her arms that weighed 110 grams.” The weight shows their size and value. AT: “two large gold bracelets for her arms” (UDB) (See: **Biblical Weight**)
- **Whose daughter are you** - “Who is your father”

- **is there room in your father's house** - "is there a place in your father's house"
- **for us** - Apparently other men went on this journey with Abraham's servant. Here "us" refers to the servant and those traveling with him. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **to spend the night** - "to stay tonight" or "to stay for the night"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:24-25**UDB:**

²⁴ She replied, "My father's name is Bethuel. He is the son of Nahor and his wife Milcah. ²⁵ Yes, we have room where you all can sleep tonight, and we also have plenty of straw and grain to feed the camels."

ULB:

²⁴ She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." ²⁵ She also said to him, "We have plenty of both straw and feed, and also room for you to spend the night."

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **She said** - "Rebekah said" or "the young woman said"
- **to him** - "to the servant"
- **I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor** - "Bethuel is my father, and his parents are Milcah and Nahor"
- **We have plenty of both straw and feed** - It is understood that the straw and feed are for the camels. You can make clear this understood information. AT: "We have plenty of straw and feed for the camels" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **for you to spend the night** - "for you to stay tonight" or "where you can stay for the night"
- **for you** - Here "you" refers to the servant and those traveling with him. (See: [Forms of You](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ The servant bowed and worshiped Yahweh. ²⁷ He said, “I thank Yahweh, God whom my master Abraham worships. He has continued to show that he is faithful and trustworthy toward my master. Yahweh led me on this journey straight to the house of my master’s relatives!”

ULB:

²⁶ Then the man bowed down and worshiped Yahweh. ²⁷ He said, “Blessed be Yahweh, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his covenant faithfulness and his trustworthiness toward my master. As for me, Yahweh has led me directly to the house of my master’s relatives.”

translationWords:

- bow, bow down
- worship
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- lord, master, sir
- Abraham, Abram
- forsake, forsaken, forsook
- covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love
- trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness

translationNotes:

- **the man** - “the servant” (UDB)
- **bowed down** - This is a sign of humility before God. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **has not forsaken his covenant faithfulness and his trustworthiness toward my master** - “has not stopped showing his covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness to my master.” The abstract nouns “faithfulness” and “trustworthiness” can be stated as “to be faithful and trustworthy.” AT: “has continued to be faithful and trustworthy because of his covenant with my master” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **has not forsaken** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: “continues to show” (See: [Litotes](#))
- **relatives** - “family” or “clan”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)

- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:28-30

UDB:

²⁸ The girl ran and told everyone in her mother's household about what had happened. ²⁹ Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban went quickly to the servant, who was outside by the well. ³⁰ He was surprised to have seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms and to have heard Rebekah tell what the man had said to her. So he went out and saw the man standing near the camels, close to the well.

ULB:

²⁸ Then the young woman ran and told her mother's household about all of these things. ²⁹ Now Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban. Laban ran to the man who was out at the road by the spring. ³⁰ When he had seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister, "This is what the man said to me," he went to the man, and, behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring.

translationWords:

- household
- Rebekah
- Laban
- fountain, spring
- camel

translationNotes:

- **ran and told her mother's household** - Here "household" stands for all the people living in her mother's house. AT: "ran to the house and told her mother and everyone there" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **all of these things** - "everything that had just happened"
- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a break in the main storyline. Here the author tells background information about Rebekah. The author introduces her brother, Laban, to the story. (See: [Background Information](#) and [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))
- **When he had seen the nose ring ... and when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister** - These things happened before he ran out to the man. This tells why Laban ran out to the man. (See: [Order of Events](#))
- **when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister, "This is what the man said to me,"** - This can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "when he had heard his sister Rebekah tell what the man had said to her" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **behold** - "indeed." The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:31-32

UDB:

³¹ He said to the man, “You who have been blessed by Yahweh, come! Why are you standing out here? I have prepared a room for you in the house, and a place for the camels to stay.” ³² So the servant went to the house, and Laban’s servants unloaded the camels. They brought straw and grain for the camels, and water for him and the men with him to wash their feet.

ULB:

³¹ Then Laban said, “Come, you blessed of Yahweh. Why are you standing outside? I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels.” ³² So the man came to the house and he unloaded the camels. The camels were given straw and feed, and water was provided to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.

translationWords:

- Laban
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **Come** - “Come in” or “Enter”
- **you blessed of Yahweh** - “you whom Yahweh has blessed”
- **you** - Here the word “you” refers to Abraham’s servant. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **Why are you standing outside?** - Laban used this question to invite Abraham’s servant into his house. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: “You do not need to stay outside.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **So the man came to the house** - The word “came” can be translated as “went.” (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **he unloaded the camels** - It is not clear who did this work. This may be stated in active form. AT: “Laban’s servants unloaded the camels” (UDB) or “the camels were unloaded” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **The camels were given straw and feed, and water was provided** - This does not say who did the work. If you state this in active form use “Laban’s servants” as the subject. AT: “Laban’s servants gave straw and feed to the camels, and they provided water” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **to wash his feet ... him** - “for Abraham’s servant and the men who were with him to wash their feet”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:33-35

UDB:

³³ They set food in front of him for him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I tell you what I need to tell you." So Laban said, "Tell us!" ³⁴ So the servant said, "I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵ Yahweh has greatly blessed my master so that he has become very rich. Yahweh has given him many sheep and cattle, a lot of gold and silver, male and female servants, camels and donkeys.

ULB:

³³ They set food before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have said what I have to say." So Laban said, "Speak on." ³⁴ He said, "I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵ Yahweh has blessed my master very much and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, and camels and donkeys.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [silver](#)
- [gold](#)
- [donkey, mule](#)

translationNotes:

- **They set** - Here, the word "they" refers to Laban's family members or to the household servants.
- **set food before him** - "gave food to the servant"
- **said what I have to say** - "spoken my words" or "told you why I am here"
- **he has become great** - Here the word "he" refers to Abraham.
- **become great** - "become very wealthy"
- **He has given** - The word "he" refers to Yahweh.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 24 Translation Questions

Genesis 24:36-38

UDB:

³⁶ My master's wife, Sarah, bore a son for him when she was very old, and my master has given to his son everything he owns. ³⁷ My master made me solemnly promise, saying, 'Do not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaan people, in whose land we are living. ³⁸ Instead, go back to my father's family, to my own clan, and get from them a wife for my son.'

ULB:

³⁶ Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master when she was old, and he has given everything that he owns to him. ³⁷ My master made me swear, saying, 'You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I make my home. ³⁸ Instead, you must go to my father's family, and to my relatives, and get a wife for my son.'

translationWords:

- [Sarah, Sarai](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
- **bore a son to my master** - "gave birth to a son"
- **he has given ... to him** - "my master has given ... to his son"
- **My master made me swear, saying** - "My master made me swear that I would do what he told me to do. He said"
- **from the daughters of the Canaanites** - This refers to Canaanite females. AT: "from the Canaanite women" or "from the Canaanites"
- **in whose land I make my home** - "among whom I live." Here, "I" stands for Abraham and all of his family and servants. AT: "among whom we live" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **to my relatives** - "to my own clan" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:39-41**UDB:**

³⁹ Then I asked my master, ‘What shall I do if the woman they give me will not come back with me?’ ⁴⁰ He replied, ‘Yahweh, whom I have always obeyed, will send his angel with you, and he will cause your journey to be successful. He will make you able to get a wife for my son from my clan, from my father’s family. ⁴¹ But if my clan refuses to allow her to return with you, you will be freed from being cursed because you could not obey me.’

ULB:

³⁹ I said to my master, ‘Perhaps the woman will not follow me.’ ⁴⁰ But he said to me, ‘Yahweh, before whom I walk, will send his angel with you and he will prosper your way, so that you will get a wife for my son from among my relatives and from my father’s family line. ⁴¹ But you will be free from my oath if you come to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath.’

translationWords:

- lord, master, sir
- Yahweh
- walk
- angel, archangel
- oath, swear, swear by

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham’s servant continues speaking to Rebekah’s family.
- **Perhaps the woman will not follow me** - This is something that could possibly happen. AT: “What if the woman will not come back with me.” or “What should I do if the woman will not come back with me?” (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))
- **before whom I walk** - Serving Yahweh is spoken of as if Abraham were walking in Yahweh’s presence. AT: “whom I serve” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **he will prosper your way** - “he will make your journey successful”
- **family line** - “family”
- **But you will be free from my oath if you come to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath** - This is a hypothetical situation that Abraham did not think was likely to happen. Possible meanings are 1) “There is only one way for you to be free from my oath: if you come to my relatives and they will not give her to you, then you will be free from my oath” or, 2) building on verse 40, “If you go to my father’s family

and ask for a girl, you will have done what I told you to do. If they will not give her to you, then you will be free from the oath you swore to me.” (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

- **you will be free from my oath** - “you will be released from the oath you made to me.” Not having to fulfill an oath is spoken of as if the person is free from an object to which he was bound. AT: “you will not have to do what you swore to me that you would do” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **if you come to my relatives** - Languages use the words come and go differently. AT: “if you arrive at my relatives’ home” or “if you go to my relatives” (See: [Go and Come](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:42-44**UDB:**

⁴² When I came today to the well, I prayed, 'Yahweh, God whom my master, Abraham, worships, if you are going to make me successful on this journey, please do this for me: ⁴³ I am standing alongside a well, where girls will come to draw water. I am asking you that if I say to a girl, "Please, give me a little water to drink from your jar," ⁴⁴ and if she says to me, "Certainly, drink some, and I will also draw some water for your camels," then let that be the woman whom you have chosen for my master's son!'

ULB:

⁴² So I arrived today at the spring, and said, 'O Yahweh, God of my master Abraham, please, if you do indeed intend to make my journey successful— ⁴³ here I am, standing by the spring of water— let the young woman who comes out to draw water, the woman to whom I say, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink," ⁴⁴ the woman who says to me, "Drink, and I will also draw water for your camels"—let her be the woman whom you, Yahweh, have chosen for my master's son.'

translationWords:

- fountain, spring
- Yahweh
- God
- Abraham, Abram

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
- **the spring** - "the well"
- **here I am, standing by the spring of water** - The servant interrupted what he was asking God to do by drawing God's attention to where he was standing.
- **let the young woman who comes ... the woman to whom I say ... the woman who says to me** - The servant went back to stating his request, and he had three things to say about the woman that he hoped would come.
- **to draw water** - "to get water"
- **pitcher** - This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in [24:14](#).
- **let her be the woman** - The servant finished his request.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:45-46**UDB:**

⁴⁵ Before I finished praying, Rebekah approached with her water jar on her shoulder. She went down to the well and got some water. I said to her, ‘Please give me a drink!’ ⁴⁶ She quickly lowered her jar and said, ‘Drink some! And I will draw water for your camels, too.’ So I drank some water, and she also got water for the camels.

ULB:

⁴⁵ Even before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her pitcher on her shoulder and she went down to the spring and drew water. So I said to her, ‘Please give me a drink.’ ⁴⁶ She quickly lowered her pitcher from her shoulder and said, ‘Drink, and I will give your camels water also.’ So I drank, and she watered the camels also.

translationWords:

- [heart](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [fountain, spring](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham’s servant continues speaking to Rebekah’s family.
- **speaking in my heart** - To pray silently in one’s mind is spoken of as if he were speaking in his heart. The word “heart” refers to his thoughts and his mind. AT: “praying” (UDB) or “praying quietly” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))
- **behold** - “indeed” or “suddenly.” The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **pitcher** - This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in [24:14](#).
- **she went down to the spring** - The phrase “went down” is used because the spring was somewhere lower than where the servant was standing.
- **spring** - “well”
- **watered the camels** - “gave water to the camels”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:47-48

UDB:

⁴⁷ Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and his wife, Milcah.’ I had her put the ring in her nose and put the bracelets on her arms. ⁴⁸ Then I bowed and worshiped Yahweh, and I thanked Yahweh God, the one my master Abraham worships, the one who led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master’s brother to be a wife for my master’s son.

ULB:

⁴⁷ I asked her and said, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him.’ Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms. ⁴⁸ Then I bowed down and worshiped Yahweh, and blessed Yahweh, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to find the daughter of my master’s relative for his son.

translationWords:

- bow, bow down
- worship
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- God
- lord, master, sir

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham’s servant continues speaking to Rebekah’s family.
- **The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him** - “My father is Bethuel. His parents are Nahor and Milcah”
- **ring ... bracelets** - In this story, all of these items were made of gold. See how you translated these in [24:22](#).
- **I bowed down** - This is a sign of humility before God. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **led me by the right way** - “brought me here”
- **who had led me** - The connecting word “because” can be used to show this is why the servant worshiped God. AT: “because Yahweh led me” (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **my master’s relative** - This refers to Bethuel, the son of Abraham’s brother Nahor.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 24 General Notes
- **Genesis 24 Translation Questions**

Genesis 24:49**UDB:**

⁴⁹ Now, if you act faithfully toward my master as part of his extended family, tell me that you will do what I am asking. If you will not do that, tell me that also, so I may know what to do.”

ULB:

⁴⁹ Now therefore, if you are prepared to treat my master with family faithfulness and trustworthiness, tell me. But if not, tell me, so that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.”

translationWords:

- [faithful, faithfulness](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Abraham’s servant continues speaking to Rebekah’s family.
- **Now therefore** - “Now” (UDB). Here “Now” does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **if you are prepared to treat my master with family faithfulness and trustworthiness, tell me** - How they could show their faithfulness and trustworthiness can be stated explicitly. AT: “tell me if you will be faithful and trustworthy to my master by giving Rebekah to be his son’s wife” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **you** - The word “you” refers to Laban and Bethuel. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **faithfulness and trustworthiness** - These abstract nouns can be stated as “faithful and trustworthy.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **family faithfulness** - This is faithfulness to family members.
- **But if not** - The understood information can be stated clearly. AT: “But if you are not prepared to treat my master with family faithfulness and trustworthiness” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **so that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left** - Possible meanings are 1) deciding what to do is spoken of as if the person will physically turn one direction or another. AT: “so that I will know what do” or 2) the servant wants to know if he needs to travel somewhere else. AT: “so that I may continue on my journey” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:50-51

UDB:

⁵⁰ Laban and Bethuel answered, "This clearly has come from Yahweh. So we two cannot say that it is the right thing or the wrong thing to do. ⁵¹ Rebekah is here in front of you. Take her and go, and let her be a wife for your master's son, just as Yahweh has indicated."

ULB:

⁵⁰ Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing has come from Yahweh; we cannot speak to you either bad or good. ⁵¹ Look, Rebekah is before you. Take her and go, so she may be the wife of your master's son, as Yahweh has spoken."

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [son, son of](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bethuel** - This was the father of Laban and Rebekah.
- **The thing has come from Yahweh** - "Yahweh has caused all of this to happen"
- **we cannot speak to you either bad or good** - They are saying they do not have the authority to decide whether what God has done is good or bad. AT: "we dare not judge what Yahweh is doing" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Look** - The word "Look" here adds emphasis to what follows.
- **Rebekah is before you** - "Here is Rebekah"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:52-53

UDB:

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard these words, he bowed down to the ground to Yahweh. ⁵³ Then the servant brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothes, and gave them to Rebekah. And he gave gifts to her brother Laban and to her mother.

ULB:

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the ground to Yahweh. ⁵³ The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious gifts to her brother and to her mother.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Rebekah](#)

translationNotes:

- **their words** - "Laban and Bethuel's words." Here "words" stands for what they said. AT: "what Laban and Bethuel said" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **he bowed himself down** - Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **articles of silver and articles of gold** - "silver and gold items" or "things made of silver and gold"
- **precious gifts** - "expensive gifts" or "valuable gifts"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:54-55

UDB:

⁵⁴ Then they ate a meal and drank. The men who were with Abraham's servant also slept there that night. The next morning, the servant said, "Allow me now to return to my master." ⁵⁵ But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the girl remain with us for about ten days. After that, you may take her and go."

ULB:

⁵⁴ Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank. They stayed there overnight, and when they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master." ⁵⁵ Her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us for a few more days, at least ten. After that she may go."

translationWords:

- [biblical time: day](#)

translationNotes:

- **he and the men who were with him** - "Abraham's servant and his men"
- **stayed there overnight** - "slept there that night"
- **arose in the morning** - "got up the next morning"
- **Send me away** - "Let me leave and return"
- **a few more days, at least ten** - "at least ten more days"
- **ten** - "10" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **After that** - "Then"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:56-58

UDB:

⁵⁶ But he replied to them, “Yahweh has made my journey successful, so do not delay me. Let me take her back to my master now!” ⁵⁷ They said, “Let us call the girl and ask her to say what she wants to do.” ⁵⁸ So they summoned Rebekah and asked her, “Will you go with this man now?” She replied, “Yes, I will go.”

ULB:

⁵⁶ But he said to them, “Do not hinder me, since Yahweh has prospered my way. Send me on my way so that I may go to my master.” ⁵⁷ They said, “We will call the young woman and ask her.” ⁵⁸ So they called Rebekah and asked her, “Will you go with this man?” She replied, “I will go.”

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [Rebekah](#)

translationNotes:

- **he said** - “Abraham’s servant said”
- **to them** - “to Rebekah’s brother and mother”
- **Do not hinder me** - “Do not delay me” (UDB) or “Do not make me wait”
- **Yahweh has prospered my way** - Here “way” stands for a journey. AT: “Yahweh has caused me to succeed in the purpose my journey” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Send me on my way** - “Allow me to leave”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:59-60**UDB:**

⁵⁹ So they sent Rebekah, along with the female servant who had cared for her all her life, to go with Abraham's servant and the men who had come with him. ⁶⁰ Then they asked God to bless Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, we ask that Yahweh will cause you to have millions of descendants, and allow them to completely defeat all those that hate them."

ULB:

⁵⁹ So they sent their sister Rebekah, along with her female servant, on her journey with Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰ They blessed Rebekah, and said to her,

"Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands,
and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them."

translationWords:

- Abraham, Abram
- servant, slave, slavery
- bless, blessed, blessing
- descendant, descended from
- gate, gate bar

translationNotes:

- **So they sent their sister Rebekah** - "So the family sent Rebekah"
- **their sister** - Rebekah was Laban's sister. AT: "their relative" or "Laban's sister"
- **her female servant** - This refers to the female servant who had fed Rebekah when she was a baby, cared for her when she was a child, and still served her.
- **Our sister** - Rebekah was not the sister to everyone in her family. But they called her this to show that they loved her. AT: "Our dear Rebekah"
- **may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands** - Here "mother" stands for ancestor. AT: "may you be the ancestor of millions of people" or "may you have very many descendants"
- **thousands of ten thousands** - This means a very large number or an uncountable number. (See: [Numbers](#))
- **may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them** - Armies would break through the gate of their enemies' cities and conquer the people. AT: "may your descendants completely defeat those who hate them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:61-62**UDB:**

⁶¹ Then Rebekah and her servant girls got ready. They got on their camels and went with Abraham's servant. He took Rebekah and left.

⁶² Now Isaac was living in the southern Judean wilderness. He had come from Beerlahairoi.

ULB:

⁶¹ Then Rebekah arose, and she and her servant girls mounted the camels, and followed the man. Thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

⁶² Now Isaac was living in the Negev, and had just returned from Beerlahairoi.

translationWords:

- [Rebekah](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [camel](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Negev](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then Rebekah arose, and she and her servant girls mounted the camels** - "Then Rebekah and her servant girls went and got on the camels"
- **Thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way** - "In this way Abraham's servant took Rebekah with him and returned to where he had come from"
- **Now** - This word marks a change in the story. It was telling about the servant finding a wife, and now it will tell about Isaac.
- **Beerlahairoi** - This is the name of a water well in the Negev. See how you translated it in [16:14](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 24:63-65

UDB:

⁶³ One evening he went out into the field to meditate as he walked. He looked up and was surprised to see some camels coming. ⁶⁴ Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got off the camel ⁶⁵ and asked the servant, “Who is that man who is approaching?” The servant replied, “That is Isaac, my master.” So she took her veil and covered her face, in order to show modesty in front of him.

ULB:

⁶³ Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening. When he looked up and saw, behold, there were camels coming! ⁶⁴ Rebekah looked, and when she saw Isaac, she jumped down from the camel. ⁶⁵ She said to the servant, “Who is that man who is walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took her veil, and covered herself.

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [meditate](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening** - “One evening Isaac went out to the field to think.” This must have been a long time after the servant and Rebekah left her home since they had to travel a long distance.
- **When he looked up and saw, behold, there were camels coming!** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. “When he looked up he was surprised to see camels coming”
- **Rebekah looked** - “Rebekah looked up”
- **she jumped down from the camel** - “she quickly got off the camel”
- **So she took her veil, and covered herself** - “So she covered her face with her veil.” This is a sign of respect and modesty towards the man she will marry. The full meaning of this can be made explicit. (See: [Symbolic Action](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **veil** - a piece of cloth used to cover a person’s head, shoulders and face

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 24 Translation Questions

Genesis 24:66-67**UDB:**

⁶⁶ The servant told Isaac all that had happened. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac took Rebekah into the tent that had belonged to his mother, Sarah, and she became his wife. He loved her. In this way Isaac was comforted about his mother's death.

ULB:

⁶⁶ The servant recounted to Isaac all the things that he had done. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Sarah, Sarai](#)

translationNotes:

- **and took Rebekah, and she became his wife** - Both of these phrases mean that Isaac married Rebekah. AT: "and married Rebekah" or "and took her as his wife" (See: [Doublet](#))
- **So Isaac was comforted** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "So Rebekah comforted Isaac" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 24 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 24 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended or special quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 25:23, which is a quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Polygamy

Abraham married another wife. This was sinful of him. Many other Hebrew leaders came to marry multiple wives. This is known as “polygamy.” It has never been an acceptable practice. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Inheritance

In the ancient Near East, inheritance was passed on through the eldest son. Even though Esau and Jacob were twins, it is very important that Esau was born first. It was his birthright to receive his inheritance, but he foolishly gave it up. (See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [birthright](#) and [fool](#), [foolish](#), [folly](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God fulfill's his promise

God begin to fulfill the promise he gave to Abraham about making his descendants numerous. Many of these children through his concubines would become large people groups. This may not be easy to understand without the remainder of the Old Testament and the history it records. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 25:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 25:1-4

UDB:

¹ Some time after Sarah died, Abraham married another woman, whose name was Keturah. ² She later gave birth to six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. ³ Jokshan became the father of two sons, Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the people groups of the Assyrians, the Letush, and the Leum. ⁴ The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. They were all descendants of Keturah.

ULB:

25 ¹ Abraham took another wife; her name was Keturah. ² She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. ³ Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Assyrian people, the Letush people, and the Leum people. ⁴ Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's descendants.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Midian, Midianites](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - See [How to Translate Names](#).
- **All these** - This refers to the people named in verses 2-4.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ Abraham declared that after he died, Isaac would inherit everything he owned. ⁶ But while Abraham was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away to live in a land to the east, to keep them far from his son.

ULB:

⁵ Abraham gave all that he owned to Isaac. ⁶ However, while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them to the land of the east, away from Isaac, his son.

translationWords:

- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [concubine](#)

translationNotes:

- **Abraham gave all that he owned to Isaac** - "Isaac inherited all that Abraham owned." It was normal for the father to divide his wealth when he was old and not leave that for others to do after he died.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:7-8

UDB:

⁷ Abraham lived until he was 175 years old. ⁸ He died at a very old age and joined his ancestors who had died previously.

ULB:

⁷ These were the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, 175 years. ⁸ Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man with a full life, and he was gathered to his people.

translationWords:

- [biblical time: day](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)

translationNotes:

- **These were the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, 175 years** - "Abraham lived 175 years" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Abraham breathed his last and died** - "Abraham took his last breath and died." The phrases "breathed his last" and "died" mean basically the same thing. AT: "Abraham died" (See: [Doublet](#))
- **breathed his last** - This is a polite way of saying a person died. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **at a good old age, an old man with a full life** - These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Abraham lived a very long time. AT: "when he had lived a very long time and was very old" (See: [Doublet](#))
- **an old man with a full life** - Living a long life is spoken of as if life were a container that becomes full. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **he was gathered to his people** - This means that after Abraham died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. AT: "he joined his family members who had already died" (See: [Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried his body in the cave at Machpelah area, near Mamre, in the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron son of Zohar, a descendant of Heth. ¹⁰ It was there that Isaac and Ishmael buried his body, where Abraham previously buried the body of his wife Sarah. ¹¹ After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac continued living near Beerlahairoi.

ULB:

⁹ Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, which is near Mamre. ¹⁰ This field Abraham had bought from the sons of Heth. Abraham was buried there with Sarah his wife. ¹¹ After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac lived near Beerlahairoi.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- Ishmael
- bury, buried, burial
- Hittite
- Abraham, Abram
- Sarah, Sarai
- God
- bless, blessed, blessing

translationNotes:

- **the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron** - Ephron owned a field in Machpelah and the cave that was in that field. Abraham bought the field from Ephron.
- **Machpelah** - Machpelah was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [23:9](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Ephron ... Zohar** - These are names of men. See how you translated these men's names in [23:8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **which is near Mamre** - Machpela was near Mamre.
- **Mamre** - This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this place name in [23:17](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **This field Abraham had bought** - "Abraham had bought this field"
- **sons of Heth** - "the descendants of Heth" or "the Hittites." See how you translated this in [23:5](#).

- **Abraham was buried** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “They buried Abraham” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **his son** - “Abraham’s son”
- **Beerlahairoi** - This name means “the well of the living one who sees me.” See how you translated this place name in [16:14](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:12**UDB:**

¹² These are those who descended from Abraham's son, Ishmael, whom Sarah's female slave, Hagar from Egypt, gave birth to.

ULB:

¹² Now these were the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- Ishmael
- Hagar
- Egypt, Egyptian
- servant, slave, slavery

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story and information about Ishmael.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:13-16

UDB:

¹³ These were their names, in the order in which they were born: Ishmael's oldest son was named Nebaioth. After him were born Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶ The twelve sons of Ishmael became the leaders of the tribes that had those names. They each had their own settlement and campsite.

ULB:

¹³ These were the names of Ishmael's sons, according to their birth order: Nebaioth—the firstborn of Ishmael, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶ These were Ishmael's sons, and these were their names, by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their tribes.

translationWords:

- [Ishmael](#)
- [prince, princess](#)
- [tribe](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - See [How to Translate Names](#).
- **These were Ishmael's sons, and these were their names, by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their tribes** - This can be stated as two sentences. "These were the names of Ishmael's twelve sons. They led tribes that were named after them, and they each had their own villages and campsites"
- **twelve** - "12" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **princes** - Here the word "princes" means that the men were leaders or rulers of the tribes; it does not mean that they were the sons of a king.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ Ishmael lived until he was 137 years old. Then he died and joined his ancestors who had previously died. ¹⁸ His descendants settled in the area between Shur and Havilah, near the border of Egypt as a person travels toward Asshur. But they did not live in peace together.

ULB:

¹⁷ These were the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years: he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. ¹⁸ They lived from Havilah to Shur, which is near Egypt, as one goes toward Assyria. They lived in hostility with each other.

translationWords:

- [Ishmael](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire](#)

translationNotes:

- **These were the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years** - “Ishmael lived 137 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **breathed his last and died** - The terms “breathed his last” and “died” mean basically the same thing. AT: “died” (See: [Doublet](#))
- **was gathered to his people** - This means that after Ishmael died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. AT: “he joined his family members who had already died” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **They lived** - “His descendants settled” (UDB)
- **from Havilah to Shur** - “between Havilah and Shur”
- **Havilah** - Havilah was located somewhere in the Arabian Desert. See how you translated this in [2:11](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **as one goes toward** - “in the direction of”
- **They lived in hostility with each other** - Possible meanings are 1) “they did not live in peace together” (UDB), or 2) “they lived away from their other relatives.”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ This is what happened concerning Abraham's son, Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac.

²⁰ When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Bethuel was one of the descendants of Aram from Paddan Aram. Rebekah was the sister of Laban, who belonged to the Aram people.

ULB:

¹⁹ These were the events concerning Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac. ²⁰ Isaac was forty years old when he took as his wife Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [Aram, Aramean, Aramaic](#)
- [Paddan Aram](#)
- [Laban](#)

translationNotes:

- **These were the events concerning Isaac, Abraham's son** - This sentence introduces the account of Isaac's descendants in Genesis 25:19-35:29. AT: "This is the account of the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **forty years old** - "40 years old" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **when he took as his wife Rebekah** - "when he married Rebekah"
- **Bethuel** - Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [22:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Paddan Aram** - This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:21-22

UDB:

²¹ For a long time after they were married, Rebekah still had no children. So Isaac prayed to Yahweh concerning his wife, and Yahweh answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² There were two babies in her womb, and they kept jostling each other. So she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she asked Yahweh about it.

ULB:

²¹ Isaac prayed to Yahweh for his wife because she was childless, and Yahweh answered his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. ²² The children struggled together within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” She went to ask Yahweh about this.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- pray, prayer
- Yahweh
- Rebekah

translationNotes:

- **she was childless** - “she was unable to become pregnant”
- **Rebekah his wife conceived** - It can be made explicit that Rebekah was pregnant with two babies at the same time: “Rebekah, his wife, became pregnant with twins” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **The children struggled together within her** - “the babies inside her kept bumping against each other” or “The babies pushed against each other within her”
- **The children ... within her** - Rebekah was pregnant with twins. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **She went to ask Yahweh about this** - “She went and asked Yahweh about this.” It is not clear where she went. She may have gone somewhere private to pray, or she may have gone somewhere to offer a sacrifice.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:23**UDB:**

²³ Yahweh said to her, “Two nations will come from the twins within you. And those two nations will separate from each other, and one will be stronger than the other. And the older will serve the younger.”

ULB:

²³ Yahweh said to her,

”Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples will be separated from within you.

One people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.”

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- nation
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- womb
- serve, service

translationNotes:

- **said to her** - “said to Rebekah”
- **Two nations ... serve the younger** - This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. (See: [Poetry](#))
- **Two nations are in your womb** - Here “two nations” stands for the two children. Each child will be the father of a nation. AT: “Two nations will come from the twins within you” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **and two peoples will be separated from within you** - Here “two peoples” stands for the two children. Each child will be the father of a people. This can be translated with an active verb. AT: “and when you give birth to these two children they will be rivals” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **the older will serve the younger** - Possible meanings are 1) “the older son will serve the younger son” or 2) “the descendants of the older son will serve the descendants of the younger son.” If possible, translate it so that people could understand either meaning.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:24-26

UDB:

²⁴ When Rebekah gave birth, it was true! Twin boys were born! ²⁵ The first one born was red, and his body had hair all over it, like a garment made of hair. So they named him Esau. ²⁶ Then his brother was born, grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born.

ULB:

²⁴ When it was time for her to give birth, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ The first child came out red all over like a hairy garment. They called his name Esau. ²⁶ After that, his brother came out. His hand was grasping Esau's heel. He was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when his wife bore them.

translationWords:

- [womb](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)

translationNotes:

- **behold** - The word “behold” here adds emphasis to what follows. “indeed”
- **red all over like a hairy garment** - Possible meanings are 1) his skin was red and he had a lot of hair on his body or 2) he had a lot of red hair on his body. AT: “red and hairy like a garment made of animal hair” (See: [Simile](#))
- **Esau** - Translators may add a footnote that says “The name Esau sounds like the word ‘hairy.’”
- **grasping Esau's heel** - “holding the back part of Esau's foot”
- **Jacob** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Jacob means ‘he grasps the heel.’”
- **sixty years old** - “60 years old” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:27-28

UDB:

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau became a very good hunter of wild animals. He spent a lot of time out in the fields. However, Jacob was a quiet man who stayed close to the campsite. ²⁸ Isaac liked Esau more, because he enjoyed the taste of the meat of the animals that Esau killed. But Rebekah liked Jacob more.

ULB:

²⁷ The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a quiet man, who spent his time in the tents. ²⁸ Now Isaac loved Esau because he ate the animals that he had hunted, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [tent](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [love](#)
- [Rebekah](#)

translationNotes:

- **became a skillful hunter** - “became good at hunting and killing animals for food”
- **a quiet man** - “a peaceful man” or “a less active man”
- **who spent his time in the tents** - This speaks about time as if it were a commodity that someone could spend. AT: “who remained in the tents much of the time” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Now** - This word is used to mark a change in focus, shifting from the story to background information about Isaac and Rebekah. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Isaac loved** - Here the word “loved” means “favored” or “preferred.”
- **because he ate the animals that he had hunted** - “because he ate the animals that Esau had hunted” or “because he enjoyed eating the wild animal meat that Esau caught”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ One day while Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home from the field, very hungry. ³⁰ He said to Jacob, “Give me some of that red stew to eat right now, because I am starving!” (That is why Esau’s other name was Edom.)

ULB:

²⁹ Jacob cooked some stew. Esau came in from the field, and he was weak from hunger. ³⁰ Esau said to Jacob, “Feed me with that red stew. Please, I am exhausted!” That is why his name was called Edom.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob cooked** - Since this is the beginning of a story about something that happened one time, some translators may want to start it with a phrase like “One day, Jacob cooked” in a similar manner to the UDB.
- **cooked some stew** - “boiled some food” or “cooked some soup.” This stew was made of boiled lentils. (See: [25:34](#))
- **he was weak from hunger** - “he was weak because he was very hungry” or “he was very hungry”
- **I am exhausted** - “I am weak from hunger” or “I am very hungry”
- **Edom** - Translators may add a footnote that says “The name Edom means ‘red.’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 25 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 25 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 25:31-34

UDB:

³¹ Jacob said, “I will give you some if you sell me your right as firstborn to inherit most of our father’s wealth.” ³² Esau replied, “Well, I am about to die from being so hungry. If I die now, my rights will not help me.” ³³ Jacob said, “Swear to me that you are giving me your rights as firstborn!” So that is what Esau did. He sold his firstborn rights to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave to Esau some bread and some stew made of lentils. Esau ate and drank, and then he got up and left. By doing that, Esau showed that he was not interested in his rights as firstborn.

ULB:

³¹ Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.” ³² Esau said, “Look, I am about to die. What good is the birthright to me?” ³³ Jacob said, “First swear to me,” so Esau swore an oath and in that way he sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, then got up and went on his way. In this manner Esau despised his birthright.

translationWords:

- [birthright](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [bread](#)

translationNotes:

- **birthright** - “right as firstborn to inherit most of our father’s wealth” (UDB)
- **I am about to die** - Esau was exaggerating to emphasize how hungry he was. AT: “I am so hungry I feel like I could die” (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **What good is the birthright to me?** - Esau used a question to emphasize that eating was more important than a birthright. This can be translated as a statement. AT: “My inheritance is no good to me if I die of hunger!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **First swear to me** - What Jacob wanted Esau to swear can be stated explicitly. AT: “First swear to me that you will sell me your birthright” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **lentils** - These are like beans, but their seeds are very small, round, and somewhat flat. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **Esau despised his birthright** - “Esau showed that he did not value his birthright”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 25 General Notes
- **Genesis 25 Translation Questions**

Genesis 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

When things in the land were bad, Isaac did not trust in Yahweh. Instead, he ran to the safety of Egypt. Even when Abraham's descendants did not trust in Yahweh's faithfulness to fulfill his covenant, Yahweh remained faithful to his covenant and blessed Isaac. (See: [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [fulfill](#) and [covenant](#))

Wells

In the ancient Near East, were very important strategically. Therefore, they were a sign of power and a sign of God's blessing being upon Isaac.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"She is my sister"

Isaac was afraid the Egyptians would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Rebekah to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Isaac's sister, they would have shown favor to him. This is the same thing his father, Abraham, did. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [favor](#), [favorable](#), [favoritism](#)).

Links:

- [Genesis 26:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 26:1

UDB:

¹ Some time later there was a severe famine in the land. That was different from the famine that occurred when Abraham was alive. So Isaac went southeast to the city of Gerar to talk to Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people.

ULB:

26 ¹ Now a famine happened in the land, besides the first famine that had been in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines at Gerar.

translationWords:

- [famine](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Abimelech](#)
- [king](#)
- [Philistines](#)
- [Gerar](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
- **a famine happened** - “there was a famine” or “there was another famine”
- **in the land** - You can state explicitly the land to which this refers. AT: “in the land where Isaac and his family lived” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **that had been in the days of Abraham** - The phrase “in the days” means the time when Abraham lived. AT: “that had happened during Abraham’s life” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:2-3

UDB:

² But Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt! Live in the land that I tell you!
³ Stay in this land, and I will help you and bless you, because it is to you and your descendants that I will give all these lands, and I will do what I solemnly promised to your father.

ULB:

² Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land that I tell you to live in. ³ Stay in this very land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants, I will give all these lands, and I will fulfill the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [fulfill](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Yahweh begins to speak to Isaac.
- **appeared to him** - "appeared to Isaac"
- **Do not go down to Egypt** - It was common to speak of leaving the promised land as "going down" to another place. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **for to you and to your descendants, I will give all these lands** - "for I will give all these lands to you and your descendants"
- **I will fulfill the oath that I swore to Abraham your father** - "I will do what I promised Abraham your father I would do"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and I will cause your descendants to be a blessing to all the people groups on the earth. ⁵ I will do that because Abraham obeyed me. He obeyed all that I told him to do, all that I commanded him to do, all that I declared and all the laws that I gave him.”

ULB:

⁴ I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and will give to your descendants all these lands. Through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. ⁵ I will do this because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

translationWords:

- multiply
- descendant, descended from
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- nation
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Abraham, Abram
- obey, obedient, obedience
- instruct, instruction
- command, to command, commandment
- statute, statutes
- law, principle

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Yahweh continues speaking to Isaac.
- **I will multiply your descendants** - “I will cause you to have very many descendants.”
- **like the stars of heaven** - This speaks about the number of Isaac’s descendants as if they were the same as the number of stars. See how you translated this in [22:17](#). (See: [Simile](#))
- **heaven** - This refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars.
- **all the nations of the earth will be blessed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “I will bless all the nations of the earth” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

- **Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws** - The phrases “obeyed my voice” and “kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” mean basically the same thing. AT: “Abraham obeyed me and did everything I commanded him to do” (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **obeyed my voice** - Here “voice” stands for Yahweh. AT: “obeyed me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:6-8

UDB:

⁶ So Isaac stayed in Gerar along with his wife and sons.

⁷ When the men in Gerar asked who that woman was, Isaac said, “She is my sister.” He said that because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “Rebekah is very beautiful, so they will want her. They will kill me to get her.” ⁸ When Isaac had been there a long time, one day Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people, looked down from a window in his palace and was surprised to see Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.

ULB:

⁶ So Isaac settled in Gerar. ⁷ When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, “She is my sister.” He feared to say, “She is my wife,” because he thought, “The men of this place will kill me to get Rebekah, because she is so beautiful.” ⁸ After Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines happened to look out of a window. He saw, behold, Isaac was caressing Rebekah, his wife.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- Gerar
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- Rebekah
- Abimelech
- king
- Philistines

translationNotes:

- **So Isaac settled in Gerar** - Only Isaac is mentioned because he is the leader of the family, but his whole family was with him. AT: “So Isaac and his family settled in Gerar” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **He feared to say** - Here “fear” refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others. “He was afraid to say”
- **to get Rebekah** - “in order to take Rebekah”
- **He saw, behold, Isaac** - The word “behold” shows that what Abimelech saw surprised him. AT: “And he was surprised to see that Isaac”
- **was caressing Rebekah** - Possible meanings are 1) he was touching her the way a husband touches his wife or 2) he was laughing and talking with her the way a husband talks with his wife.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:9-11

UDB:

⁹ So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, “Now I realize that she is really your wife! So why did you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac replied to him, “I said that because I thought that someone here might kill me to get her.” ¹⁰ Abimelech said, “You should not have done this to us! One of our people might have slept with your wife, and you would have caused us to be guilty of a great sin!” ¹¹ Then Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, “Do not harm this man or his wife! Anyone who does that will surely be executed!”

ULB:

⁹ Abimelech called Isaac to him and said, “Look, certainly she is your wife. Why did you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, “Because I thought someone might kill me to get her.” ¹⁰ Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.” ¹¹ So Abimelech warned all the people and said, “Whoever touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death.”

translationWords:

- Abimelech
- Isaac
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking
- guilt, guilty

translationNotes:

- **Abimelech called Isaac to him** - Abimelech probably sent someone to tell Isaac that Abimelech wanted to see him. AT: “Abimelech sent someone to bring Isaac to him” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’?** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “Why did you say that she is your sister?” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **to get her** - “so he could take her”
- **What is this you have done to us?** - Abimelech used this question to scold Isaac. AT: “You should not have done this to us!” (UDB) (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **you would have brought guilt upon us** - This speaks about causing someone to be guilty as if “guilt” were an object that is placed on someone. AT: “you would have caused us to be guilty of taking a man’s wife” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **upon us** - Here “us” refers to Abimelech and his people. (See: [Exclusive “We”](#))

- **Whoever touches this man** - Here “touches” means to touch in a harmful way. AT: “Whoever harms this man” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **will surely be put to death** - Abimelech may have intended to tell someone to kill anyone who might harm Isaac or Rebekah. This can be stated in active form. AT: “I will put him to death” or “I will order my men to kill him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:12-14**UDB:**

¹² Isaac planted grain in that land that year, and he harvested a very large crop, because Yahweh had blessed him. ¹³ Isaac continued to acquire more and more possessions, until finally he became very wealthy. ¹⁴ He had large herds of sheep, goats, and cattle, and many slaves. Because of that, the Philistine people envied him.

ULB:

¹² Isaac planted crops in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold, because Yahweh blessed him. ¹³ The man became rich, and grew more and more until he became very great. ¹⁴ He had many sheep and cattle, and a large household. The Philistines envied him.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- reap, reaper
- biblical time: year
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- sheep, ram, ewe
- cow, calf, bull, cattle
- household
- Philistines
- envy, covet

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This begins a new part of the story. It changes from telling about Isaac calling Rebekah his sister, and it starts to tell about how Isaac became very rich and the Philistines were jealous of him.
- **in that land** - “in Gerar”
- **a hundredfold** - This means “one hundred times as much as he planted.” It can be translated more generally as “a very large crop” (UDB). (See: [Numbers](#))
- **The man became rich** - “Isaac became rich” or “He became rich”
- **and grew more and more until he became very great** - “and he gained more and more until he became very wealthy”
- **sheep** - This may also include goats. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **a large household** - Here “household” stands for workers or servants. AT: “many servants” (See: [Metonymy](#))

- **The Philistines envied him** - “The Philistines were jealous of him”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:15-17

UDB:

¹⁵ So all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug, the people filled up with earth.

¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “You have become more numerous than we are, so I want you to leave from our area.” ¹⁷ So Isaac and his family moved from there. They went and set up their tents in the Valley of Gerar and settled there.

ULB:

¹⁵ Now all the wells that his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped them up by filling them with earth. ¹⁶ Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we.” ¹⁷ So Isaac departed from there and settled in the Valley of Gerar, and lived there.

translationWords:

- well, cistern
- ancestor, father, forefather
- servant, slave, slavery
- Philistines

translationNotes:

- **Now** - Here this word does not mean “at this moment.” It is indicating where the action in the story begins. It can be translated with the connecting word “So” to show that this is a result of what happened in [26:12-13](#). (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **in the days of Abraham his father** - The phrase “in the days of” stands for a person’s lifetime. AT: “when Abraham, his father, was living” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Abimelech said** - Possible meanings are 1) this is another action to force Isaac and his people to leave. AT: “Then Abimelech said” or “Finally Abimelech said” or 2) Abimelech made this decision because he saw that his people were jealous and acting in a hostile way towards Isaac. AT: “Therefore Abimelech said” (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **much mightier than we** - “much stronger than we are”
- **So Isaac departed** - Only Isaac is mentioned because he is the leader, but his family and servants went with him. AT: “So Isaac and his household left” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 26 General Notes
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:18

UDB:

¹⁸ There were several wells in that area that had been dug when Isaac's father Abraham was living, but Philistine people had filled them up with earth after Abraham died. But Isaac and his servants dug the wells out again, and Isaac gave the wells the same names that his father had given to them.

ULB:

¹⁸ Once again Isaac dug out the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father. The Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham's death. Isaac called the wells by the same names that his father had called them.

translationWords:

- [well, cistern](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)

translationNotes:

- **Isaac dug out** - Here "Isaac" stands for Isaac and his servants. AT: "Isaac and his servants dug out" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **which they had dug** - "which Abraham's servants had dug"
- **in the days of Abraham his father** - The phrase "in the days of" stands for a person's lifetime. AT: "when Abraham, his father, was living." See how this was translated in [26:15](#). (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **The Philistines had stopped them up** - This was the reason that Isaac dug them out. Possible ways to translate this are: 1) Since this happened first, this sentence can come before the sentence about Isaac digging them out, as in the UDB. or 2) This sentence can start with "Isaac did this because the Philistines had stopped them up." (See: [Order of Events](#))
- **had stopped them up** - "had filled them with earth"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water. ²⁰ But the men who herded animals in the Valley of Gerar argued with the men who took care of Isaac's animals. They said, "The water in this well is ours!" So Isaac named the well Esek, which means "dispute," because they disputed about who owned it.

ULB:

¹⁹ When Isaac's servants dug in the valley, they found there a well of flowing water. ²⁰ The herds-men of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, and said, "This water is ours." So Isaac called that well "Esek," because they had quarreled with him.

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [well, cistern](#)

translationNotes:

- **flowing water** - This phrase refers to a natural spring they uncovered when they were digging a new well. It provided a continuous flow of fresh drinking water. AT: "fresh water" (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#))
- **herdsmen** - "men who tended the herds"
- **This water is ours** - Here "ours" refers to the herdsmen of Gerar. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **Esek** - Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Esek means 'quarrel' or 'argue.'" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:21-22

UDB:

²¹ Then Isaac's servants dug another well, but they quarreled about who owned that one also. So Isaac named it Sitnah, which means "opposition." ²² They moved on from there and dug another well, but this time no one quarreled about who owned it. So he named it Rehoboth, which means "empty place," saying, "Yahweh has given us an empty place to live in, a place that is not wanted by other people, and we will become very prosperous here."

ULB:

²¹ Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that, too, so he gave it the name of "Sitnah."
²² He left there and dug yet another well, but they did not quarrel over that one. So he called it Rehoboth, and he said, "Now Yahweh has made room for us, and we will prosper in the land."

translationWords:

- [well, cistern](#)
- [prosper, prosperity, prosperous](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then they dug** - "Then Isaac's servants dug" (UDB)
- **they quarreled** - "the herdsmen of Gerar argued with Isaac's herdsmen"
- **so he gave it** - "so Isaac gave it"
- **Sitnah** - Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Sitnah means 'oppose' or 'accuse.'" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Rehoboth** - Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Rehoboth means 'make room for' or 'empty place.'" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **us ... we** - Isaac was speaking about himself and his household.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:23-25**UDB:**

²³ From there Isaac went up to Beersheba. ²⁴ The first night that he was there, Yahweh appeared to him and said, “I am the God whom your father Abraham worshiped. Do not be afraid of anything. I will help you and bless you, and because of what I promised my servant Abraham, I will greatly increase the number of your descendants.” ²⁵ So Isaac built an altar there and offered a sacrifice to worship Yahweh. He set up their tents there, and his servants started to dig a well.

ULB:

²³ Then Isaac went up from there to Beersheba. ²⁴ Yahweh appeared to him that same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Do not fear, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your descendants, for my servant Abraham’s sake.” ²⁵ Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of Yahweh. There he pitched his tent, and his servants dug a well.

translationWords:

- Beersheba
- Yahweh
- Abraham, Abram
- bless, blessed, blessing
- multiply
- descendant, descended from
- servant, slave, slavery
- altar
- name
- tent

translationNotes:

- **Isaac went up from there to Beersheba** - Here “went up” is probably a reference to going north. Say that he departed in the most natural way for your language. AT: “Isaac left there and went to Beersheba”
- **multiply your descendants** - “will cause your descendants to increase greatly” or “will cause your descendants to be very many”
- **for my servant Abraham’s sake** - “for my servant Abraham” or you can make the full meaning explicit. AT: “because I promised my servant Abraham that I would do this” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Isaac built an altar there** - You can make explicit why Isaac built an altar. AT: “Isaac built an altar there to sacrifice to Yahweh” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **called on the name of Yahweh** - To “call on” means to pray or to worship. Here “name” stands for Yahweh. AT: “prayed to Yahweh” or “worshiped Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:26-27

UDB:

²⁶ While they were digging the well, King Abimelech came to Isaac from Gerar, along with Ahuzzath, his advisor, and Phicol, the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac asked them, “You acted in a hostile way toward me before and sent me away. So why have you come to me now?”

ULB:

²⁶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath, his friend, and Phicol, the captain of his army. ²⁷ Isaac said to them, “Why are you coming to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?”

translationWords:

- [Abimelech](#)
- [Gerar](#)

translationNotes:

- **went to him** - “went to Isaac”
- **Ahuzzath** - This is the name of a man. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **his friend** - Possible meanings are 1) “Abimelech’s friend” or 2) “Abimelech’s advisor.”
- **Phicol** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated his name in [21:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:28-29

UDB:

²⁸ One of them answered, "We have seen that Yahweh helps you. So we said to each other, 'We should have an agreement between ourselves and Isaac.' So we should make a peace treaty with you, ²⁹ stating that you will not harm us, in the same way that we did not molest you. We always treated you well, and we sent you away peacefully. And now Yahweh is blessing you."

ULB:

²⁸ Then they said, "We have clearly seen that Yahweh has been with you. So we decided that there should be an oath between us, yes, between us and you. So let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹ that you will do us no harm, just as we have not harmed you, and as we have treated you well and have sent you away in peace. Indeed, you are blessed by Yahweh."

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [oath, swear, swear by](#)
- [covenant](#)
- [peace, peaceful](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **they said** - This refers to Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol. One of them spoke and the other two agreed with what he said. It does not mean they all spoke at the same time. AT: "one of them said"
- **We have clearly seen** - "We know" or "We are certain"
- **So let us make a covenant** - "So we want to make a covenant"
- **and as we have treated you well** - This can also be translated as the beginning of a new sentence. "We have done only good to you"
- **you are blessed by Yahweh** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "Yahweh has blessed you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ So Isaac made a feast for them, and they all ate and drank. ³¹ Early the next morning they all swore to each other that they would do what they had promised. Then Isaac sent them home peacefully.

ULB:

³⁰ So Isaac made a feast for them, and they ate and drank. ³¹ They rose early in the morning and swore an oath with each other. Then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- feast
- oath, swear, swear by
- peace, peaceful

translationNotes:

- **Isaac made a feast for them, and they ate and drank** - Eating a meal together was a part of making a covenant with one another. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **for them** - Here “them” refers to “Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol”
- **they ate** - Here “they” refers to Isaac, Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol. AT: “they all ate” (UDB)
- **They rose early** - “They awoke early”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:32-33

UDB:

³² That day Isaac’s servants came to him and told him about the well that they had finished digging. They said, “We found water in the well!” ³³ Isaac named the well Shibah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “oath.” To the present time the town there has the name Beersheba which means “peace treaty well.”

ULB:

³² That same day Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well that they had dug. They said, “We have found water.” ³³ He called the well Shibah, so the name of that city is Beersheba to this day.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [Beersheba](#)

translationNotes:

- **He called the well Shibah** - “So he called the well Shibah.” Translators may add a footnote that says “The name Shibah sounds like the word that means ‘oath.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Beersheba** - Translators may add a footnote saying “Beersheba can mean either ”well of the oath” or “well of seven.” (See note on [21:32](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 26:34-35

UDB:

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. Both of those women were descendants of Heth, not from Isaac's clan. ³⁵ Esau's two wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

ULB:

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old, he took a wife, Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and also Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵ They brought sorrow to Isaac and Rebekah.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Hittite](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Rebekah](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Most of Genesis 26 was about Isaac. These verses are about his older son Esau.
- **forty** - "40" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **he took a wife** - "he married." You can state explicitly that he married two women. AT: "he took two wives" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Judith ... Basemath** - These are the names of Esau's wives. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Beerli ... Elon** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the Hittite** - "the descendant of Heth" or "a descendant of Heth" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **They brought sorrow to Isaac and Rebekah** - Here "they" refers to Judith and Basemath. To make someone sorrowful or miserable is spoken of as if "sorrow" were an object that a person could bring to another person. AT: "They made Isaac and Rebekah sorrowful" or "Isaac and Rebekah were miserable because of them" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 26 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 26 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended or special quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 27:27-29, 39-40, which are quotations.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessing

In the ancient Near East, a father's blessing was very important. This spoken blessing was legally binding. Jacob previously receive the birthright from Esau and was guaranteed the double portion of land and money that was supposed to be inherited by the older son, Esau. In this chapter, Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him Isaac blessing. This means that he is to inherit the promises of the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [birthright](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [promise](#) and [covenant](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 27:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 27:1-2**UDB:**

¹ When Isaac was old, he became almost blind. One day he summoned Esau, his firstborn son, and said to him, “My son?” He replied, “Here I am!” ² Isaac said, “Listen to me. I am very old, and I do not know when I will die.

ULB:

27 ¹ When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau, his older son, and said to him, “My son.” He said to him, “Here I am.” ² He said, “See here, I am old. I do not know the day of my death.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- Esau
- death, die, dead

translationNotes:

- **his eyes were dim** - This speaks about being nearly blind as if the eyes were a lamp and the light has nearly gone out. AT: “he was nearly blind” or “he was almost blind” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **He said to him** - “And Esau replied”
- **Here I am** - “I am here” or “I am listening.” See how you translated this in [22:1](#).
- **He said** - “Then Isaac said”
- **See here** - The phrase “see here” adds emphasis to what follows. AT: “Listen carefully” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **I do not know the day of my death** - It is implied that Isaac knows he will die soon. AT: “I may die any day now” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **death** - This refers to physical death.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:3-4

UDB:

³ So take now your bow and quiver full of arrows and go out into the countryside, and hunt for a wild animal for me. ⁴ Kill one and prepare the kind of tasty meat that I like. Then bring it to me so that after I eat it, I can give you a blessing before I die.”

ULB:

³ Therefore take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. ⁴ Make delicious food for me, the sort that I love, and bring it to me so I can eat it and bless you before I die.”

translationWords:

- [bow and arrow](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Isaac continues giving instructions to his older son Isaac.
- **your weapons** - “your hunting equipment”
- **your quiver** - A quiver is a case for holding arrows. AT: “your quiver of arrows” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **hunt game for me** - “hunt a wild animal for me”
- **Make delicious food for me, the sort that I love** - The word “delicious” refers to something that tastes very good. AT: “Cook for me the tasty meat that I love” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **bless you** - In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ Rebekah was listening as Isaac said that to his son, Esau. So when Esau left the tent to go hunting, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son, Jacob, "Listen to me. I heard your father talking to your brother, Esau, saying, ⁷ 'Go and kill some wild animal and bring it here, and prepare the meat in a tasty way, so that I may eat it. Then before I die I will give you my blessing while Yahweh is listening.'

ULB:

⁵ Now Rebekah heard it when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it back. ⁶ Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son and said, "See here, I heard your father speak to Esau your brother. He said, ⁷ 'Bring me game and make me delicious food, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of Yahweh before my death.'

translationWords:

- [Rebekah](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - The word "now" shows a change of emphasis to Rebekah and Jacob. (See: [Background Information](#)).
- **Rebekah heard it when Isaac spoke to Esau his son** - "Rebekah heard Isaac speaking to his son Esau"
- **Esau went ... bring it back** - The words "So when" can be added to show that Rebekah speaks to Jacob because of what she heard, and she is speaking to him while Esau is gone. AT: "So when Esau went ... bring it back," (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **to Esau his son ... to Jacob her son** - Esau and Jacob were both sons of Isaac and Rebekah. They are called "his son" and "her son" to emphasize that one parent preferred one son over the other son.
- **See here** - The phrase "see here" adds emphasis to what follows. AT: "Listen carefully" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **He said, 'Bring me game and make me delicious food, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of Yahweh before my death'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: He told Esau to 'hunt a wild animal, and to make the tasty meat that he loves.' Then before he dies, Isaac will bless Esau in the presence of Yahweh (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

- **Bring me game** - “Bring me a wild animal that you hunt and kill”
- **make me delicious food** - “cook for me the tasty meat that I love.” See how this was translated in [27:04](#).
- **bless you in the presence of Yahweh** - “bless you before Yahweh”
- **before my death** - “before I die”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ So now, my son, do what I am telling you. ⁹ Go out to the flock and kill two nice young goats and bring the meat to me. Then I will prepare some tasty food for your father, the way he likes it. ¹⁰ Then you can take it to your father, in order that he can eat it, and then he will give you his blessing before he dies.”

ULB:

⁸ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice as I command you. ⁹ Go to the flock, and bring me two good young goats; and I will make delicious food from them for your father, just like he loves. ¹⁰ You will take it to your father, so that he may eat it, so that he may bless you before his death.”

translationWords:

- [obey, obedient, obedience](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Rebekah continues to speak to her younger son Jacob.
- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **obey my voice as I command you** - Rebekah said “my voice” to refer to what she was saying. AT: “obey me and do what I tell you” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **I will make delicious food from them for your father, just like he loves** - The word “delicious” refers to something that tastes very good. See how a similar sentence was translated in [27:4](#).
- **You will take it to your father** - “Then take it to your father”
- **so that he may eat it, so that he may bless you** - “and after he eats it, he will bless you”
- **he may bless you** - The word “bless” refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.
- **before his death** - “before he dies”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 27 General Notes
- **Genesis 27 Translation Questions**

Genesis 27:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "My brother Esau's skin has hair all over it, and my skin is not like that! My skin is smooth! ¹² What will happen if my father touches me? He will realize that I am tricking him, and I will bring a curse on myself, not a blessing!"

ULB:

¹¹ Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "See, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. ¹² Perhaps my father will touch me, and I will seem to him as a deceiver. I will bring a curse upon me and not a blessing."

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)
- [curse, cursed](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **I am a smooth man** - "I am a man with smooth skin" or "I am not hairy"
- **and I will seem to him as a deceiver** - "and he will think that I am a liar" or "he will know that I am deceiving him"
- **I will bring a curse upon me and not a blessing** - Being cursed or blessed is spoken of as if a curse and a blessing are objects that are placed on a person. AT: "Then because of this, he will curse me and not bless me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:13-14

UDB:

¹³ His mother said to him, “If that happens, my son, let the curse be on me. You do what I am telling you. Go and get the goats for me!” ¹⁴ So Jacob went and killed two goats and brought them to his mother. Then his mother prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked.

ULB:

¹³ His mother said to him, “My son, let any curse fall on me. Just obey my voice, and go, bring them to me.” ¹⁴ So Jacob went and got the young goats and brought them to his mother, and his mother made delicious food, just like his father loved.

translationWords:

- [curse, cursed](#)
- [obey, obedient, obedience](#)

translationNotes:

- **My son, let any curse fall on me** - “let your curse be on me, my son.” Being cursed is spoken of as if the curse were on object that is placed on the person. AT: “let your father curse me instead of you, my son” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **obey my voice** - Rebekah said “my voice” to refer to what she was saying. AT: “obey what I tell you” or “obey me” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **bring them to me** - “bring me the young goats”
- **made delicious food, just like his father loved** - The word “delicious” refers to something that tastes very good. See how a similar sentence was translated in [27:4](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:15-17**UDB:**

¹⁵ Then Rebekah took her older son Esau's best clothes that were with her in the tent, and she put them on her younger son Jacob. ¹⁶ She also put the skins of the young goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ Then she put into his hands some bread and the tasty food that she had prepared.

ULB:

¹⁵ Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau, her older son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob, her younger son. ¹⁶ She put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ She put the delicious food and the bread that she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob.

translationWords:

- [Rebekah](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [bread](#)

translationNotes:

- **She put the skins of the young goats on his hands** - The goat skins still had the hair on them.
- **She put the delicious food and the bread that she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob** - "She gave to her son Jacob the delicious food and bread which she had prepared"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ Jacob took it and went to his father and said, “My father!” Isaac replied, “I am here; which of my sons are you?” ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau, your firstborn son. I did what you told me to do. Sit up and eat some of the meat so that you can bless me.”

ULB:

¹⁸ Jacob went to his father and said, “My father.” He said, “Here I am; who are you, my son?” ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you said to me. Now sit up and eat some of my game, that you may bless me.”

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [firstborn](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **He said** - “And his father replied” or “Isaac replied” (UDB)
- **Here I am** - “Yes, I am listening” or “Yes, what is it?” See how you translated this in [22:1](#).
- **I have done as you said to me** - “I have done what you told me to do”
- **some of my game** - The word “game” refers to wild animals that someone hunts and kills. See how “game” was translated in [27:3](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:20-21

UDB:

²⁰ But Isaac asked his son, “My son, how is it that you were able to find and kill an animal so quickly?” Jacob replied, “Because Yahweh, whom you worship, enabled me to be successful.” ²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near to me, my son, so that I can touch you and find out whether you are really my son Esau.”

ULB:

²⁰ Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?” He said, “Because Yahweh your God brought it to me.” ²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near me, so I may touch you, my son, and learn whether you are my true son Esau or not.”

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **He said** - “Jacob replied”
- **brought it to me** - This is an idiom meaning that God caused it to happen. AT: “helped me to succeed while hunting” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **whether you are my true son Esau or not** - “if you are really my son Esau”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:22-23

UDB:

²² So Jacob went close to his father, Isaac. Isaac touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands feel hairy, like the hands of his older brother, Esau.” ²³ Isaac did not recognize him, because he was blind and because Jacob’s hands were hairy, like those of his older brother, Esau. So Isaac got ready to bless him.

ULB:

²² Jacob went over to Isaac his father; and Isaac touched him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” ²³ Isaac did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy, like his brother Esau’s hands, so Isaac blessed him.

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob went over to Isaac his father** - “Jacob approached Isaac his father”
- **The voice is Jacob’s voice** - Isaac is equating Jacob’s voice with Jacob himself. AT: “You sound like Jacob” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **but the hands are the hands of Esau** - Isaac is equating Esau’s hands with Esau himself. AT: “but your hands feel like Esau’s hands” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:24-25

UDB:

²⁴ But first Isaac asked, “Are you really my son Esau?” Jacob replied, “Yes, I am.” ²⁵ Isaac said, “My son, bring me some of the meat that you have cooked, so that I may eat it and then give you my blessing.” So Jacob brought him some, and he ate it. Jacob also brought him some wine, and he drank it.

ULB:

²⁴ He said, “Are you really my son Esau?” He replied, “I am.” ²⁵ Isaac said, “Bring the food to me, and I will eat of your game, so that I may bless you.” Jacob brought the food to him. Isaac ate, and Jacob brought him wine, and he drank.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)

translationNotes:

- **He said** - Isaac asks this question before blessing his son. AT: “But first Isaac asked” (UDB) (See: [Order of Events](#))
- **eat of your game** - The word “game” refers to a wild animal that people hunt and kill. See how “game” was translated in [27:7](#).
- **and he drank** - “and Isaac drank it”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ Then his father, Isaac, said to him, “My son, come here and kiss me.” ²⁷ So Jacob went to him, and his father kissed him on the cheek. Isaac smelled the smell of the clothes Jacob was wearing. They smelled like Esau’s clothes. So he said, “Truly, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that Yahweh has blessed.

ULB:

²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” ²⁷ Jacob came near and kissed him, and he smelled the smell of his clothes and blessed him. He said,

”See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that Yahweh has blessed.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- kiss
- Jacob, Israel
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **he smelled the smell of his clothes and blessed him** - It can be made explicit that the clothes smelled like Esau’s clothes. AT: “he smelled his clothes and they smelled like Esau’s clothes, so Isaac blessed him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **and he smelled** - “and Isaac smelled”
- **the smell** - “the scent”
- **and blessed him** - “and then he blessed him.” This refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.
- **See, the smell of my son** - The word “see” is used as an emphatic figure of speech to mean “it is true.” AT: “Truly, the smell of my son” (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#))
- **that Yahweh has blessed** - Here the word “blessed” means that Yahweh has caused good things to happen to the field and it has become fruitful. AT: “that Yahweh has caused to be very productive” (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 27 General Notes
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:28

UDB:

²⁸ I ask that God will send down to you dew from heaven to water your fields, and cause you to have abundant crops from the soil, and good harvests of grain, and grapes for wine.

ULB:

²⁸ May God give you a portion of the dew of heaven, a portion of the fatness of the earth,
and plenty of grain and new wine.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [grain](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This is Isaac's blessing. He thought he was speaking to Esau, but he was speaking to Jacob.
- **give you** - Here "you" is singular and refers to Jacob. But the blessing would also apply to Jacob's descendants. (See: [Forms of You](#) and [Synecdoche](#))
- **dew of heaven** - "Dew" is drops of water that form on the plants during the night. This can be made explicit in the translation. AT: "night mist from heaven to water your crops" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **fatness of the earth** - Having fertile land is spoken of as if the earth were fat or rich. AT: "good soil for producing crops" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **plenty of grain and new wine** - If "grain" and "wine" are unknown, this can be stated more generally. AT: "plenty of food and drink" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:29**UDB:**

²⁹ I ask that people of many people groups serve you and bow down to you. I ask that you rule over your brothers, and that your mother's descendants also bow down to you. I ask that God curse those who curse you, and bless those who bless you."

ULB:

²⁹ May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you.

Be master over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you.

May every one who curses you be cursed; may every one who blesses you be blessed."

translationWords:

- **people group, peoples, the people, a people**
- **serve, service**
- **nation**
- **bow, bow down**
- **lord, master, sir**
- **curse, cursed**
- **bless, blessed, blessing**

translationNotes:

- **you ... your** - Here these pronouns are singular and refer to Jacob. But the blessing also applies to Jacob's descendants. (See: **Forms of You** and **Synecdoche**)
- **nations bow down** - Here "nations" refers to the people. AT: "people from all nations bow down" (See: **Metonymy**)
- **bow down** - This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. (See: **Symbolic Action**)
- **Be master over your brothers** - "Become a master over your brothers"
- **your brothers ... your mother's sons** - Isaac is speaking this blessing directly to Jacob. But, it also applies to Jacob's descendants who will rule over the descendants of Esau and the descendants of any other of Jacob's brothers that he may have. (See: **Synecdoche**)
- **and may your mother's sons bow down to you** - "and your mother's sons will bow down to you"
- **May every one who curses you be cursed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "May God curse everyone who curses you" (See: **Active or Passive**)

- **may every one who blesses you be blessed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “May God bless everyone who blesses you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ After Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had just left the room where his father was, his older brother, Esau, returned from hunting. ³¹ Esau cooked some tasty meat and brought it to his father. He said to his father, “My father, please sit up and eat some of the meat that I have cooked, so that you can then give me your blessing!”

ULB:

³⁰ As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. ³¹ He also made delicious food and brought it to his father. He said to his father, “Father, get up and eat some of your son’s game, so that you may bless me.”

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Esau](#)

translationNotes:

- **had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father** - “had just left the tent of Isaac his father”
- **delicious food** - “tasty meat that I love.” See how this was translated in [27:3](#).
- **some of your son’s game** - Here “your son’s” was a polite way of Esau referring to his own food he prepared. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **your son’s game** - The word “game” refers to wild animals that people hunt to eat. See how “game” was translated in [27:7](#).
- **bless me** - This refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:32-33**UDB:**

³² His father, Isaac, said to him, “Who are you?” He answered, “I am Esau, your firstborn son!” ³³ Then Isaac began to tremble very violently. He said, “Then who is it that brought me some meat from an animal that he had hunted and killed, and I ate it all? He was here just before you came. I blessed him, and I cannot take back that blessing.”

ULB:

³² Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” He said, “I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.” ³³ Isaac trembled very much and said, “Who was it that hunted this game and brought it to me? I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him. Indeed, he will be blessed.”

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [firstborn](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **said to him** - “said to Esau”
- **Isaac trembled** - “Isaac began to shake”
- **hunted this game** - Game refers to a wild animal that people hunt and kill. See how “game” was translated in [27:7](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:34-35

UDB:

³⁴ When Esau heard those words of his father, he cried loudly. He was very disappointed. He said to his father, “My father, bless me, too!” ³⁵ But his father said, “Your brother came, tricked me, and took your blessing!”

ULB:

³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a very great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me, me also, my father.” ³⁵ Isaac said, “Your brother came here deceitfully and has taken away your blessing.”

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)

translationNotes:

- **he cried with a very great and bitter cry** - Esau’s anguish was similar to the taste of something bitter. AT: “he cried loudly” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **has taken away your blessing** - This is a figure of speech meaning Jacob took what was Esau’s. AT: “I have blessed him instead of you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:36-37

UDB:

³⁶ Esau said, “It is right that his name is Jacob, because he tricked me two times. The first time he took my rights as firstborn, and this time he took my blessing!” Then he asked, “Do you not have any blessing left for me?” ³⁷ Isaac answered and said to Esau, “I have declared that your younger brother will rule over you, and I have declared that all his relatives will serve him. And I have said that God will give him plenty of grain and grapes for wine. So, my son, what can I do for you?”

ULB:

³⁶ Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and, see, now he has taken away my blessing.” Then he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” ³⁷ Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Look, I have made him your master, and I have given to him all his brothers as servants, and I have given him grain and new wine. What more can I do for you, my son?”

translationWords:

- Esau
- Jacob, Israel
- birthright
- bless, blessed, blessing
- lord, master, sir
- servant, slave, slavery
- grain
- wine, wineskin, new wine

translationNotes:

- **Is he not rightly named Jacob?** - Esau uses a question to emphasize his anger at Jacob. AT: “Jacob is certainly the right name for my brother!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Jacob** - Translators may also add a footnote that says: “The name Jacob means ‘he grasps the heel.’ In the original language the name ‘Jacob’ also sounds like the word for ‘he deceives.’”
- **He took ... blessing** - This speaks about a birthright as if it were an object that a person could take away. AT: “He tricked me into giving him the double inheritance that I should receive as firstborn son!” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **now he has taken away my blessing** - This speaks about a blessing as if it were an object that person could take away. AT: “now he has tricked you into blessing him instead of me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

- **Have you not reserved a blessing for me** - Esau knows that his father cannot bless him with the same things that he blessed Jacob. Esau is asking if there is anything left to say to him that Isaac did not say while blessing Jacob.
- **What more can I do for you, my son?** - Isaac uses a question to emphasize that there is nothing else he can do. AT: “There is nothing else I can do for you!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:38**UDB:**

³⁸ Esau said to his father, “My father, do you have only one blessing? My father, bless me, too!” Then Esau cried very loudly.

ULB:

³⁸ Esau said to his father, “Have you not even one blessing for me, my father? Bless me, even me too, my father.” Esau wept loudly.

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **Have you not even one blessing for me, my father** - This can be stated in positive form. “My father, do you have one more blessing for me”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:39-40**UDB:**

³⁹ His father Isaac answered and said to him, "The place where you will live will be far from the fertile soil and from the dew that God sends from heaven to water the fields. ⁴⁰ You will rob and kill people in order to get what you need to live,

and you will be as though you are your brother's slave.

But when you decide to rebel against him, you will free yourself from his control."

ULB:

³⁹ Isaac his father answered and said to him,

"Look, the place where you live will be far from the richness of the earth, away from the dew of the sky above.

⁴⁰ By your sword you will live, and you will serve your brother.

But when you rebel, you will shake his yoke from off your neck."

translationWords:

- Isaac
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- sword
- serve, service
- rebel, rebellious, rebellion
- yoke

translationNotes:

- **said to him** - "said to Esau"
- **Look** - This adds emphasis to what Isaac says next. AT: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you" (See: **Idiom**)
- **far from the richness of the earth** - This is a figure of speech referring to the earth's fertility. AT: "far from the fertile soil" (See: **Metaphor**)
- **your ... you** - In 27:39-40 these pronouns are singular and refer to Esau, but what Isaac says also applies to Esau's descendants (See: **Synecdoche**).
- **dew of the sky above** - "Dew" is drops of water that form on the plants during the night. This can be made explicit in the translation. AT: "the night mist from the sky to water your crops" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)

- **By your sword you will live** - Here “sword” stands for violence. AT: “You will rob and kill people in order to get what you need to live” (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **you will shake his yoke from off your neck** - This speaks about someone having a master as if the master’s control over the person were a yoke that the person had to carry. AT: “you will free yourself from his control” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:41-42

UDB:

⁴¹ Because of the blessing that his father had given to Jacob, Esau hated his brother. Esau said to himself, “After my father dies and we finish mourning for him, I will kill Jacob!” ⁴² But Rebekah found out what her older son, Esau, was thinking. So she summoned her younger son, Jacob, and said to him, “Listen to me. Your older brother, Esau, is comforting himself by planning to kill you, to get revenge for you tricking your father.

ULB:

⁴¹ Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing that his father had given him. Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are near; after that I will kill my brother Jacob.” ⁴² The words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son and said to him, “See, your brother Esau is consoling himself about you by planning to kill you.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [heart](#)
- [Rebekah](#)

translationNotes:

- **Esau said in his heart** - Here “heart” stands for Esau himself. AT: “Esau said to himself” (UDB) (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **days of mourning for my father are near** - This refers to a number of days a person grieves when a family member dies.
- **The words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah** - Here “words” stands for what Esau said. This can be stated in active form. AT: “Someone told Rebekah about Esau’s plan” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **See** - “Listen” or “Pay attention”
- **is consoling himself** - “is making himself feel better”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 27:43-45

UDB:

⁴³ So now, my son, listen carefully to what I am telling you. Escape quickly and go and stay with my brother Laban, in Haran. ⁴⁴ Stay with him a while, until your older brother is no longer angry. ⁴⁵ When he forgets what you did to him, I will send a message to you to tell you to return from there. If Esau killed you, then others would kill him, and then both my sons would die at the same time!”

ULB:

⁴³ Now therefore, my son, obey me and flee to Laban, my brother, in Haran. ⁴⁴ Stay with him for a while, until your brother’s fury subsides, ⁴⁵ until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and bring you back from there. Why should I lose you both in one day?

translationWords:

- [obey, obedient, obedience](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [Haran](#)
- [biblical time: day](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **flee to Laban** - “leave here quickly and go to Laban”
- **for a while** - “for a period of time”
- **until your brother’s fury subsides** - “until you brother calms down”
- **until your brother’s anger turns away from you** - No longer being angry is spoken of as if the anger turns to a different direction away from the person. AT: “until he is no longer angry with you” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Why should I lose you both in one day?** - Rebekah uses a question to emphasize her concern. AT: “I do not want to lose both of you in one day!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **I lose you both in one day** - It is implied that if Esau kills Jacob, then they will execute Esau as a murderer. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **I lose** - This is a polite way of referring to her sons dying. (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 27 General Notes
- **Genesis 27 Translation Questions**

Genesis 27:46

UDB:

⁴⁶ Rebekah then said to Isaac, “These foreign women whom Esau has married, who are descendants of Heth, are making my life miserable. If Jacob also marries a woman from the descendants of Heth in this area, my life will be worthless!”

ULB:

⁴⁶ Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am weary of life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes one of the daughters of Heth as a wife, like these women, some of the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **I am weary of life** - Rebekah is exaggerating to emphasize how upset she is about the Hittite women that Esau married. AT: “I am terribly upset” (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **the daughters of Heth** - “these Hittite women” or “descendants of Heth”
- **like these women, some of the daughters of the land** - The phrase “daughters of the land” means the local females. AT: “like these women who live in this land” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **what good will my life be to me?** - Rebekah uses a question to emphasize how upset she would be if Jacob marries a Hittite woman. AT: “My life will be awful!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 27 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 27 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Even though Jacob tricked his father in order to receive Esau's blessing, the chapter repeats the blessing, ensuring he inherits the blessings promised to Abraham. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#) and [promise](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob's dream

Jacob had a dream or received a vision. The purpose of this dream is to show that, despite Jacob's sin, God is giving Abraham's covenant promises to Jacob and his descendants. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [covenant](#) and [promise](#))

Bethel

This was an important city for Abraham and his descendants. It is possible that there is some theological significance to the city of Bethel.

Links:

- [Genesis 28:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 28:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Then Isaac summoned Jacob and gave him a blessing. He told him this: "Do not marry a woman from the women of the Canaanite people. ² Instead, go right away to Paddan Aram, to the house of your mother's father Bethuel. Ask one of the daughters of your mother's brother Laban to marry you.

ULB:

28 ¹ Isaac called Jacob, blessed him, and commanded him, "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. ² Arise, go to Paddan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take a wife from there, one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

translationWords:

- Isaac
- Jacob, Israel
- bless, blessed, blessing
- command, to command, commandment
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Paddan Aram
- house
- Bethuel
- Laban

translationNotes:

- **You must not take** - "Do not take"
- **Arise, go** - "Go right away"
- **Paddan Aram** - This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [25:20](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **house of** - This refers to a person's descendants or other relatives. AT: "family" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Bethuel** - Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [22:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **your mother's father** - "your grandfather"
- **one of the daughters** - "from the daughters"
- **your mother's brother** - "your uncle"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:3-4**UDB:**

³ I will pray that God Almighty bless you, and enable you to have many descendants, in order that they will become many different people groups. ⁴ I also will pray that he bless you and your descendants by enabling you to possess the land in which you are now living as a foreigner, the land that God promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.”

ULB:

³ May God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and multiply you, so that you may become a multitude of peoples. ⁴ May he give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your descendants after you, that you may inherit the land where you have been living, which God gave to Abraham.”

translationWords:

- God
- Almighty
- fruit, fruitful
- multiply
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- Abraham, Abram
- descendant, descended from
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Isaac continues speaking to Jacob
- **make you fruitful and multiply you** - The word “multiply” explains how God would make Jacob “fruitful.” AT: “give you many children and descendants” (See: **Doublet**)
- **May he give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your descendants after you** - This speaks about blessing someone as if a blessing were an object that a person can give. The abstract noun “the blessing” can be stated as “bless.” AT: “May God bless you and your descendants as he blessed Abraham” or “May God give to you and your descendants what he promised to Abraham” (See: **Metaphor** and **Abstract Nouns**)
- **that you may inherit the land** - God giving the land of Canaan to Jacob and his descendants is spoken of as if a child were inheriting money or possessions from his father. (See: **Metaphor**)
- **the land where you have been living** - “the land where you have been staying”
- **which God gave to Abraham** - “which God promised to Abraham”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:5**UDB:**

⁵ So Isaac sent Jacob to Paddan Aram to live with Rebekah's brother Laban son of Bethuel, who belonged to the people group of the Arameans. (It was this Rebekah who would later give birth to Jacob and Esau.)

ULB:

⁵ So Isaac sent Jacob away. Jacob went to Paddan Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Aram, Aramean, Aramaic](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [Esau](#)

translationNotes:

- **Paddan Aram** - This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [25:20](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Bethuel** - Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [22:22](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Esau found out that his father Isaac had blessed Jacob and then sent him to Paddan Aram. He also found out that when his father blessed Jacob, he told him, “Do not marry a woman from the Canaanite people,” ⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother, and had gone to Paddan Aram.

ULB:

⁶ Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan Aram, to take a wife from there. He also saw that Isaac had blessed him and given him a command, saying, “You must not take a wife from the women of Canaan.” ⁷ Esau also saw that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother, and had gone to Paddan Aram.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [obey, obedient, obedience](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The story changes from Jacob to Esau
- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Esau. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Paddan Aram** - This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [25:20](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **to take a wife** - “to take a wife for himself”
- **He also saw that Isaac had blessed him** - “Esau also saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob”
- **You must not take** - “Do not take”
- **women of Canaan** - “daughters of Canaan” or “Canaanite women”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 28 General Notes
- **Genesis 28 Translation Questions**

Genesis 28:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ Esau also realized that his father Isaac did not approve of women from the Canaan people. ⁹ Because of that, Esau went to see his relative Ishmael and married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. Mahalath was the sister of Nabaioth and the granddaughter of Abraham.

ULB:

⁸ Esau saw that the women of Canaan did not please Isaac his father. ⁹ So he went to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife.

translationWords:

- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Ishmael](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This continues the background information about Esau.
- **Esau saw** - "Esau realized"
- **the women of Canaan did not please Isaac his father** - "his father Isaac did not approve of the women of Canaan"
- **women of Canaan** - "daughters of Canaan" or "the Canaanite women"
- **So** - "Because of that"
- **besides the wives that he had** - "in addition to the wives that he already had"
- **Mahalath** - This is the name of one of Ishmael's daughters. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Nebaioth** - This is the name of one of Ishmael's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:10-11**UDB:**

¹⁰ Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and started to go toward Haran. ¹¹ When he arrived at a certain place, he stopped there because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones there and put it under his head to use as a pillow. Then he lay down and slept there.

ULB:

¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ He came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones in that place, put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

translationWords:

- [Beersheba](#)
- [Haran](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The story switches back to Jacob
- **He came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set** - “He came to a certain place and, because the sun had set, he decided to stay for the night”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:12-13**UDB:**

¹² While he was sleeping, he had a dream in which he saw a stairway. The bottom of the stairway was on the earth and the top was in the sky. Jacob also saw that God's angels were going up and down the stairway. ¹³ Then he saw Yahweh standing at the top of the stairway, saying "I am Yahweh God, whom your grandfather Abraham worshiped and whom Isaac worships. I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying.

ULB:

¹² He dreamed and saw a stairway set up on the earth. Its top reached to heaven and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ Behold, Yahweh stood above it and said, "I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are lying, I will give to you and to your descendants.

translationWords:

- dream
- heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly
- angel, archangel
- God
- Yahweh
- Abraham, Abram
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Isaac
- descendant, descended from

translationNotes:

- **He dreamed** - "Jacob had a dream"
- **set up on the earth** - "with the bottom of it touching the ground"
- **reached to heaven** - This refers to the place where God lives.
- **Behold** - The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **Yahweh stood above it** - Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh was standing at the top of the stairway" or 2) "Yahweh was standing next to Jacob"
- **Abraham your father** - Here "father" means "ancestor." AT: "Abraham your ancestor" or "Abraham your forefather"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Your descendants will be as numerous as the particles of dust that are on the earth, and their territory will be very large. It will extend in all directions, to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. I will bless all the clans and people groups on earth through you and your descendants. ¹⁵ I will help you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you; I will do for you all that I have promised to do.”

ULB:

¹⁴ Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread far out to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south. Through you and through your descendants will all the families of the earth be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you, and I will keep you wherever you go. I will bring you into this land again; for I will not leave you. I will do all that I have promised to you.”

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- bless, blessed, blessing
- promise

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - God continues to talk to Jacob in a dream.
- **Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth** - God compares Jacob’s descendants to the dust of the earth to emphasize their huge number. AT: “You will have more descendants than you can count” (See: [Simile](#))
- **and you will spread far out to the west** - Here the word “you” is singular but refers to Jacob’s descendants. It only speaks of Jacob since he is the leader of the family. AT: “and your descendants will spread out to the west” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **you will spread far out** - This means the people will extend the borders of their land and occupy more territory.
- **to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south** - This phrases are used together to mean “all directions.” AT: “in all directions” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **Through you and through your descendants will all the families of the earth be blessed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “I will bless all families on the earth through you and your descendants” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Behold** - This adds emphasis to what is said next. AT: “Look” or “Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

- **for I will not leave you. I will do all** - “for I will not leave you until I have done all”
- **I will keep you** - “I will keep you safe” or “I will protect you”
- **I will bring you into this land again** - “I will bring you back to this land”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ During the night, when Jacob woke up from sleeping, he thought, “Surely Yahweh is in this place, and until now I was not aware of it!” ¹⁷ He was afraid, and he said, “This place is terrifying! This is surely the place where God lives, and this is the entrance to heaven!”

ULB:

¹⁶ Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and he said, “Surely Yahweh is in this place, and I did not know it.”
¹⁷ He was afraid and said, “How terrifying is this place! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven.”

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [terror, terrify](#)
- [house of God, Yahweh’s house](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)
- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)

translationNotes:

- **awoke out of his sleep** - “woke up from his sleep”
- **the house of God ... the gate of heaven** - The phrase “the gate of heaven” explains that this place is the entrance to “the house of God” and “the entrance to where God lives.” (See: [Doublet](#))
- **This is the gate of heaven** - This speaks about the entrance to the place where God lives as if it were a literal kingdom that had a gate that someone has to open to let people in. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ The next morning Jacob got up, took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up on its end to mark the place where God had appeared to him. He poured some olive oil on top of the stone to set it apart for God. ¹⁹ He named that place Bethel, which means “house of God.” Previously its name was Luz.

ULB:

¹⁸ Jacob arose early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head. He set it up as a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it. ¹⁹ He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city originally was Luz.

translationWords:

- [pillar, column](#)
- [oil](#)
- [Bethel](#)

translationNotes:

- **pillar** - This is a memorial pillar, that is, simply a large stone or boulder set up on its end.
- **poured oil upon the top of it** - This action symbolizes that Jacob is dedicating the pillar to God. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: “poured oil on the top of it in order to dedicate the pillar to God” (See: [Symbolic Action](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Bethel** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Bethel means ‘house of God.’”
- **Luz** - This is the name of a city. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 28:20-22**UDB:**

²⁰ Jacob solemnly promised God, saying, "If you will help me and protect me while I am taking this journey, and if you give me enough food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹ in order that I can later return safely to my father's house, then you, Yahweh, will be the God that I will worship. ²² This stone that I have set up will mark the place where you appeared to me. And I will give back to you a tenth of everything that you give to me."

ULB:

²⁰ Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will protect me on this road on which I am walking, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to wear, ²¹ so that I return safely to my father's house, then Yahweh will be my God. ²² Then this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be a sacred stone. From everything that you give me, I will surely give a tenth back to you."

translationWords:

- **vow**
- **Yahweh**
- **God**
- **bread**
- **pillar, column**
- **sacred**
- **tenth, tithe**

translationNotes:

- **vowed a vow** - "made a vow" or "solemnly promised God"
- **If God will ... then Yahweh will be my God** - Jacob is speaking to God in the third person. This can be stated in the second person. AT: "If you will ... then you, Yahweh, will be the God that I will worship" (UDB) (See: **First, Second or Third Person**)
- **on this road on which I am walking** - This stands for Jacob's journey to find a wife and to return home. AT: "on this journey" (See: **Metonymy**)
- **will give me bread to eat** - Here "bread" stands for food in general. (See: **Synecdoche**)
- **to my father's house** - Here "house" stands for Jacob's family. AT: "to my father and the rest of my family" (See: **Metonymy**)
- **a sacred stone** - This means that the stone will mark the place where God appeared to him and it will be a place where people can worship God. AT: "God's house" or "God's place"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 28 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 28 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the conflict between Jacob's wives, Rachel and Leah. This account continues into the next chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Shepherds

Although the exact reasoning for the shepherds unwillingness to give water to the sheep is unknown, it is probable they were being lazy. The actions of these shepherd contrast Jacob's actions.

Kissing

It was common in the ancient Near East for relatives to greet each other with a kiss. There was nothing sexual about this type of kissing.

Marriage

It was customary in the ancient Near East for a man to work for a woman's father in order to earn the right to marry her. It is unknown how common it was for a father to have his younger daughter marry before an older daughter. It was also sinful for Jacob to marry more than one wife. (See: [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 29:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 29:1-3**UDB:**

¹ Jacob continued on the road, and he reached the land that was east of the land of Canaan. ² There he saw a well in a field, and three flocks of sheep were lying near the well. It was the well from which shepherds normally got water for their sheep. There was a large stone covering the top of the well. ³ When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would work together to roll the stone away from the top of the well and get water for the sheep. When they finished doing that, they would put the stone back in its place over the top of the well.

ULB:

29 ¹ Then Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east. ² As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and, behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there by it. For out of that well they would water the flocks, and the stone over the well's mouth was large. ³ When all the flocks had gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the well's mouth and water the sheep, and then put the stone again over the well's mouth, back in its place.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)

translationNotes:

- **the people of the east** - This means the people of Paddan Aram, which is a land east of the land of Canaan.
- **and, behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there by it** - The word “behold” marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
- **For out of that well** - “For from that well.” This phrase marks a change from the story to background information about how the shepherds watered the flocks. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **they would water** - “the shepherds would water” or “those taking care of the sheep would water”
- **the well's mouth** - Here “mouth” is a way of referring to an opening. AT: “the opening of the well” (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:4-6

UDB:

⁴ On that day, Jacob asked the shepherds who were sitting there, “Where are you from?” They replied, “We are from the city of Haran.” ⁵ He asked them, “Do you know Laban, the grandson of Nahor?” They replied, “Yes, we know him.” ⁶ Jacob asked them, “Is Laban well?” They replied, “Yes, he is well. Look! Here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep!”

ULB:

⁴ Jacob said to them, “My brothers, where are you from?” They replied, “We are from Haran.” ⁵ He said to them, “Do you know Laban son of Nahor?” They said, “We know him.” ⁶ He said to them, “Is he well?” They said, “He is well, and, look there, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep.”

translationWords:

- [brother](#)
- [Haran](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [son, son of](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob said to them** - “Jacob said to the shepherds”
- **My brothers** - This is a polite way to greet a stranger.
- **Laban son of Nahor** - Here “son” refers to a male descendant. Another possible meaning is “Laban the grandson of Nahor.” (UDB)
- **and, look there, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep** - “Now look! Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ Jacob said, “But the sun is still high in the sky. It is not time for the flocks to be gathered for nighttime. Why do you not give the sheep some water and then take them back to graze in the pastures?” ⁸ They replied, “No, we cannot do that until all the flocks are gathered here and the stone is removed from the top of the well. After that, we will give water to the sheep.”

ULB:

⁷ Jacob said, “See, it is the middle of the day. It is not the time for the flocks to be gathered together. You should water the sheep and then go and let them graze.” ⁸ They said, “We cannot water them until all the flocks are gathered together. The men will then roll the stone from the well’s mouth, and we will water the sheep.”

translationWords:

- [flock, herd](#)

translationNotes:

- **it is the middle of the day** - “the sun is still high in the sky” (UDB) or “the sun is still shining brightly”
- **for the flocks to be gathered together** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “for you to gather the flocks” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **to be gathered together** - This means to gather them together inside a fence for them to stay for the night. The full meaning of this can be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **let them graze** - “let them eat grass in the field”
- **We cannot water them** - “We have to wait to water them”. This has to do with timing, not permission.
- **until all the flocks are gathered together** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “until the other shepherds gather their flocks” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **from the well’s mouth** - Here “mouth” is way of referring to an opening. AT: “from the well” or “from the opening of the well” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **and we will water the sheep** - “then we will water the sheep”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 29 Translation Questions

Genesis 29:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. She was the one who took care of her father's sheep. ¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and Laban's sheep, he went over and by himself rolled away the stone that covered the top of the well, and he got water for his uncle's sheep.

ULB:

⁹ While Jacob was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was tending them. ¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, Jacob came over, rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [flock, herd](#)

translationNotes:

- **his mother's brother** - "his uncle"
- **the well's mouth** - Here "mouth" is a way of referring to an opening. AT: "the well" or "the opening of the well" (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel on the cheek, and he cried loudly because he was so happy. ¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was one of her father's relatives, the son of her aunt Rebekah. So she ran and told that to her father.

ULB:

¹¹ Jacob kissed Rachel and wept loudly. ¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative, and that he was Rebekah's son. Then she ran and told her father.

translationWords:

- [kiss](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [son, son of](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob kissed Rachel** - In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. However, it is normally done between men. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.
- **wept loudly** - Jacob weeps because he is so happy. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **her father's relative** - "related to her father"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:13-14

UDB:

¹³ As soon as Laban heard that Jacob, his sister's son, was there, he ran to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him on the cheek. Then he brought him to his home, and then Jacob told him all that had happened to him. ¹⁴ Then Laban said to him, "Truly, you are part of my family!"

Jacob stayed there and worked for Laban for a month.

ULB:

¹³ When Laban heard the news about Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, embraced him, kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things. ¹⁴ Laban said to him, "You are indeed my bone and my flesh." Then Jacob stayed with him for about one month.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [kiss](#)
- [biblical time: month](#)

translationNotes:

- **his sister's son** - "his nephew"
- **embraced him** - "hugged him"
- **kissed him** - In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. However, it is normally done between men. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.
- **Jacob told Laban all these things** - "then Jacob told Laban everything he told Rachel"
- **my bone and my flesh** - This phrase means they are directly related. AT: "my relative" or "a member of my family" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:15-18

UDB:

¹⁵ Then Laban said to him “You should not work for me for nothing just because you are a relative of mine! Tell me how much you want me to pay you.” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The older one was named Leah, and the younger one was named Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel had a very attractive figure and was beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel, and he said, “I will work for you for seven years. That will be my payment for you giving me permission to marry your younger daughter, Rachel.”

ULB:

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, “Should you serve me for nothing because you are my relative? Tell me, what will your wages be?” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah’s eyes were tender, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, “I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter.”

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- Leah
- Rachel
- love
- biblical time: year

translationNotes:

- **Should you serve me for nothing ... my relative?** - Laban uses a question to emphasize that he should pay Jacob for working for him. The question can be translated as a statement. This can also be stated in positive form. AT: “It is certainly right that I should pay you for working for me even though you are my relative.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Litotes](#))
- **Now Laban had** - The word “now” is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Laban and his daughters. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Leah’s eyes were tender** - Possible meanings are 1) “Leah’s eyes were pretty” or 2) “Leah’s eyes were plain”
- **Jacob loved Rachel** - Here the word “loved” refers to a romantic attraction between a man and a woman.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ Laban replied, “It is better for me to let you marry her than for her to marry some other man! You should stay here with us.” ²⁰ So Jacob worked for Laban for seven years to get Rachel, but to him it seemed like it was only a few days, because he loved her so much.

ULB:

¹⁹ Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you, than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me.” ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him only a few days, for the love he had for her.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [biblical time: day](#)

translationNotes:

- **than that I should give her to another man** - “rather than give her to another man”
- **and they seemed to him only a few days** - “but the time seemed to him to be only a few days”
- **for the love he had for her** - “on account of the love he had for her” or “because of his love for her”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:21-22

UDB:

²¹ After the seven years were ended, Jacob said to Laban, “Let me marry Rachel now, because the time we agreed upon for me to work for you has ended, and I want to marry her.” ²² So Laban gathered together all the people who lived in that area and made a feast.

ULB:

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my days have been completed—so that I may marry her!” ²² So Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [feast](#)

translationNotes:

- **Give me my wife, for my days have been completed—so that I may marry her!** - Here “days” stands for a longer period of time. The phrase “have been completed” can be stated in active form. The statement is emphatic. AT: “Give me Rachel so that I may marry her, for I have worked seven years for you!” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **made a feast** - “prepared a wedding feast.” Most likely Laban had others prepare the feast. AT: “had others prepare a wedding feast” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:23-25

UDB:

²³ But that evening, instead of taking Rachel to Jacob, Laban took his older daughter, Leah, to him. But because it was already dark, he could not see that it was Leah and not Rachel, and he slept with her. ²⁴ (Laban had already given his slave girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.)

²⁵ The next morning, Jacob was shocked to see that it was Leah who was with him! So he went to Laban and told him very angrily, “What you have done to me is disgusting! I worked for you to get Rachel, did I not? So why did you deceive me?”

ULB:

²³ In the evening, Laban took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob, who slept with her. ²⁴ Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah, to be her servant. ²⁵ In the morning, behold, it was Leah! Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve you for Rachel? Why then have you tricked me?”

translationWords:

- Leah
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking
- servant, slave, slavery

translationNotes:

- **who slept with her** - It is implied that Jacob did not know he was with Leah because it was dark and he could not see. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Laban gave his female servant Zilpah ... her servant** - Here the author gives background information about Laban giving Zilpah to Leah. Most likely he gave Zilpah to Leah before the wedding. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah’s female servant. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **behold, it was Leah** - “Jacob was surprised to see it was Leah in bed with him.” The word “behold” here shows that Jacob was surprised by what he saw.
- **What is this you have done to me?** - Jacob uses a question to express his anger and surprise. AT: “I cannot believe you did this to me!” This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Did I not serve you for Rachel?** - Jacob uses these questions to express his hurt that Laban had tricked him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: “I served you for seven years to marry Rachel!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ Laban replied, "In this land, it is not our custom to give a younger daughter to be married before we let someone marry our firstborn daughter. ²⁷ After we finish this week of celebration, we will let you marry the younger one also. But in return, you must pay for Rachel by working for me for another seven years."

ULB:

²⁶ Laban said, "It is not our custom to give the younger daughter before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the bridal week of this daughter, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years."

translationWords:

- [firstborn](#)

translationNotes:

- **It is not our custom to give** - "In our family we do not give"
- **Complete the bridal week of this daughter** - "Finish celebrating Leah's bridal week"
- **and we will give you the other also** - The full meaning can be made explicit. AT: "and next week we will give you Rachel also" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:28-30

UDB:

²⁸ So that is what Jacob did. After the week of celebration was ended, Laban gave him his daughter, Rachel, to be his wife. ²⁹ Laban gave his slave girl, Bilhah, to Rachel to be her servant. ³⁰ Jacob married Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah. He worked for Laban for another seven years.

ULB:

²⁸ Jacob did so, and completed Leah's week. Then Laban gave him Rachel his daughter as his wife also. ²⁹ Laban also gave Bilhah to his daughter Rachel, to be her servant. ³⁰ So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, but he loved Rachel more than Leah. So Jacob served Laban for seven more years.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Leah](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [love](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob did so, and completed Leah's week** - "And Jacob did what Laban asked, and finished celebrating Leah's bridal week"
- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel's female servant. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Jacob slept with Rachel** - This is a polite way to say that they had marital relations. AT: "Jacob married Rachel" (UDB) (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **he loved Rachel** - This refers to the romantic love between a man and a woman.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:31-32

UDB:

³¹ When Yahweh saw that Jacob did not love Leah very much, he enabled her to become pregnant. But Rachel was not able to become pregnant. ³² Leah gave birth to a son, whom she named Reuben. She said, “Yahweh has seen that I was miserable, and because of that he has given me a son. Now, surely my husband will love me for giving birth to a son for him.”

ULB:

³¹ Yahweh saw that Leah was not loved, so he opened her womb, but Rachel was childless. ³² Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben. For she said, “Because Yahweh has looked upon my affliction; surely now my husband will love me.”

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- love
- womb
- conceive, conception
- Reuben
- afflict, affliction

translationNotes:

- **Leah was not loved** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “Jacob did not love Leah” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **not loved** - This is an exaggeration to emphasize that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. AT: “loved less than Rachel” (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **so he opened her womb** - God causing Leah to be able to become pregnant is spoken of as if God is opening her womb. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **was childless** - “was not able to become pregnant”
- **Leah conceived and bore a son** - “Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son”
- **she called his name Reuben** - Translators may also add a footnote that says: “The name Reuben means ‘See, a son.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Yahweh has looked upon my affliction** - Leah was experiencing emotional pain because Jacob had rejected her. The abstract noun “affliction” can be stated as a verb. AT: “Yahweh saw that I was suffering” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:33-34

UDB:

³³ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, “Because Yahweh has heard that my husband does not love me, he has given me this son, too.” So she named him Simeon, which means “someone who hears.” ³⁴ Later she became pregnant again, and gave birth to another son. She said, “Now, finally, my husband will hold me close to him.” So she named him Levi, which means “hold close.”

ULB:

³³ Then she conceived again and bore a son. She said, “Because Yahweh has heard that I am unloved, he has therefore given me this son also,” and she called his name Simeon. ³⁴ Then she conceived again and bore a son. She said, “Now this time will my husband be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore his name was called Levi.

translationWords:

- [conceive, conception](#)
- [Simeon](#)
- [Levite, Levi](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then she conceived** - “Then Leah became pregnant”
- **bore a son** - “gave birth to a son”
- **Yahweh has heard that I am unloved** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “Yahweh has heard that my husband does not love me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **she called his name Simeon** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Simeon means ‘heard.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **will my husband be attached to me** - “my husband will embrace me”
- **I have borne him three sons** - “I have given birth to three sons for him”
- **his name was called Levi** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Levi means ‘attached.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 29:35**UDB:**

³⁵ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, “This time I will praise Yahweh,” so she called his name Judah. After that, she did not give birth to any more children.

ULB:

³⁵ She conceived again and bore a son. She said, “This time I will praise Yahweh.” Therefore she called his name Judah; then she stopped having children.

translationWords:

- [praise](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Judah](#)

translationNotes:

- **She conceived again** - “Leah became pregnant again”
- **bore a son** - “gave birth to a son”
- **she called his name Judah** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Judah means ‘praise.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 29 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 29 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the story of the conflict between Rachel and Leah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Women and their children

In the ancient Near East, it was important for a married woman to have many children. If a woman did not have many children, people believed it brought shame upon her. This is one of the reasons why Rachel and Leah were always jealous of each other. (See: [jealous](#), [jealousy](#))

Speckled and Spotted

Speckled and spotted sheep were considered to be imperfect. Therefore, they were considered to be much less valuable than the spotless sheep. Despite Jacob's fair offer, Laban once again tried to cheat him out of something he deserved. Jacob anticipated Laban's cheating.

Links:

- [Genesis 30:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 30:1-2

UDB:

¹ Rachel realized that she was not becoming pregnant at all. So she became jealous of her older sister, Leah, because Leah had given birth to four sons. She said to Jacob, “Make me pregnant so I can have children. If you do not do that, I will die!” ² Jacob became angry with Rachel and said, “I am not God! He is the one who has prevented you from becoming pregnant!”

ULB:

30 ¹ When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister. She said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I will die.” ² Jacob’s anger burned against Rachel. He said, “Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?”

translationWords:

- [Rachel](#)
- [envy, covet](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children** - “When Rachel realized that she was unable to become pregnant”
- **I will die** - Rachel is using hyperbole to show how upset she is about not having children. AT: “I will feel completely worthless” (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **Give me children** - “Cause me to become pregnant”
- **Jacob’s anger burned against Rachel** - Jacob’s anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. AT: “Jacob was very angry with Rachel” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?** - This is a rhetorical question that Jacob uses to scold Rachel. It can be translated as a statement. AT: “I am not God! I am not the one who is preventing you from having children!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:3-4

UDB:

³ Then she said, “Look, here is my slave, Bilhah. Sleep with her so that she will have children in my place. In that way I will have legal children.” ⁴ So she gave him her slave, Bilhah, to be another wife for him, and Jacob slept with her.

ULB:

³ She said, “See, there is my servant Bilhah. Sleep with her, so she might give birth to children on my knees, and I will have children by her.” ⁴ So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob slept with her.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **She said** - “Rachel said”
- **See** - “Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you.” This adds emphasis to what Rachel says next.
- **there is my servant Bilhah ... I will have children by her** - At that time, this was an acceptable way for a barren woman to have children that would legally belong to her. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel’s female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#).
- **on my knees** - This is a way of saying that the child that Bilhah gives birth to will belong to Rachel. AT: “for me” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **I will have children by her** - “and in this way she will cause me to have children”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:5-6

UDB:

⁵ She became pregnant and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ Rachel said, “God gave me justice. He has heard me when I prayed to him, and his justice was to give me a son.” She named him Dan, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “he gives me justice.”

ULB:

⁵ Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ Then Rachel said, “God has judged in my favor. He has listened to my prayer and given me a son.” For this reason she called his name Dan.

translationWords:

- [conceive, conception](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [God](#)
- [Dan](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel’s female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#).
- **bore Jacob a son** - “gave birth to a son for Jacob”
- **she called his name** - “Rachel gave him the name”
- **called his name Dan** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Dan means ‘he judged.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:7-8

UDB:

⁷ Later, Rachel's slave Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to another son for Jacob. ⁸ Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle to have children like my older sister, but truly I have a son." So she named him Naphtali, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "struggle."

ULB:

⁷ Bilhah, Rachel's servant, conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister and have prevailed." She called his name Naphtali.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Naphtali](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bilhah ... conceived again** - "Bilhah ... became pregnant again"
- **and bore Jacob a second son** - "and gave birth to a second son for Jacob"
- **With mighty wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister** - The phrase "wrestlings have I wrestled" is an idiom used for emphasis. It is also a metaphor that speaks of Rachel's attempts to have a child like her sister as if she were having a physical fight with Leah. AT: "I have had a great struggle to have children like my older sister, Leah" (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#) and [Metaphor](#))
- **and have prevailed** - "and I have won" or "I have succeeded"
- **called his name Naphtali** - Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Naphtali means 'my struggle.'"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ When Leah realized that she was not having any more children, she took her slave, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob to be another wife for him. ¹⁰ Zilpah soon became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Jacob. ¹¹ Leah said, “I am truly fortunate!” So she named him Gad, which means “fortunate.”

ULB:

⁹ When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took Zilpah, her servant, and gave her to Jacob as a wife. ¹⁰ Zilpah, Leah’s servant, bore Jacob a son. ¹¹ Leah said, “This is fortunate!” so she called his name Gad.

translationWords:

- Leah
- servant, slave, slavery
- Gad

translationNotes:

- **When Leah saw that** - “When Leah became aware that”
- **she took Zilpah, her servant, and gave her to Jacob as a wife** - “she gave Zilpah, her servant, to Jacob as a wife”
- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah’s female servant. See how you translated this in [29:24](#).
- **bore Jacob a son** - “gave birth to a son for Jacob”
- **This is fortunate!** - “How fortunate!” or “What good luck!”
- **called his name Gad** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Gad means ‘fortunate.’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:12-13

UDB:

¹² Later Leah's slave, Zilpah, gave birth to another son for Jacob. ¹³ Leah said, "Now I am very happy, and people will call me happy." So she named him Asher, which means "happy."

ULB:

¹² Then Zilpah, Leah's servant, bore Jacob a second son. ¹³ Leah said, "I am happy! For the daughters will call me happy." So she called his name Asher.

translationWords:

- [Asher](#)

translationNotes:

- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:24](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **bore Jacob a second son** - "gave birth to a second son for Jacob"
- **I am happy!** - "How blessed I am!" or "How happy I am!"
- **the daughters** - "the women" or "the young women"
- **called his name Asher** - Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Asher means 'happy.'" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ During the time when they were harvesting wheat, Reuben went out into the fields and saw some mandrakes. He brought some of them to his mother Leah. But Rachel saw them and said to Leah, “Please give me some of those plants that your son brought to you!” ¹⁵ But Leah said to her, “No! It was bad that you stole my husband! Now are you going to take my son’s mandrake plants?” So Rachel said, “All right, Jacob can sleep with you tonight, if you give me some of your son’s mandrake plants.” So Leah agreed with Rachel.

ULB:

¹⁴ Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field. He brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, “Give me some of your son’s mandrakes.” ¹⁵ Leah said to her, “Is it a small matter to you, that you have taken away my husband? Do you now want to take away my son’s mandrakes, too?” Rachel said, “Then he will sleep with you tonight, in exchange for your son’s mandrakes.”

translationWords:

- Reuben
- biblical time: day
- wheat
- harvest
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

T

translationNotes:

- **Reuben went** - “Reuben went out”
- **in the days of wheat harvest** - Here the phrase “in the days of” is an idiom that refers to the season or time of year. AT: “at the time of year of the wheat harvest” or “during the wheat harvest” (See: **Idiom**)
- **mandrakes** - This is a fruit that was said to increase fertility and the desire to sleep with one’s lover. AT: “love fruit” (See: **Translate Unknowns**)
- **Is it a small matter to you ... my husband?** - “Do you not care ... my husband?” This is a rhetorical question used to scold Rachel. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: “It is bad enough ... my husband.” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **Do you now want ... too?** - This is a rhetorical question, used to scold Rachel. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: “Now you want ... too!” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **Then he will sleep** - “Then Jacob will sleep” or “Then I will let Jacob sleep”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ When Jacob returned from the wheat fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. She said, “You must sleep with me tonight, because I gave Rachel some mandrake plants to pay her for allowing us to do that.” So Jacob slept with her that night. ¹⁷ God answered Leah’s prayers, and she became pregnant and bore a fifth son to Jacob. ¹⁸ Leah said, “God has rewarded me for giving my slave to my husband to be another wife for him.” So she named him Issachar, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “reward.”

ULB:

¹⁶ Jacob came from the field in the evening. Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must sleep with me tonight, for I have hired you with my son’s mandrakes.” So Jacob slept with Leah that night. ¹⁷ God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸ Leah said, “God has given me my wages, because I gave my servant woman to my husband.” She called his name Issachar.

translationWords:

- **Jacob, Israel**
- **Leah**
- **sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking**
- **conceive, conception**
- **servant, slave, slavery**
- **Issachar**

translationNotes:

- **with my son’s mandrakes** - “for the price of my son’s mandrakes.” See how you translated “mandrake” in [30:14](#).
- **she conceived** - “She became pregnant”
- **and bore Jacob a fifth son** - “and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob”
- **God has given me my wages** - God rewarding Leah is spoken of as if he were a boss paying wages to someone who works for him. AT: “God has given my due” or “God has rewarded me” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **She called his name Issachar** - Translators may also add a footnote that says: “The name Issachar means ‘there is a reward.’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ Leah became pregnant again and bore a sixth son for Jacob. ²⁰ Leah said, “God has given me a precious gift. This time my husband will honor me, because I have given birth to six sons for him.” So she named him Zebulun.

²¹ Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

ULB:

¹⁹ Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. ²⁰ Leah said, “God has given me a good gift. Now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons.” She called his name Zebulun.

²¹ Afterwards she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah.

translationWords:

- [honor, to honor](#)
- [Zebulun](#)

translationNotes:

- **Leah conceived again** - “Leah became pregnant again”
- **and bore a sixth son to Jacob** - “and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob”
- **She called his name Zebulun** - Translators may also add a footnote that says: “The name Zebulun means ‘honor.’”
- **and called her name Dinah** - This is the name of Leah’s daughter. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:22-24

UDB:

²² Then God thought about what Rachel wanted. He heard her pray and enabled her to become pregnant. ²³ She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, “God has caused me to be ashamed no longer for not having children.” ²⁴ She named him Joseph, which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean, “Yahweh gave me another son.”

ULB:

²² God called Rachel to mind and listened to her. He caused her to become pregnant. ²³ She conceived and bore a son. She said, “God has taken away my shame.” ²⁴ She called his name Joseph, saying, “Yahweh has added to me another son.”

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [mind](#)
- [shame, shameful, ashamed](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **God called Rachel to mind and listened to her** - The phrase “call to mind” means to remember. This does not mean God forgot about Rachel. It means he considered her request. AT: “God considered Rachel and granted to her what she wanted” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **God has taken away my shame** - God causing Rachel to no longer feel ashamed is spoken of as if “shame” were an object that person could take away from someone else. The abstract noun “shame” can be stated as “ashamed.” AT: “God has caused me to no longer feel ashamed” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **She called his name Joseph** - Translators may also add a footnote that says: “The name Joseph means ‘may he add.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Yahweh has added to me another son** - Rachel’s first sons were through her female servant Bilhah.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 30 Translation Questions

Genesis 30:25-26

UDB:

²⁵ After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Now allow me to stop working for you and let me return to my own land. ²⁶ You know the work that I have done for you. So let me take my wives and my children for whom I worked for you to get them, and leave."

ULB:

²⁵ After Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, so that I may go to my own home and to my country. ²⁶ Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go, for you know the service I have given you."

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [serve, service](#)

translationNotes:

- **After Rachel had borne Joseph** - "After Rachel gave birth to Joseph"
- **and let me go** - "so I can go"
- **you know the service I have given you** - Jacob is reminding Laban of their contract ([Gen 29:27](#)). The abstract noun "service" can be stated as "served." AT: "you know that I have served you long enough" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:27-28**UDB:**

²⁷ But Laban said to him, "If you are pleased with me, stay here, because I have found out by performing a magic ritual that Yahweh has blessed me because of what you have done for me. ²⁸ Tell me what you want me to pay you for continuing to work for me, and that is what I will pay you."

ULB:

²⁷ Laban said to him, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, wait, because I have learned by using divination that Yahweh has blessed me for your sake." ²⁸ Then he said, "Name your wages, and I will pay them."

translationWords:

- favor, favorable, favoritism
- divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- name

translationNotes:

- **Laban said to him** - "Laban said to Jacob"
- **If now I have found favor in your eyes** - The phrase "in your eyes" is a metonymy that represents Jacob's thoughts or opinion. AT: "If I have found favor with you" or "If you are pleased with me" (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **found favor** - This is an idiom that means that someone is approved of by someone else. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **wait, because** - "please stay, because"
- **I have learned by using divination** - "I have discovered by my own spiritual and magical practices"
- **for your sake** - "because of you"
- **Name your wages** - This can be made more explicit. AT: "Tell me how much I have to pay to keep you here" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)

- **Genesis 30 Translation Questions**

Genesis 30:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ Jacob said to him, "You know how I have worked for you, and you know that your livestock have increased greatly as I have taken care of them. ³⁰ You had only a few animals before I came here. But now you have a large number of animals and Yahweh has caused them to increase into an even larger number everywhere I have taken them. But now I need to start taking care of the needs of my own family."

ULB:

²⁹ Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you, and how your livestock have fared with me. ³⁰ For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly. Yahweh has blessed you wherever I worked. Now when will I provide for my own household also?"

translationWords:

- [serve, service](#)
- [livestock](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [household](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob said to him** - "Jacob said to Laban"
- **how your livestock have fared with me** - "how well your livestock have done since I started taking care of them"
- **For you had little before I came** - "your herds were small before I worked for you"
- **and it has increased abundantly** - "but now your wealth has greatly increased"
- **Now when will I provide for my own household also?** - "Now when will I take care of my own family?" Jacob uses a question to emphasize that he wants to start providing for his own family. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: "Now I want to take care of my family!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:31-32

UDB:

³¹ Laban replied, “What do you want me to pay you?” Jacob replied, “I do not want you to pay me anything. But if you will do this one thing for me, I will continue to take care of your flocks and protect them. ³² Allow me to go and look at all of your flocks today and remove from them all the speckled sheep, all the spotted sheep, and every dark-colored lamb, all the goats that are speckled, and all the goats that are spotted. I want to keep them for myself. They will be my wages.

ULB:

³¹ So Laban said, “What will I pay you?” Jacob said, “You will not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed your flock and keep it. ³² Let me walk through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats. These will be my wages.

translationWords:

- flock, herd
- sheep, ram, ewe
- goat, kid

translationNotes:

- **What will I pay you** - “What can I pay you” or “What can I give you.” This can be made more explicit. AT: “What can I pay you so that you stay and work for me” (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)).
- **If you will do this thing for me** - The connecting word “but” can be added to indicate that this is the one thing Jacob wants. AT: “But if you will do this thing for me” (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **feed your flock and keep it** - “feed and take care of your flock”
- **removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats** - “and remove every sheep with spots, every black sheep, and every goat with spots”
- **These will be my wages** - “This will be the cost of keeping me here”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:33-34

UDB:

³³ In that way, in the future, you will be able to know whether I have been honest regarding what you have paid me. If any of my goats are neither speckled or spotted, or if any of my lambs are not dark-colored, you will know that I have stolen them from you.”

³⁴ Laban agreed and said, “Yes, we will do as you have said.”

ULB:

³³ My integrity will testify for me later on, when you come to check on my wages. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, if any are found with me, will be considered to be stolen.” ³⁴ Laban said, “Agreed. Let it be according to your word.”

translationWords:

- [testimony, testify](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [word](#)

translationNotes:

- **My integrity will testify for me later on** - The word “integrity” means “honesty.” This speaks about integrity as if it were a person who could testify for or against another person. AT: “And later you will know if I have been honest with you or not” (See: [Personification](#))
- **Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, if any are found with me, will be considered to be stolen** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “If you find any goats without spots or any sheep that are not black, you can consider them stolen” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Let it be according to your word** - Here “word” stands for something said. AT: “It will be as you say” or “We will do what you have said” (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:35-36

UDB:

³⁵ But on that same day, Laban removed all the male goats that had black and white stripes on them or were spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled or spotted, all the goats that were partly white, and all the dark-colored lambs. He separated them from the other animals and put his sons in charge of them. ³⁶ Then Laban and his sons took these animals and journeyed for three days from where Jacob was. Jacob continued to take care of the rest of Laban's flocks.

ULB:

³⁵ That day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons. ³⁶ Laban also put three days' journey between himself and Jacob. So Jacob kept tending the rest of Laban's flocks.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [biblical time: day](#)

translationNotes:

- **that were striped and spotted** - "that had stripes and spots"
- **that were speckled and spotted** - "that had spots"
- **every one that had white in it** - "every goat that had some white in it"
- **and all the black ones among the sheep** - "and all the black sheep"
- **gave them into the hand** - Here "hand" stands for control or care. AT: "had his sons take care of them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:37-38

UDB:

³⁷ Then Jacob cut some branches of poplar, almond, and plane trees. He peeled strips of bark from the branches. In this way, where he peeled the bark off, the branches were light in color. ³⁸ Then he placed the peeled branches in the troughs where they put the water for the animals to drink, so that the flocks saw them when they were drinking water.

ULB:

³⁷ Jacob took fresh cut branches of fresh poplar, and of the almond and of the plane tree, and peeled white streaks in them, and made the white inner wood appear that was in the sticks. ³⁸ Then he set the sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks, in front of the watering troughs where they came to drink. They conceived when they came to drink.

translationWords:

- [conceive, conception](#)

translationNotes:

- **fresh poplar ... almond ... plane tree** - These are all trees with white wood. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **and peeled white streaks in them, and made the white inner wood appear that was in the sticks** - “and peeled off pieces of bark so that the white wood underneath would show”
- **the watering troughs** - long open containers for holding water for animals to drink

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:39-40

UDB:

³⁹ The animals also mated in front of the branches, and later they gave birth to animals that were speckled, or to animals that were spotted, or to animals that had black and white stripes on them. ⁴⁰ During the several years following, Jacob often separated the female sheep in Laban's flock from the other sheep and goats. When they mated, he made them look toward the animals that had black and white stripes, and toward the dark-colored animals. So they gave birth to animals with similar markings. Then he would separate these animals from Laban's flocks and keep them for his own.

ULB:

³⁹ The flocks bred in front of the sticks; and the flocks produced striped, speckled, and spotted young. ⁴⁰ Jacob separated out these lambs, but made the rest of them face toward the striped animals and all the black sheep in the flock of Laban. Then he separated out his flocks for himself alone and did not put them together with Laban's flocks.

translationWords:

- [flock, herd](#)
- [lamb, Lamb of God](#)
- [face](#)

translationNotes:

- **The flocks bred** - "The animals of the flocks conceived" or "The animals mated"
- **produced striped, speckled, and spotted young** - "gave birth to babies with stripes and spots"
- **Jacob separated** - It can be made explicit that this happened over several years. AT: "During the several years following, Jacob separated" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **face toward** - "look toward"
- **he separated out his flocks for himself alone** - "he set his flocks apart"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:41-42

UDB:

⁴¹ In addition, whenever the stronger female sheep were ready to mate, Jacob put some of those peeled branches in the troughs in front of them, so that they would mate in front of the branches. ⁴² But when weak animals were ready to mate, he did not put the branches in their troughs. So they gave birth to weak lambs, which remained in Laban's flock, but the strong ones became part of Jacob's flock.

ULB:

⁴¹ Whenever the stronger sheep in the flock were breeding, then Jacob would lay the sticks in the watering troughs before the eyes of the flock, so that they might conceive among the sticks. ⁴² But when the feebler animals in the flock came, he did not put the sticks in front of them. So the feebler animals were Laban's, and the stronger were Jacob's.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [conceive, conception](#)
- [Laban](#)

translationNotes:

- **before the eyes of the flock** - Here "eyes" stands for "seeing." AT: "so that the flock could see them" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **among the sticks** - "in front of the sticks"
- **the feebler animals** - "the weaker animals"
- **So the feebler animals were Laban's, and the stronger were Jacob's** - "So the weaker offspring belonged to Laban, while the stronger offspring belonged to Jacob." You can make this even more explicit. AT: "So the weaker offspring did not have stripes or spots and so belonged to Laban, while the stronger offspring did have stripes or spots and so belonged to Jacob" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 30:43**UDB:**

⁴³ As a result, Jacob became very rich. He owned many large flocks. He also owned many male and female slaves, camels, and donkeys.

ULB:

⁴³ The man became very prosperous. He had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

translationWords:

- prosper, prosperity, prosperous
- flock, herd
- servant, slave, slavery
- camel
- donkey, mule

translationNotes:

- **The man** - "Jacob"
- **became very prosperous** - "greatly prospered" or "became very wealthy"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 30 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 30 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's blessing

When Jacob left Paddam Aram, he left very wealthy. Despite his punishment of exile from Canaan, God still blessed Jacob and his family. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Household gods

Although a few scholars believe the possession of the household gods was a sign of inheritance, this seems unlikely. It is probable that Rachel believed these idols would bring them “good luck” and would bring them great blessing. This was sinful because they were to trust in Yahweh, who already promised to bless them. (See: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Irony

Laban's sons complained that Jacob cheated them out of their father's possessions. It was their father who tried to cheat Jacob out of what he promised to give Jacob. Jacob treated his brother Esau in the same way. Jacob cheated Esau out of their father's blessing.

Links:

- [Genesis 31:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 31:1-3

UDB:

¹ One day, someone told Jacob that Laban's sons were complaining and saying, "Jacob has become very rich by taking everything that belonged to our father." ² Jacob noticed that Laban was not acting friendly toward him as he had done before. ³ Then Yahweh said to Jacob, "Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will help you there."

ULB:

31 ¹ Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, that they said, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and it is from our father's possessions that he has gotten all this wealth." ² Jacob saw the look on Laban's face. He saw that his attitude toward him had changed. ³ Then Yahweh said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [possess, possession](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a break in the main storyline. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.
- **Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, that they said** - Here "words" stands for what they were saying. AT: "Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Jacob has taken away all that was our father's** - Laban's sons were exaggerating because they were angry. AT: "Everything that Jacob has taken belonged to our father" (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **Jacob saw the look on Laban's face. He saw that his attitude toward him had changed** - These two sentences mean basically the same thing. The second explains the look that Jacob saw on Laban's face. AT: "Jacob noticed that Laban was no longer pleased with him" (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **your fathers** - "your father Isaac and your grandfather Abraham"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 31 General Notes
- **Genesis 31 Translation Questions**

Genesis 31:4-6

UDB:

⁴ So Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Leah, telling them to come out to the pastures where his flocks of sheep and goats were. ⁵ When they arrived, he said to them, "I see that your father does not act friendly toward me as he did previously. But God, whom my father worshiped, has helped me. ⁶ You two know that I have worked very hard for your father.

ULB:

⁴ Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock ⁵ and said to them, "I see your father's attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me. ⁶ You know that it is with all my strength that I have served your father.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Leah](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [God](#)
- [serve, service](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock** - "Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah and told them to meet him out in the field with the flocks"
- **to his flock and said to them** - This can be stated as two shorter sentences. AT: "to his flock. He said to them" (See: [Sentence Structure](#))
- **I see your father's attitude toward me has changed** - "I have noticed your father is no longer pleased with me"
- **You know that it is with all my strength that I have served your father** - The word "you" here refers to both Rachel and Leah. It also adds emphasis. AT: "You yourselves know that I have served your father with all my strength" (See: [Forms of You](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:7-9**UDB:**

⁷ He has cheated me many times by decreasing my wages. But God has not allowed him to do me physical harm. ⁸ When Laban said, ‘The speckled animals are the ones that I will give you to be your wages,’ then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were speckled. When he changed his mind and said, ‘The ones that have black and white stripes on them will be your wages,’ then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were striped. ⁹ In that way, God has taken away the livestock that belonged to your father and has given them to me.

ULB:

⁷ Your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God has not permitted him to hurt me. ⁸ If he said, ‘The speckled animals will be your wages,’ then all the flock bore speckled young. If he said, ‘The striped will be your wages,’ then the whole flock bore striped young. ⁹ In this way God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.

translationWords:

- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)
- [livestock](#)

translationNotes:

- **has deceived me** - “has lied to me” or “has not treated me fairly”
- **my wages** - “what he said he would pay me”
- **to hurt me** - Possible meanings are 1) physical harm (UDB) or 2) to cause Jacob to suffer in any way.
- **The speckled animals** - “The animals with spots”
- **the flock bore** - “the flock gave birth to”
- **The striped** - “The animals with stripes”
- **In this way God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me** - “This is how God gave your father’s animals to me”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ One time, when the animals were mating, I had a dream. In my dream I looked up and was surprised to see that some of the male goats that were mating with the female goats had black and white stripes on them, some were speckled, and some were spotted. ¹¹ In the dream, an angel came from God said to me, ‘Jacob!’ I replied, ‘I am here!’

ULB:

¹⁰ Once at the time of breeding season, I saw in a dream the male goats that were mating with the flock. The male goats were striped, speckled, and spotted. ¹¹ The angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob.’ I said, ‘Here I am.’

translationWords:

- [dream](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [angel, archangel](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues his story to his wives Leah and Rachel.
- **Once at the time of breeding season** - “During the breeding season”
- **mating with the flock** - Here “flock” stands for the female goats. AT: “mating with the female goats of the flock” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **were striped, speckled, and spotted** - “had stripes, little spots, and big spots”
- **angel of God** - Possible meanings are 1) God himself appeared as a man or 2) one of God’s messengers appeared. Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as “the angel of God,” using the normal word that you use for “angel.”
- **I said** - “And I answered”
- **Here I am** - “Yes, I am listening” or “Yes, what is it?” See how you translated this in [22:1](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:12-13

UDB:

¹² He said to me, 'Look up and you will see that all the male goats that are mating have black and white stripes on them, or are speckled or spotted. This is happening because I have seen all that Laban has done to you. ¹³ I am the God who appeared to you at Bethel, where you set up a stone, poured olive oil on it and made a solemn promise to me. So now leave this land immediately and return to the land where you were born.'"

ULB:

¹² He said, 'Lift up your eyes and see all the male goats that are breeding with the flock. They are striped, speckled, and spotted, for I have seen everything that Laban is doing to you. ¹³ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to me. Now rise up and leave this land and return to the land of your birth.'"

translationWords:

- goat, kid
- Laban
- God
- Bethel
- anoint, anointed
- pillar, column
- vow

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The angel of the Lord continues to talk to Jacob. (See: [Genesis 31:10-11](#))
- **Lift up your eyes** - This is a way of saying "Look up." (See: [Idiom](#))
- **that are breeding with the flock** - Here "flock" stands for the female goats. AT: "that are breeding with the female goats of the flock" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **are striped, speckled, and spotted** - "have stripes and spots"
- **where you anointed a pillar** - Jacob poured oil on the pillar to dedicate it to God. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **the land of your birth** - "the land where you were born"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 31 General Notes
- **Genesis 31 Translation Questions**

Genesis 31:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ Rachel and Leah replied to him, "Our father will not give us anything more when he dies. ¹⁵ He treats us as though we were foreigners! The work that you did for him all these years was a payment that you gave him for us, but we will not inherit any of the wealth you produced for him. He has spent it all! ¹⁶ Certainly all of the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and to our children. So do whatever God has told you to do!"

ULB:

¹⁴ Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? ¹⁵ Are we not treated by him as foreigners? For he has sold us and has also completely devoured our money. ¹⁶ For all the riches that God has taken away from our father are now ours and our children's. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

translationWords:

- Rachel
- Leah
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir
- foreigner, foreign, alien
- devour

translationNotes:

- **Rachel and Leah answered and said to him** - This does not mean they talked at the same time. It emphasizes they agreed with each other.
- **Is there any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?** - Rachel and Leah use a question to emphasize that there is nothing left for their father to give. AT: "There is absolutely nothing left for us to inherit from our father!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Are we not treated by him as foreigners?** - They use a question to show their anger about how their father treats them. This can be stated in active form. AT: "Our father treats us like a foreign women instead of daughters!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **For he has sold us** - This can be made more explicit. AT: "He has sold us for his own gain" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **has also completely devoured our money** - Laban completely using up the money that he should have given to his daughters is spoken of as if he were a wild beast that ate the money as if it were food. AT: "he completely used up our money" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **are now ours and our children's** - "belongs to us and to our children"

- **Now then** - Here “Now” does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **whatever God has said to you, do it** - “do all that God has told you”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels. ¹⁸ He drove all his livestock just ahead of him as they went. He also took along all the other property and goods that he added to his own possessions while living in Paddan Aram. This is how they began their journey back to his father Isaac, who lived in the land of Canaan.

ULB:

¹⁷ Then Jacob arose and placed his sons and his wives upon the camels. ¹⁸ He drove all his livestock ahead of him, along with all his property, including the livestock he had acquired in Paddan Aram. Then he set out to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [camel](#)
- [livestock](#)
- [Paddan Aram](#)
- [Isaac](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **his sons** - Jacob took all of his children. It only mentions the sons because they are important as his heirs. AT: “his children” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **He drove all his livestock** - “He drove all his cattle.” Here “livestock” is referring to all his domesticated animals.
- **including the livestock he had acquired in Paddan Aram** - “and the other herd of cattle which he took ownership of when he was in Paddan Aram”
- **Then he set out to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan** - “He went to the land of Canaan, where his father Isaac lived”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:19-21

UDB:

¹⁹ Now Laban had left to go shear his sheep. In his absence, Rachel stole the small wooden idols that were in her father's tent. ²⁰ Furthermore, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that they were planning to leave. ²¹ So Jacob and his family fled with all their possessions. They crossed the Euphrates River and then started traveling south toward the hill country of the region of Gilead.

ULB:

¹⁹ When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father's household gods. ²⁰ Jacob also deceived Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he was leaving. ²¹ So he fled with all that he had and quickly passed over the River, and headed toward the hill country of Gilead.

translationWords:

- Laban
- sheep, ram, ewe
- Rachel
- household
- false god, foreign god, god, goddess
- deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive
- Aram, Aramean, Aramaic
- Gilead

translationNotes:

- **When Laban had gone to shear his sheep** - "When Laban had left to cut the wool off of his sheep"
- **the River** - This refers to the Euphrates River.
- **headed toward** - "traveled toward"
- **the hill country of Gilead** - "the mountains of Gilead" or "Mount Gilead"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:22-23

UDB:

²² On the third day after they left, someone told Laban that Jacob and his family were gone. ²³ So he took some of his relatives with him and started to pursue Jacob. They walked for seven days and they caught up with him in hill country of the region of Gilead.

ULB:

²² On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. ²³ So he took his relatives with him and pursued him for a seven days' journey. He overtook him in the hill country of Gilead.

translationWords:

- [biblical time: day](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Gilead](#)

translationNotes:

- **On the third day** - It was Jewish custom to count the day of departure as day one. AT: "Two days after they had left"
- **Laban was told** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "someone told Laban" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **that Jacob had fled** - Only Jacob is mentioned because he is the leader of the family. It can be made explicit that his family went with him. AT: "that Jacob had fled with his wives and children" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **So he took** - "So Laban took"
- **and pursued him** - "and chased after Jacob"
- **for a seven days' journey** - Laban spent seven days walking to catch up to Jacob.
- **He overtook him** - "He caught up to him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:24-25

UDB:

²⁴ Then God appeared to Laban in a dream at night. He said to him, “When you catch up to Jacob, be very careful what you say to him.”

²⁵ The next day, by the time Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob and his household had set up their tents in the hills of Gilead. So Laban and his relatives set up their tents there too.

ULB:

²⁴ Now God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, “Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.” ²⁵ Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country. Laban also camped with his relatives in the hill country of Gilead.[1]Some modern versions have: *Laban also camped in the hill country of Gilead.*

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [Aram, Aramean, Aramaic](#)
- [dream](#)
- [Gilead](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night** - The word “now” is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Laban. AT: “That night God came to Laban in a dream” (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad** - The phrase “good nor bad” are used together to mean “anything.” AT: “Do not say anything to try and stop Jacob from leaving” (See: [Merism](#))
- **Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country. Laban also camped with his relatives in the hill country of Gilead** - The word “now” is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jacob and Laban. AT: “When Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob had set up camp in the hill country. Then Laban and his relatives also camped in the hill country of Gilead” (See: [Background Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:26-28**UDB:**

²⁶ Then Laban went to Jacob and said to him, "Why have you done this? You have deceived me by carrying away my daughters as though you had captured them in a war! ²⁷ Why did you run away and deceive me? Why did you not tell me that you were going to leave, so that we could have rejoiced and sung while people played music on tambourines and harps before I said 'goodbye' to you? ²⁸ You did not even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye before they left! What you have done was foolish!

ULB:

²⁶ Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you deceived me and carried away my daughters like prisoners of war? ²⁷ Why did you flee secretly and trick me and did not tell me? I would have sent you away with celebration and with songs, with tambourine and with harps. ²⁸ You did not allow me to kiss my grandsons and my daughters good bye. Now you have done foolishly.

translationWords:

- deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive
- prison, prisoner, imprison
- harp
- kiss
- fool, foolish, folly

translationNotes:

- **carried away my daughters like prisoners of war** - Laban speaks about Jacob taking his family with him back to the land of Canaan as if Jacob took them as prisoners after a battle and is forcing them to go with him. Laban is exaggerating because he is angry and is trying to make Jacob feel guilty for what he did. (See: [Simile](#) and [Hyperbole](#))
- **flee secretly** - "run away in secret"
- **with celebration** - "with joy"
- **with tambourine and with harps** - These instruments stand for music. AT: "and with music" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **tambourine** - a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **to kiss my grandsons** - Here "grandsons" would include all grandchildren whether male or female. AT: "to kiss my grandchildren" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))
- **Now you have done foolishly** - "You have acted foolishly"
- **Now** - This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ My relatives and I have the power to harm you, but last night the God whom your father worships said to me in a dream, ‘Be very careful what you say to Jacob.’ ³⁰ Now I know you have left because you want to go back home. But why did you steal my idols?”

ULB:

²⁹ It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night and said, ‘Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.’ ³⁰ Now you have gone away because you longed to return to your father’s house. But why did you steal my gods?”

translationWords:

- [power, powers](#)
- [God](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [house](#)
- [false god, foreign god, god, goddess](#)

translationNotes:

- **It is in my power to do you harm** - The word “you” is plural and refers to everyone with Jacob. AT: “I have enough people with me to harm all of you” (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad** - The words “good nor bad” are used together to mean “anything.” See how you translated this in [31:24](#). AT: “Do not say anything to try and stop Jacob from leaving” (See: [Merism](#))
- **you have gone away** - This “you” is singular and refers to Jacob. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **to your father’s house** - Here “house” stands for family. AT: “to be home with your father and the rest of your family” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **my gods** - “my idols”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:31-32

UDB:

³¹ Jacob replied to Laban, "I did not tell you that we were planning to leave, because I was afraid that you would take your daughters away from me by force. ³² But if you find anyone here who has your idols, we will execute that person. While our relatives are watching, search for yourself to see if there is anything that belongs to you that is here with me. If you find anything, you can take it!" When Jacob said that, he did not know that Rachel had already stolen her father's idols.

ULB:

³¹ Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid and thought that you would take your daughters from me by force I left secretly. ³² Whoever has stolen your gods will not continue to live. In the presence of our relatives, identify whatever with me is yours and take it." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

translationWords:

- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [false god, foreign god, god, goddess](#)
- [Rachel](#)

translationNotes:

- **Because I was afraid and thought that you would take your daughters from me by force I left secretly** - "I left in secret because I was afraid that you would take your daughters from me by force"
- **Whoever has stolen your gods will not continue to live** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: "We will kill whoever has stolen your gods" (See: [Litotes](#))
- **In the presence of our relatives** - The word "our" refers to Jacob's relatives and includes Laban's relatives. All the relatives will watch to make sure everything is fair and honest. (See: [Inclusive "We"](#))
- **identify whatever with me is yours and take it** - "look for whatever we have that is yours and take it"
- **For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them** - This changes from the story to background information about Jacob. (See: [Background Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)

- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:33

UDB:

³³ Then Laban went into Jacob's tent, next into Leah's tent, and then into the tent of the two female slaves and searched for the idols, but he did not find them. After he left their tents, he entered Rachel's tent.

ULB:

³³ Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. He went out of Leah's tent and entered into Rachel's tent.

translationWords:

- [Laban](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [tent](#)
- [Leah](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Rachel](#)

translationNotes:

- **the two female servants** - This refers to Zilpah and Bilhah.
- **he did not find them** - "he did not find his idols"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:34-35

UDB:

³⁴ But Rachel had previously taken the idols and put them in the saddle of a camel, and she was sitting on the saddle. So when Laban searched all over for them inside Rachel's tent, he did not find them. ³⁵ Rachel said to her father, "Do not be angry with me, sir, but I cannot stand up in your presence to show respect for you, because I am having my menstrual period." So even after searching more, Laban, he did not find his idols.

ULB:

³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the household gods, put them in a camel's saddle, and sat upon them. Laban searched the whole tent, but did not find them. ³⁵ She said to her father, "Do not be angry, my master, that I cannot stand up before you, for I am having my period." So he searched but did not find his household gods.

translationWords:

- [household](#)
- [false god, foreign god, god, goddess](#)
- [camel](#)
- [angry, anger](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now Rachel ... upon them** - The word "now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Rachel. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **saddle** - a seat placed on the back of an animal so a person can ride on it
- **my master** - Calling someone "my master" is a way of honoring them.
- **that I cannot stand up before you** - "because I am unable to stand up in your presence"
- **for I am having my period** - This refers to the time of the month when a woman bleeds from her womb. (See: [Euphemism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:36-37

UDB:

³⁶ Then Jacob became angry. He said to Laban, "What crime did I commit? For what sin have you pursued me?" ³⁷ Now you have searched through all my possessions, and you have found nothing that belongs to you! If you have found anything, put it here in front of my relatives and your relatives, so that they can decide who is right, you or me!

ULB:

³⁶ Jacob was angry and argued with Laban. He said to him, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued after me?" ³⁷ For you have searched all my possessions. What have you found of all your household goods? Set them here before our relatives, so that they may judge between us two.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- angry, anger
- Laban
- sin, sinful, sinner, sinning
- possess, possession
- household
- judge, judgment

translationNotes:

- **He said to him** - "Jacob said to Laban"
- **What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued after me?** - The phrases "What is my offense" and "What is my sin" mean basically the same thing. Jacob is asking Laban to tell him what he did wrong. AT: "What have I done wrong that you should pursue me like this?" (See: **Parallelism**)
- **hotly pursued after me** - Here the word "hotly" means Laban urgently chased Jacob intending to capture him. (See: **Idiom**)
- **What have you found of all your household goods?** - "What have you found that belongs to you?"
- **Set them here before our relatives** - Here the word "our" refers to Jacob's relatives and includes Laban's relatives. AT: "Lay anything you have found in front of our relatives" (See: **Inclusive "We"**)
- **they may judge between us two** - Here "two of us" refers to Jacob and Laban. The phrase "to judge between" means to decide which person is right in a dispute. AT: "they may judge between the two of us" (See: **Inclusive "We"**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:38-40

UDB:

³⁸ I was with you for twenty years. In all that time, your sheep and goats have not miscarried. I have not killed and eaten any rams from your flocks. ³⁹ When one of your animals was attacked and mauled by a wild animal, I did not bring it to you. I replaced the dead animal with a living one of my own animals. Whenever one of your animals was stolen, during the day or during the night, you demanded that I replace it with one of my own animals. ⁴⁰ I suffered from the heat during the day and from the cold at night. I was often not even able to sleep!

ULB:

³⁸ For twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten any rams from your flocks. ³⁹ What was torn by beasts I did not bring to you. Instead, I bore the loss of it. You always made me pay for every missing animal, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. ⁴⁰ There I was; in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night; and I went without sleep.

translationWords:

- biblical time: year
- goat, kid
- sheep, ram, ewe
- flock, herd
- consume

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues to speak to Laban.
- **twenty years** - “20 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **ewes** - female sheep
- **have not miscarried** - This means they have not had a pregnancy end early and unexpectedly with the lamb or kid born dead.
- **What was torn by beasts I did not bring to you** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “When a wild animal killed one of your animals I did not bring it to you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Instead, I bore the loss of it** - For Jacob to count Laban’s dead animals as a loss from his own flock is spoken of as if it was a burden he would bear on his shoulders. AT: “Instead of counting it a loss from your flock, I counted it as a loss from my flock” (See: [Metaphor](#))

- **There I was; in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night** - Suffering in the hot and cold temperatures is spoken of as if the temperatures were animals that were eating Jacob. AT: "I stayed with your flocks even during hottest part of the day and the coldest part of the night" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:41-42**UDB:**

⁴¹ I lived in your household for twenty years. I worked for you for fourteen years to marry your two daughters, and for six more years to buy some of your sheep and goats. During that time, you changed and reduced my wages ten times. ⁴² If God, the one whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and before whom my father Isaac trembled in fear, had not been with me and helped me, you would have sent me away with nothing in my hands! But God saw how much I was suffering and how hard I was working, so last night he told you that what you have done to me was wrong.”

ULB:

⁴¹ These twenty years I have been in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock. You have changed my wages ten times. ⁴² Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the one Isaac fears, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my oppression and how hard I worked, and he rebuked you last night.”

translationWords:

- biblical time: year
- household
- flock, herd
- God
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Abraham, Abram
- Isaac
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- oppress, oppression, oppressor
- rebuke

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues to speak to Laban.
- **These twenty years** - “These last 20 years” (See: **Numbers**)
- **fourteen years** - “14 years” (See: **Numbers**)
- **changed my wages ten times** - “changed what he said he would pay me ten times.” See how you translated “my wages” in **31:7**.
- **Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the one Isaac fears, had been with me** - Jacob is referring to the same God not to three different gods. AT: “If the God of Abraham and Isaac, my father, had not been with me”

- **the God of my father** - Here the word “father” refers to his parent, Isaac.
- **and the one Isaac fears** - Here the word “fears” refers to the “fear of Yahweh,” which means to deeply respect him and show that respect by obeying him.
- **empty-handed** - This stands for having nothing. AT: “with absolutely nothing” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **God has seen my oppression and how hard I worked** - The abstract noun “oppression” can be stated as “oppressed.” AT: “God has seen how hard I worked and how you oppressed me” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:43-44

UDB:

⁴³ Laban replied, "These two women are my daughters, and their children are my grandchildren, and the animals are my animals. Everything you see here is mine! ⁴⁴ I cannot do anything in order to keep them, so we should make a peace agreement, you and I. It will serve as a witness between you and me."

ULB:

⁴³ Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the grandchildren are my grandchildren, and the flocks are my flocks. All that you see is mine. But what can I do today to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have borne? ⁴⁴ So now, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be for a witness between you and me."

translationWords:

- [flock, herd](#)
- [covenant](#)
- [witness, eyewitness](#)

translationNotes:

- **But what can I do today to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have borne?** - Laban uses a question to emphasize that there is nothing he can do. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: "But, there is nothing I can do to bring my daughters and grandchildren back with me." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **let it be for a witness** - Here the word "witness" does not refer to a person, but it is used figuratively and refers to the covenant that Jacob and Laban are making. The covenant is spoken of as if it were a person who is there when they agree to act peacefully to one another. (See: [Personification](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:45-47

UDB:

⁴⁵ So Jacob took a large stone and set it on its end. ⁴⁶ Then Jacob said to his relatives, “Gather some stones.” So they gathered some rocks and put them in a heap, and they ate some food there near the heap. ⁴⁷ Laban gave the heap the Aramaic name Jegar Saha Dutha, but Jacob gave the heap the Hebrew name Galeed.

ULB:

⁴⁵ So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. ⁴⁶ Jacob said to his relatives, “Gather stones.” So they took stones and made a pile. Then they ate there by the pile. ⁴⁷ Laban called it Jegar Saha Dutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.

translationWords:

- [pillar, column](#)

translationNotes:

- **pillar** - This means that a large stone was simply set up on its end to mark the place where this important event happened.
- **made a pile** - “stacked them on top of each other”
- **Then they ate there by the pile** - Eating a meal together was a part of making the covenant with one another. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Jegar Saha Dutha** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Jegar Saha Dutha means ‘heap of witness’ in Laban’s language.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Galeed** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Galeed means ‘heap of witness’ in Jacob’s language. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:48-50

UDB:

⁴⁸ Laban said to Jacob, “This pile of rocks we have put here today will help us to remember our agreement.” That is why Jacob called it Galeed. ⁴⁹ They also named the place Mizpah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “watchtower,” because Laban said, “We will ask Yahweh to watch you and me while we are separated from each other, so that we do not try to harm each other. ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take other women to be your wives, even if no one tells me about it, do not forget that God sees what you and I are doing!”

ULB:

⁴⁸ Laban said, “This pile is a witness between me and you today.” Therefore its name was called Galeed. ⁴⁹ It is also called Mizpah, because Laban said, “May Yahweh watch between you and me, when we are out of sight one from another. ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take any wives besides my daughters, although no one else is with us, see, God is witness between you and me.”

translationWords:

- Laban
- witness, eyewitness
- Yahweh
- God

translationNotes:

- **This pile is a witness between me and you** - The stones do not actually bear witness as a person. AT: “This pile will be a reminder between me and you” (See: [Personification](#))
- **Galeed** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Galeed means ‘heap of witness’ in Jacob’s language. See how you translated this in [31:47](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Mizpah** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Mizpah means ‘watchtower.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **when we are out of sight one from another** - Here “out of sight” stands for no longer being in each other’s presence. AT: “when we are no longer with each other” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **although no one else is with us** - Here “us” refers to Laban and Jacob. AT: “even if no one else is there to see us”
- **see** - “remember.” This adds emphasis to what is said next.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:51-53

UDB:

⁵¹ Laban also said to Jacob, "You see this large stone and this pile of rocks that we have set up to be between us. ⁵² Both this pile of rocks and this large stone will remind us, that I will not go past these rocks to harm you and you will not go past these rocks to harm me. ⁵³ May the God whom Abraham worshiped, and the god that Nahor worshiped, and the gods their ancestor Terah worshiped punish either one of us, if one of us harms the other." Jacob solemnly promised by the God whom his father Isaac feared to do what they said in their peace agreement.

ULB:

⁵¹ Laban said to Jacob, "Look at this pile, and look at the pillar, which I have set between you and me. ⁵² This pile is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this pile to you, and that you will not pass beyond this pile and this pillar to me, to do harm. ⁵³ May the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us." Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac.

translationWords:

- pillar, column
- witness, eyewitness
- Abraham, Abram
- Nahor
- ancestor, father, forefather
- judge, judgment
- oath, swear, swear by
- Isaac
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **This pile is a witness, and the pillar is a witness** - These piles of stones were to act as a remembrance and a boundary marker for Jacob and Laban regarding their peace agreement. They are spoken of as if they are human witnesses. (See: [Personification](#))
- **May the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us** - Abraham is Jacob's grandfather. Nahor is Laban's grandfather. The father of Abraham and Nahor is Terah. Not all of them worshipped Yahweh.
- **the Fear of his father Isaac** - Here the word "Fear" refers to Yahweh, who Isaac deeply respected and showed that respect by obeying him.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 31:54-55

UDB:

⁵⁴ He offered a sacrifice to God there in the hill country, and he invited his relatives to eat with him. After they had eaten, they slept there that night. ⁵⁵ The next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters, and he asked God to bless them. Then Laban and his men left and returned home.

ULB:

⁵⁴ Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain and called his relatives to eat a meal. They ate and spent the entire night on the mountain. ⁵⁵ Early in the morning Laban got up, kissed his grandsons and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban left and returned home.

translationWords:

- [sacrifice, offering](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [kiss](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **called his relatives to eat a meal** - Eating a meal together was part of making the covenant with one another. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Early in the morning ... returned home** - Verse 55 is the first verse of chapter 32 in the original Hebrew text, but the last verse of chapter 31 in most modern Bibles. We suggest that you follow the numbering of Bibles in your national language.
- **blessed** - This means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to someone.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 31 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 31 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob does not trust Yahweh

Jacob does not trust in Yahweh. Instead, he fears that his brother Esau could kill him and his family. He should have known that Yahweh would continue to bless him and protect his family. He should have trusted in Yahweh's covenant faithfulness. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#) and [covenant faithfulness](#), [covenant loyalty](#), [loving kindness](#), [unfailing love](#))

Name change

In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly significant point in a person's life. The return of Jacob to Canaan was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"A man wrestled with him"

Scholars are divided over the identity of the person Jacob wrestled with. It was probably an angel, but some believe he wrestled with Jesus before he came to earth. The translator will probably have difficulty trying to keep ambiguity in identifying this individual because the word "man" usually indicates a normal, living person. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 32:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 32:1-2**UDB:**

¹ As Jacob and his family continued traveling, some angels came from God and met him. ² When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s army camp!” So he named that place Mahanaim.

ULB:

32 ¹ Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. ² When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s camp,” so he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [angel, archangel](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **Mahanaim** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Mahanaim means ‘two camps.’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:3-5

UDB:

³ Jacob told some men to go ahead of him to his older brother Esau, who was living in Seir, that is, the land of Edom. ⁴ He told them, "This is what I want you to say to Esau: 'I, Jacob, am your servant and you are my master. I have been living with our uncle Laban, and I have stayed there until now. ⁵ I now own many cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, and male and female slaves. Now I am sending this message to you, sir, hoping that you will be friendly toward me when I arrive.'"

ULB:

³ Jacob sent messengers on ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, in the region of Edom. ⁴ He commanded them, saying, "This is what you will say to my master Esau: This is what your servant Jacob says: 'I have been staying with Laban, and have delayed my return until now. ⁵ I have oxen, donkeys, and flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent this message to my master, so that I may find favor in your sight.'"

translationWords:

- Esau
- Edom, Edomite, Idumea
- command, to command, commandment
- lord, master, sir
- servant, slave, slavery
- Laban
- ox, oxen
- donkey, mule
- flock, herd
- favor, favorable, favoritism

translationNotes:

- **Seir** - This is a mountainous area in the region of Edom. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **This is what you will say to my master Esau: This is what your servant Jacob says: 'I have been ... in your sight.'** - This has a quotation within a quotation. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "‘This is what I want you to tell my master Esau. Tell him that I have been ... in his sight.’" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **my master Esau** - Jacob is using polite language and refers to his brother as "my master."
- **your servant Jacob** - Jacob is using polite language and refers to himself as "your servant."
- **that I may find favor in your sight** - Here "sight" stands for a person's thoughts or opinion. AT: "that you may approve of me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ The messengers went and gave that message to Esau. When they returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your older brother Esau. He is coming to you, and four hundred men are coming with him.”

⁷ Jacob was very afraid and worried. So he divided the people who were with him into two groups. He also divided the sheep and goats, the cattle, and the camels, into two groups. ⁸ He was thinking, “If Esau and his men come and attack us, perhaps one of the groups will be left and will be able to escape.”

ULB:

⁶ The messengers returned to Jacob and said, “We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.” ⁷ Then Jacob was very afraid and upset. So he divided the people who were with him into two camps, and also the flocks, the herds, and the camels. ⁸ He said, “If Esau comes to one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape.”

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [camel](#)

translationNotes:

- **four hundred men** - “400 men” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **afraid** - This refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.
- **upset** - “distressed” or “troubled”
- **to one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape** - Here “camp” refers to the people. AT: “to attack the people in one camp, then the people in the other camp will escape” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ Then Jacob prayed, "O Yahweh God, whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and my father Isaac worships, you said to me, 'Go back to your own land and to your relatives, and I will cause good things to happen to you.' ¹⁰ I am not worthy for you to have kept your covenant in so many faithful and trustworthy ways with me, your servant. I had only this walking stick with me when I crossed the Jordan River on my way to Haran, but now I am so wealthy that there are two large groups of my family and possessions.

ULB:

⁹ Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, Yahweh, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will prosper you,' ¹⁰ I am not worthy of all your acts of covenant faithfulness and of all the trustworthiness that you have done for your servant. For with only my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.

translationWords:

- God
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Abraham, Abram
- Isaac
- Yahweh
- prosper, prosperity, prosperous
- worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless
- covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love
- trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness
- servant, slave, slavery
- staff
- Jordan River

translationNotes:

- **God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, Yahweh** - This does not refer to different gods, but to the one God they all worship. AT: "Yahweh, who is God of my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Yahweh, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will prosper you'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated an indirect quotation. AT: "Yahweh, you who said that I should return to my country and to my kindred, and that you would prosper me" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

- **and to your kindred** - “and to your family”
- **I will prosper you** - “I will do good for you” or “I will treat you well”
- **I am not worthy of all your acts of covenant faithfulness and of all the trustworthiness that you have done for your servant** - The abstract nouns “faithfulness” and “trustworthiness” can be stated as “faithful” and “loyal.” AT: “I do not deserve for you to remain faithful to your covenant or for you to be loyal to me, your servant” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **your servant** - This is a polite way of saying “me.”
- **now I have become two camps** - Here “I have become” stands for what he now has. AT: “and now I have enough people, flocks, and possessions with me to make two camps” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ So now I pray that you will rescue me from the power of my brother Esau, because I am afraid that he and his men will come and attack and kill me and the children and their mothers. ¹² But do not forget that you have said, ‘I will certainly enable you to prosper, and I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, which are so many that no one can count them.’”

ULB:

¹¹ Please rescue me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children. ¹² But you said, ‘I will certainly make you prosper. I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for their number.’”

translationWords:

- hand, right hand, to hand over
- Esau
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- descendant, descended from

translationNotes:

- **rescue me** - “save me”
- **from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau** - Here the word “hand” refers to power. The two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second clarifies that the brother whom Jacob intended was Esau. AT: “from the power of my brother, Esau” or “from my brother, Esau” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Parallelism](#))
- **I am afraid of him, that he will** - “I am afraid that he will”
- **But you said, ‘I will certainly make you prosper. I will make your descendants ... number.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “But you said that you would certainly prosper me, and that you would make my descendants ... number” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **make you prosper** - “do good to you” or “treat you well”
- **I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea** - This speaks about the very large number of Jacob’s descendants as if their number will be like the grains of sand on the seashore. (See: [Simile](#))
- **which cannot be numbered for their number** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “which no one can count because of their number” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:13-16

UDB:

¹³ Jacob slept in that place that night. The next morning he selected some animals to give to his brother Esau. ¹⁴ He selected two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred female sheep and twenty male sheep, ¹⁵ thirty female camels and their offspring, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ He divided them into small herds, and put each herd into the care of one of his servants. He said to his servants, “Go ahead of me, one group at a time, and keep some space between each herd.”

ULB:

¹³ Jacob stayed there that night. He took some of what he had with him as a gift for Esau, his brother: ¹⁴ two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵ thirty milking camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ These he gave these into the hand of his servants, every herd by itself. He said to his servants, “Go on ahead of me and put a space between each of the herds.”

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- gift
- goat, kid
- sheep, ram, ewe
- camel
- cow, calf, bull, cattle
- servant, slave, slavery
- flock, herd

translationNotes:

- **two hundred** - “200” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **twenty ... thirty ... forty ... ten** - “20 ... 30 ... 40 ... 10” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **and their colts** - “and their young”
- **These he gave these into the hand of his servants, every herd by itself** - Here “into the hand” means to give control over them. AT: “He divided them into small herds, and gave each of his servants control over one herd” (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#))
- **put a space between each of the herds** - “let each herd travel at a distance from the other herds”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ He said to the servant who was going with the first group, "When my brother Esau meets you, he will ask you, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do these animals in front of you belong?'" ¹⁸ Tell him, "They belong to your servant Jacob. He has sent them to you as a gift, sir. And he is coming behind us."

ULB:

¹⁷ He instructed the first servant, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Whose animals are these that are in front of you?'" ¹⁸ Then you will say, "They are your servant Jacob's. They are a gift sent to my master Esau. See, he is also coming after us."

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- gift
- lord, master, sir

translationNotes:

- **He instructed** - "He commanded"
- **asks you ... that are in front of you?** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "asks you who your master is, where you are going, and who owns these animals that are ahead of you" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **To whom do you belong?** - "Who is your master?"
- **Whose animals are these that are in front of you?** - "Who owns these animals that are in front of you?"
- **Then you will say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. They are a gift sent to my master Esau. See, he is also coming after us.'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "Then I want you to tell him that all of these things belong to Jacob, his servant, and he his giving them to his master, Esau. And tell him that Jacob is on the way to meet him" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **your servant Jacob's** - Jacob is referring to himself in a polite way as Esau's servant.
- **to my master Esau** - Jacob is referring to Esau is a polite way as his master.
- **coming after us** - Here "us" refers to the servant speaking and the other servants bringing herds to Esau. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:19-21

UDB:

¹⁹ He also said the same thing to the servants who were taking care of the second and third groups, and to the other herdsmen. He said to them, "When you meet Esau, I want you to say to him the same thing that I told the first servant. ²⁰ Also be sure to say 'Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.'" Jacob told them to say that because he was thinking, "Perhaps these gifts that I am sending ahead of me will cause him to act peacefully toward me. Later, when I see him, perhaps he will act kindly toward me." ²¹ So the men taking the gifts went ahead, but Jacob himself stayed in the camp that night.

ULB:

¹⁹ Jacob also gave instructions to the second group, the third, and all the men who followed the herds. He said, "You will say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. ²⁰ You must also say, 'Your servant Jacob is coming after us.'" For he thought, "I will appease him with the gifts that I am sending ahead of me. Then later, when I will see him, perhaps he will receive me." ²¹ So the gifts went on ahead of him. He himself stayed that night in the camp.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- flock, herd
- Esau
- servant, slave, slavery
- gift

translationNotes:

- **gave instructions to the second group** - "commanded the second group"
- **You must also say, 'Your servant Jacob** - Possible meanings are 1) "You will say also, 'Your servant Jacob'" or 2) "You will say, 'Also, Your servant Jacob.'"
- **I will appease him** - "I will calm him down" or "I will make his anger go away"
- **he will receive me** - "he will welcome me kindly"
- **So the gifts went on ahead of him** - Here "gifts" stands for the servants taking the gifts. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **He himself stayed** - Here "himself" emphasizes that Jacob did not go with the servants. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:22-23**UDB:**

²² Some time during that night, Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female slaves, and his eleven sons, and he sent them across the ford at the Jabbok River. ²³ After he sent all his people across the Jabbok River, then he also sent over everything he owned.

ULB:

²² Jacob got up during the night, and took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons. He sent them across the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ In this way he sent them across the stream along with all his possessions.

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [possess, possession](#)

translationNotes:

- **his two women servants** - “his two servant wives.” This means Zilpah and Bilhah.
- **ford** - a shallow place in a river that is easy to cross
- **Jabbok** - This is the name of a river. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **all his possessions** - “all that he had”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:24-26

UDB:

²⁴ So Jacob was left there alone. But a man came and wrestled with him until dawn. ²⁵ When the man realized that he was not winning against Jacob, he struck Jacob's hip and caused the thigh bone to pull away from the hip socket. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, because it will soon be daylight." Jacob replied, "No, if you will not bless me, I will not let you go!"

ULB:

²⁴ Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not defeat him, he struck Jacob's hip. Jacob's hip was dislocated as he wrestled with him. ²⁶ The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)

translationNotes:

- **until daybreak** - "until dawn" (UDB)
- **hip** - "thigh socket." This is the place where the upper leg bone connects to the hip.
- **Jacob's hip was dislocated as he wrestled with him** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "The man injured Jacob's hip as he wrestled with him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **for the dawn is breaking** - "the sun will rise soon"
- **bless** - Here "bless" means to pronounce a formal blessing on someone and to cause good things to happen to that person.
- **I will not let you go unless you bless me** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: "Absolutely not! You must bless me first, then I will let you go" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:27-28**UDB:**

²⁷ The man said to him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Jacob.” ²⁸ The man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob. Your name will be Israel, which means ‘he struggles with God,’ because you have struggled with God and with people, and you have won.”

ULB:

²⁷ The man said to him, “What is your name?” Jacob said, “Jacob.” ²⁸ The man said, “Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel. For you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.”

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **Israel** - Translators may add a footnote that says “The name Israel means ‘He struggles with God.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **and with men** - Here “men” means “people” in general.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ Jacob said, “Now, please tell me your name!” The man replied, “Why do you ask me what my name is?” But he blessed Jacob there. ³⁰ So Jacob named the place Peniel, which means “God’s face,” saying “I looked directly at God, but I did not die because of doing that.”

ULB:

²⁹ Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” He said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there. ³⁰ Jacob called the name of the place Peniel for he said, “I have seen God face to face, and my life is delivered.”

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [God](#)
- [face](#)

translationNotes:

- **He said, “Why is it that you ask my name?”** - “He said, ‘Why would you ask about my name?’” This rhetorical question was meant to shock, rebuke and cause Jacob to ponder over what just happened between him and the other man he just wrestled with. AT: “Do not ask me for my name!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Peniel** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Peniel means ‘the face of God.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **face to face** - Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- **and my life is delivered** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “yet he spared my life” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 32:31-32

UDB:

³¹ The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of what had happened to his hip. ³² The muscle on his hip joint had been injured. So to this present time, because of what happened to Jacob, the Israelite people do not eat the muscle that is attached to the socket of the hips of animals.

ULB:

³¹ The sun rose on Jacob as he passed Peniel. He was limping because of his hip. ³² That is why to this day the people of Israel do not eat the ligaments of the hip which are at the hip joint, because the man injured those ligaments while dislocating Jacob's hip.

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **That is why to this day** - This marks a change from the story to background information about the descendants of Israel. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **to this day** - This means to the day that the author was writing this.
- **ligaments of the hip** - This refers to the muscle that connects the thigh bone to the thigh socket.
- **hip joint** - "thigh socket"
- **while dislocating** - "while striking"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 32 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 32 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob's fear

Jacob feared his brother. He showed Esau great respect and sought to protect his family from Esau's power. He did not fear and trust Yahweh. (See: [fear](#), [afraid](#), [fear of Yahweh](#) and [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#))

Favoritism

Jacob showed favoritism towards Rachel and Joseph. He arranged the family according to those he loved the most. Rachel and Joseph were the most protected from a potential attack by Esau. He would have rather had everyone else die, in order to spare their lives. (See: [favor](#), [favorable](#), [favoritism](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 33:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 33:1-3

UDB:

¹ Then Jacob joined the rest of his family. Later that day Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and there were four hundred men with him. Jacob was worried because of that, so he separated the children. He put Leah's children with Leah, Rachel's children with Rachel, and the two female slaves' children with their mothers. ² He put the two female slaves and their children in front. He put Leah and her children next. He put Rachel and Joseph at the rear. ³ He himself went ahead of them all, and as he continued to approach his older brother, he prostrated himself with his face on the ground seven times.

ULB:

33 ¹ Jacob looked up and, behold, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. Jacob divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two female servants. ² Then he put the female servants and their children in front, followed by Leah and her children, and followed by Rachel and Joseph last of all. ³ He himself went on ahead of them. He bowed toward the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- Esau
- Leah
- Rachel
- servant, slave, slavery
- Joseph (OT)
- bow, bow down

translationNotes:

- **behold** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to a surprising new part of the story.
- **four hundred men** - “400 men” (See [Numbers](#))
- **Jacob divided the children ... female servants** - This does not mean Jacob divided the children evenly so that each woman had the same amount of children with her. Jacob divided the children so that each one went with his or her mother. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **female servants** - “servant wives.” This refers to Bilhah and Zilpah.
- **He himself went on ahead of them** - Here “himself” emphasizes that Jacob went alone in front of the others. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

- **He bowed** - Here the word “bow” means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:4-5

UDB:

⁴ But Esau ran to Jacob. He hugged him, put his arms around his neck, and kissed him on the cheek. And they both cried. ⁵ Then Esau looked up and saw the women and the children. He asked, “Who are these people who are with you?” Jacob replied, “These are the wives and children that God has graciously given to me.”

ULB:

⁴ Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him. Then they wept. ⁵ When Esau looked up, he saw the women and the children. He said, “Who are these people with you?” Jacob said, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.”

translationWords:

- [kiss](#)
- [God](#)
- [grace, gracious](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **meet him** - “meet Jacob”
- **embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him** - This can be translated as a new sentence. AT: “Esau put his arms around Jacob, hugged him, and kissed him”
- **Then they wept** - This can be translated more explicitly. AT: “Then Esau and Jacob cried because they were happy to see each other again” (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **he saw the women and the children** - “he saw the women and children who were with Jacob”
- **The children whom God has graciously given your servant** - The phrase “your servant” is a polite way for Jacob to refer to himself. AT: “These are the children God has kindly given me, your servant” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:6-8

UDB:

⁶ Then the female slaves and their children came near and bowed in front of Esau. ⁷ Then Leah and her children came and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came near and bowed down.

⁸ Esau asked, “What is the meaning of all the animals that I saw?” Jacob replied, “I am giving them to you, sir, so that you will feel good toward me.”

ULB:

⁶ Then the female servants came forward with their children, and they bowed down. ⁷ Next Leah also and her children came forward and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed down. ⁸ Esau said, “What do you mean by all these groups that I met?” Jacob said, “To find favor in the sight of my master.”

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **female servants** - “servant wives.” This refers to Bilhah and Zilpah.
- **bowed down** - This is a sign of humility and respect before another person. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **What do you mean by all these groups that I met?** - The phrase “all these groups” refers to the groups of servants that Jacob sent to give gifts to Esau. AT: “Why did you send all of those different groups to meet me?”
- **To find favor in the sight of my master** - Here “sight” stands for a person’s thoughts or opinion. AT: “So that you, my master, would be pleased with me” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **my master** - The phrase “my master” is a polite way of referring to Esau. (See [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:9-11

UDB:

⁹ But Esau replied, “My younger brother, I have enough animals! Keep for yourself the animals that you have!” ¹⁰ But Jacob said, “No, please, if you feel good toward me, accept these gifts from me. You have greeted me very kindly. Seeing you smile at me assures me that you have forgiven me. It is like seeing the face of God!” ¹¹ Please accept these gifts that I have brought to you, because God has acted kindly toward me, and I still have plenty of animals!” Jacob kept on urging him to accept the animals, and finally Esau accepted them.

ULB:

⁹ Esau said, “I have enough, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself.” ¹⁰ Jacob said, “No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my gift from my hand, for indeed, I have seen your face, and it is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. ¹¹ Please accept my gift that was brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.” Thus Jacob urged him, and Esau accepted it.

translationWords:

- Esau
- brother
- Jacob, Israel
- favor, favorable, favoritism
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- face

translationNotes:

- **I have enough** - The word “animals” or “property” is understood. AT: “I have enough animals” (UDB) or “I have enough property” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **if I have found favor in your sight** - Here “sight” stands for a person’s thoughts or opinions. AT: “if you are pleased with me” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **my gift from my hand** - Here “hand” refers to Jacob. AT: “this gift that I am giving to you” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **my hand, for indeed** - This can be translated as a new sentence: “my hand. For certainly”
- **I have seen your face, and it is like seeing the face of God** - The meaning of this simile is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) Jacob is happy that Esau has forgiven him like God has forgiven him or 2) Jacob is amazed to see his brother again like he was amazed to see God or 3) Jacob is humbled to be in Esau’s presence like he was humbled to be in God’s presence. (See: [Simile](#))

- **I have seen your face** - Here “face” stands for Esau. It may be best to translate as “face” because of the importance of the word “face” here with “face of God” and “face to face” in [32:30](#). (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **that was brought to you** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “that my servants brought to you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **God has dealt graciously with me** - “God has treated me very well” or “God has blessed me very much”
- **Thus Jacob urged him, and Esau accepted it** - It was customary to refuse a gift first, but then to accept the gift before the giver was offended.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:12-14

UDB:

¹² Then Esau said, "Let us continue traveling together, and I will lead you on the road." ¹³ Jacob said, "You know, sir, that the children are weak, and that I must take care of the female sheep and cows that are sucking their mother's milk. If I force them to walk fast for a long distance in just one day, the animals will all die. ¹⁴ You go ahead of me. I will lead the animals slowly, but I will walk as fast as the children and animals can walk. I will catch up with you in Seir."

ULB:

¹² Then Esau said, "Let us be on our way. I will go before you." ¹³ Jacob said to him, "My master knows that the children are young, and that the sheep and the cattle are nursing their young. If they are driven hard even one day, all the animals will die. ¹⁴ Please let my master go on ahead of his servant. I will travel more slowly, at the pace of the livestock that are before me, and at the pace of the children, until I come to my master in Seir."

translationWords:

- lord, master, sir
- flock, herd
- servant, slave, slavery
- livestock

translationNotes:

- **My master knows** - This is a polite and formal way of referring to Esau. AT: "You, my master, know" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **the children are young** - The meaning can be stated more explicitly. AT: "the children are too young to travel fast" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **If they are driven hard even one day** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "If we force them to go too fast even for one day" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Please let my master go on ahead of his servant** - This is a polite and formal way of Jacob referring to himself. AT: "My lord, I am your servant. Please go ahead of me" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **at the pace of the livestock that are before me** - "at the speed the animals I am looking after can go"
- **Seir** - This is a mountainous area in the region of Edom. See how you translated this in [32:3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:15-17

UDB:

¹⁵ Esau said, “Then allow me to leave with you some of the men who came with me, to protect you.” But Jacob replied, “Why do that? The only thing that I want is for you to feel good toward me.” ¹⁶ So on that day Esau left to return to Seir. ¹⁷ But instead of going to Seir, Jacob and his family went to a place called Succoth. There he built a house for himself and his family, and built shelters for his livestock. That is the reason they named the place Succoth, which means “shelters.”

ULB:

¹⁵ Esau said, “Let me leave with you some of my men who are with me.” But Jacob said, “Why do that? My master has already been kind enough to me.” ¹⁶ So Esau that day started on his way back to Seir. ¹⁷ Jacob traveled to Succoth, built himself a house, and made shelters for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Succoth](#)
- [refuge, shelter](#)

translationNotes:

- **Why do that?** - Jacob uses a question to emphasize that Esau does not need to leave men. AT: “Do not do that!” or “You do not need to do that!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **My master has** - This is a polite and formal way of referring to Esau. AT: “You, my master, have” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#)).
- **Succoth** - Translators may also add a footnote that says, “The name Succoth means ‘shelters.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **built himself a house** - It is implied that the house is also for his family. AT: “built a house for himself and his family” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **for his livestock** - “for the animals he looked after”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 33:18-20

UDB:

¹⁸ This is how Jacob and his family left Paddan Aram and traveled safely to the land of Canaan. There they set up their tents in a field near the city of Shechem. ¹⁹ One of the leaders of the people in that area was named Hamor. Hamor had several sons. Jacob paid the sons of Hamor one hundred pieces of silver for the piece of ground on which they set up their tents. ²⁰ He built a stone altar there and named it El Elohe Israel, which means “God, the God of Israel.”

ULB:

¹⁸ When Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan. He camped near the city. ¹⁹ Then he bought the piece of ground where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for a hundred pieces of silver. ²⁰ There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Paddan Aram](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [silver](#)
- [altar](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This starts a new part of the story. The author describes what Jacob did after he rested in Succoth.
- **When Jacob came from Paddan Aram** - “After Jacob left Paddan Aram”
- **When Jacob ... he arrived ... He camped** - This only mentions Jacob because he is the leader of the family. It is implied that his family was with him. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **He camped near** - “He set up his camp near”
- **piece of ground** - “piece of land”
- **Hamor** - This is the name of a man. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Shechem’s father** - Shechem is the name of a city and the name of a man.
- **a hundred** - “100” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **El Elohe Israel** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name El Elohe Israel means ‘God, the God of Israel.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 33 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 33 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel

Jacob's name was changed to Israel. It is his descendants who inherited the promised blessings given to him and to Isaac and Abraham. This is the first time his descendants are collectively referred to as the people group Israel. The people group Israel is identified through the covenant of circumcision. (See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [promise](#), [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [covenant](#) and [circumcise](#), [circumcision](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Jacob's reacted to the rape of Dinah with indifference. This is possibly because she was not a daughter of Rachel. His reaction was not wise, but was improper. This action brought shame on the whole family. Therefore, Jacob's sons corrected this wrong and plotted against Hamor and Shechem.

Shechem raped Dinah, but then he said he loved her. By raping her, he ensured that no one else would want to marry her. This is not love. (See: [wise](#), [wisdom](#), [love](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 34:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 34:1-3

UDB:

¹ One day Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, went to visit some of the women in that area. ² Shechem was one of the sons of Hamor, and he was descended from the people group of the Hivites. When he saw her, he took her and forced her to have sex with him. ³ He was very much attracted to her, and he became attached to her. He loved her and he spoke very tenderly to the girl.

ULB:

34 ¹ Now Dinah, Leah's daughter whom she bore to Jacob, went out to meet the young women of the land. ² Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her and he grabbed her, assaulted her, and slept with her. ³ He was drawn to Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her.

translationWords:

- Leah
- Jacob, Israel
- Shechem
- Hamor
- Hivite
- prince, princess
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

translationNotes:

- **Now** - Here this word is used to mark a new part of the story.
- **Dinah** - This is the name of Leah's daughter. See how you translated this name in [30:21](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the Hivite** - This is the name of a people group. See how you translated the similar word "Hivites" in [10:17](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the prince of the land** - This is referring to Hamor not Shechem. Also, "prince" here does not mean son of a king. It means Hamor was the leader of the people in that area.
- **assaulted her, and slept with her** - Shechem raped Dinah. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **He was drawn to Dinah** - "He was very attracted to her" (UDB). This speaks about Shechem loving Dinah and wanting to be with her as if something were forcing him to come to Dinah. This can be stated in active form. AT: "He wanted very much to be with Dinah" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **spoke tenderly to her** - This means he spoke affectionately to convince her that he loved her and that he wanted her to love him also.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:4-5

UDB:

⁴ So Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Please get this girl for me. I want her to become my wife!”

⁵ When Jacob found out that Shechem had seized his daughter Dinah and slept with her, his sons were still in the fields with his livestock, so he said nothing about this until they returned home.

ULB:

⁴ Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get this young woman for me as a wife.” ⁵ Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. His sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came.

translationWords:

- [Shechem](#)
- [Hamor](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [defile, be defiled](#)
- [livestock](#)
- [peace, peaceful](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now Jacob** - “Now” is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jacob. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **Jacob heard that he** - The word “he” refers to Shechem.
- **he had defiled** - This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him.
- **held his peace** - This is a way of saying that Jacob did not say or do anything about the matter. (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:6-7

UDB:

⁶ In the meantime, Shechem's father Hamor went to talk with Jacob. ⁷ Jacob's sons came in from the field, and when they had found out what had happened, they were shocked and very angry, because Shechem had brought much shame to Israel by forcing himself on Jacob's daughter. She was their sister! This was a terrible crime that should never be done.

ULB:

⁶ Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷ The sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard of the matter. The men were offended. They were very angry because he had disgraced Israel by forcing himself on Jacob's daughter, for such a thing should not have been done.

translationWords:

- [Hamor](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [disgrace, disgraceful](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **Hamor ... went out to Jacob** - "Hamor ... went to meet Jacob"
- **The men were offended** - "The men were outraged"
- **They were very angry ... should not have been done** - This can be stated as a direct quotation spoken by Jacob's son, as in the UDB. (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **he had disgraced Israel** - Here the word "Israel" refers to every member of Jacob's family. Israel as a people group was disgraced. AT: "he had humiliated the family of Israel" or "he had brought shame on the people of Israel" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **forcing himself on Jacob's daughter** - "assaulting Jacob's daughter"
- **for such a thing should not have been done** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "for he should not have done such a terrible thing" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:8-10

UDB:

⁸ But Hamor said to them, "My son Shechem really likes this girl who is your daughter and your sister. Please allow him to marry her. ⁹ Let us make an agreement: You will give your daughters to our young men to be their wives, and we will give our daughters to your young men to be their wives. ¹⁰ You can live among us and live anywhere in our land that you wish. You can buy and sell things. If you find land that you want, then you can buy it."

ULB:

⁸ Hamor spoke with them, saying, "My son Shechem loves your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. ⁹ Intermarry with us, give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰ You will live with us, and the land will be open to you to live and trade in, and to acquire property."

translationWords:

- [Hamor](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [love](#)

translationNotes:

- **Hamor spoke with them** - "Hamor spoke with Jacob and his sons"
- **loves your daughter** - Here the word "love" refers to romantic love between a man and a woman. AT: "loves her and wants to marry her"
- **give her to him as a wife** - In some cultures, the parents decide whom their children will marry.
- **Intermarry with us** - To intermarry is to marry a member of a different racial, social, religious or tribal group. AT: "Allow marriages between your people and ours"
- **the land will be open to you** - "the land will be available to you"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:11-13**UDB:**

¹¹ Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "If you feel good toward me and do what I am asking for, I will give you whatever you ask for. ¹² Tell me what gifts you want and what bride price you want, and I will give you what you ask for. I just want you to give the girl to me to be my wife."

¹³ But because Shechem had done a shameful thing to their sister Dinah, the sons of Jacob deceived Shechem and his father Hamor.

ULB:

¹¹ Shechem said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you tell me I will give. ¹² Ask me for as great a bride price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me, but give me the young woman as a wife." ¹³ The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit, because Shechem had defiled Dinah their sister.

translationWords:

- [Shechem](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)
- [defile, be defiled](#)

translationNotes:

- **Shechem said to her father** - "Shechem said to Dinah's father Jacob"
- **Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you tell me I will give** - Here "eyes" stands for a person's thoughts or opinion. AT: "If you will approve of me, then I will give you whatever you ask" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **bride price** - In some cultures, it is customary for a man to give money, property, cattle, and other gifts to the bride's family at the time of marriage.
- **The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit** - The abstract noun "deceit" can be stated as the verb "lied." AT: "But the sons of Jacob lied to Shechem and Hamor when they answered them" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **Shechem had defiled Dinah** - This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him. See how you translated "defiled" in [34:5](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 34 General Notes
- **Genesis 34 Translation Questions**

Genesis 34:14-17**UDB:**

¹⁴ They said to them, "No, we cannot do that. We cannot give our sister to be the wife of a man who is not circumcised, because that would be a shameful thing for us to do. ¹⁵ We will do that only if you do one thing: you must become like us by circumcising all the males that are among you. ¹⁶ Then we will give our daughters to your young men to be your wives, and we will take your daughters to be the wives of our young men. We will live among you, and we will become one people group. ¹⁷ But if you do not agree to be circumcised, we will take our sister and leave."

ULB:

¹⁴ They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to anyone who is uncircumcised; for that would be a disgrace to us. ¹⁵ Only on this condition will we agree with you: if you will become circumcised as we are, if every male among you is circumcised. ¹⁶ Then will we give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people. ¹⁷ But if you do not listen to us and become circumcised, then we will take our sister and we will leave."

translationWords:

- [uncircumcised, uncircumcision](#)
- [circumcise, circumcision](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)

translationNotes:

- **They said to them** - "Jacob's sons said to Shechem and Hamor"
- **We cannot do this thing, to give our sister** - "We cannot agree to give Dinah in marriage"
- **for that would be a disgrace to us** - "for that would cause us shame." Here "us" refers to Jacob's sons and all the people of Israel. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **give our daughters to you ... take your daughters to ourselves** - This means they will allow a person from Jacob's family to marry a person who lives in Hamor's land.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ What they said pleased Hamor and his son Shechem. ¹⁹ Shechem wanted very much to take Jacob's daughter as his wife; also, since he was the most respected person in his father's family, he quickly agreed to do what they suggested.

ULB:

¹⁸ Their words pleased Hamor and his son Shechem. ¹⁹ The young man did not delay to do what they said, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter, and because he was the most honored person in all his father's household.

translationWords:

- [word](#)
- [Hamor](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [honor, to honor](#)
- [household](#)

translationNotes:

- **Their words pleased Hamor and his son Shechem** - Here "words" stands for what was said. AT: "Hamor and his son Shechem agreed with what Jacob's sons said" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **to do what they said** - "to become circumcised"
- **Jacob's daughter** - "Jacob's daughter Dinah"
- **because he was the most honored person in all his father's household** - This can be translated as a new sentence. It can be made explicit that Shechem knew the other men would agree to be circumcised because they greatly respected him. AT: "Shechem knew all the men in his father's household would agree with him because he was the most honored among them" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:20-21**UDB:**

²⁰ Shechem went with Hamor to the meeting place at the city gate, and they spoke to the city leaders. They said, ²¹ "These men are friendly toward us. We should let them live here and travel around. Certainly the land is big enough to support them and us. Our young men can marry their daughters, and their young men can marry our daughters.

ULB:

²⁰ Hamor and Shechem his son went to the gate of their city and spoke with the men of their city, saying, ²¹ "These men are at peace with us, so let them live in the land and trade in it for, really, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters.

translationWords:

- [Hamor](#)
- [Shechem](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)
- [peace, peaceful](#)

translationNotes:

- **the gate of their city** - It was common for leaders to meet at the city gate to make official decisions.
- **These men** - "Jacob, his sons, and the people of Israel"
- **peace with us** - Here "us" includes Hamor, his son and all the people they spoke with at the city gate. (See: [Inclusive "We"](#))
- **let them live in the land and trade in it** - "let them live and trade in the land"
- **for, really, the land is large enough for them** - Shechem uses the word "really" to add emphasis to his statement. "because, certainly, the land is large enough for them" or "because, indeed, there is plenty of land for them"
- **take their daughters ... give them our daughters** - This refers to marriages between the women of one group and the men of the other group. See how you translated similar phrases in [34:9](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 34 Translation Questions

Genesis 34:22-23

UDB:

²² But these men will agree to live among us and become one people group with us only if all our males are circumcised, as they are. ²³ But if we do that, just think! Their cattle, their possessions, and all their animals will become ours! So we should agree to do what they suggest, and then they will live among us!”

ULB:

²² Only on this condition will the men agree to live with us and become one people: if every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised. ²³ Will not their livestock and their property—all their animals be ours? So let us agree with them, and they will live among us.”

translationWords:

- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [circumcise, circumcision](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Hamor and Shechem his son continue to talk to the city elders.
- **Only on this condition will the men agree to live with us and become one people: if every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised** - “Only if every man among us is circumcised, as the men of Israel are circumcised, will they agree to live among us and unite with us as one people”
- **Will not their livestock and their property—all their animals be ours?** - Shechem uses a question to emphasize that Jacob’s livestock and property will belong to the people of Shechem. This can be translated as a statement. AT: “All of their animals and property will be ours.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:24-26

UDB:

²⁴ All the men who were at the city gate agreed to what Hamor and Shechem suggested. Every male in the city was circumcised.

²⁵ On the third day after that, when the men of the city were still sore because of being circumcised, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's brothers, took their swords and entered the city without anyone stopping them, and killed all the men. ²⁶ They even killed Hamor and his son Shechem. Then they took Dinah out of Shechem's house and left the city.

ULB:

²⁴ All the men of the city listened to Hamor and Shechem, his son. Every male was circumcised. ²⁵ On the third day, when they were still in pain, two of the sons of Jacob (Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers), each took his sword and they attacked the city that was certain of its security, and they killed all the males. ²⁶ They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword. They took Dinah from Shechem's house and went away.

translationWords:

- Hamor
- Shechem
- circumcise, circumcision
- Jacob, Israel
- Simeon
- Levite, Levi
- sword
- house

translationNotes:

- **Every male was circumcised** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "So Hamor and Shechem had someone circumcise all the men" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **On the third day** - "third" is the ordinal number for three. It can be stated without the ordinal number. AT: "After two days" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **when they were still in pain** - "when the men of the city were still in pain"
- **each took his sword** - "took their swords"
- **they attacked the city** - Here "city" stands for the people. AT: "they attacked the people of the city" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **security, and they killed all the males** - This can be translated as a new sentence. "security. Simeon and Levi killed all the men of the city"

- **with the edge of the sword** - Here “edge” stands for the blade of the sword. AT: “with the blade of their swords” or “with their swords” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:27-29

UDB:

²⁷ Then the other sons of Jacob went into the city where all those dead bodies were. They looted the city to get revenge for the shameful thing that had been done to their sister. ²⁸ They took away the people's sheep and goats, their cattle, their donkeys, and everything else that they wanted from inside the city and from out in the countryside. ²⁹ They took away everything that was valuable, even the children and the women. They seized and took away everything that was in the houses.

ULB:

²⁷ The other sons of Jacob came to the dead bodies and looted the city, because the people had defiled their sister. ²⁸ They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, and everything in the city and in the surrounding fields with ²⁹ all their wealth. All their children and their wives, they captured. They even took everything that was in the houses.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- death, die, dead
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- defile, be defiled
- flock, herd
- donkey, mule
- house

translationNotes:

- **the dead bodies** - "the dead bodies of Hamor, Shechem, and their men"
- **looted the city** - "stole everything in the city that was valuable"
- **because the people had defiled their sister** - Shechem alone had defiled Dinah, but Jacob's sons considered Shechem's entire family and everyone in the city responsible for this act.
- **had defiled** - This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him. See how you translated "defiled" in [34:5](#).
- **They took their flocks** - "Jacob's sons took the people's flocks"
- **all their wealth** - "all their possessions and money"
- **All their children and their wives, they captured** - "They captured all their children and wives"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 34:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have brought me big trouble! Now the Canaan people group, the Perez people group, and everyone else who lives in this land will hate me! I do not have many men to fight for us, so if they all gather together and come to me and attack us, they will destroy us and all our household!” ³¹ But they replied, “Should we have allowed Shechem to treat our sister like a prostitute?”

ULB:

³⁰ Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have brought trouble on me, to make me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I am few in number. If they gather themselves together against me and attack me, then I will be destroyed, I and my household.” ³¹ But Simeon and Levi said, “Should Shechem have dealt with our sister as with a prostitute?”

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- Simeon
- Levite, Levi
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Perizzite
- household
- Shechem
- prostitute, harlot, whore

translationNotes:

- **brought trouble on me** - Causing someone to experience trouble is spoken of as if trouble were an object that is brought and placed on a person. AT: “caused great problems for me” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **to make me stink to the inhabitants of the land** - Causing the people in the surrounding areas to hate Jacob is spoken of as if Jacob’s sons made him smell bad physically. This can be translated as a new sentence. AT: “You have made me repulsive to the people who live in the land” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **I am few in number ... against me and attack me, then I will be destroyed, I and my household** - Here the words “I” and “me” refer to all of Jacob’s household. Jacob only says “I” or “me” since he is the leader. AT: “My household is small ... against us and attack us, then they will destroy all of us” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

- **gather themselves together against me and attack me** - “form an army and attack me” or “form an army and attack us”
- **then I will be destroyed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “they will destroy me” or “they will destroy us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Should Shechem have dealt with our sister as with a prostitute?** - Simeon and Levi use a question to emphasize that Shechem did what was wrong and deserved to die. AT: “Shechem should not have treated our sister as if she were a prostitute!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 34 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 34 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Name change

In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly significant point in a person's life. The return of Jacob to Canaan was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Covenant

The covenant God made with Abraham is repeated here. It indicates that all of Jacob's descendants inherit the promises of this covenant. (See: [covenant](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#) and [promise](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 35:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 35:1-3**UDB:**

¹ Some time later, God said to Jacob, “Go up to the city of Bethel and live there. Build an altar to worship me, God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your older brother Esau.” ² So Jacob said to his household and to all the others who were with him, “Get rid of the idols you brought from the land of Mesopotamia. Also, bathe yourselves and put on clean clothes. ³ Then we will get ready and go up to Bethel. There I will build an altar to worship God. He is the one who helped me at the time when I was greatly distressed and afraid, and he has been with me wherever I have gone.”

ULB:

35 ¹ God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel, and stay there. Build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from Esau your brother.” ² Then Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your clothes. ³ Then let us depart and go up to Bethel. I will build an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and has been with me wherever I have gone.”

translationWords:

- God
- Jacob, Israel
- Bethel
- altar
- Esau
- household
- false god, foreign god, god, goddess
- pure, purify, purification

translationNotes:

- **go up to Bethel** - The phrase “go up” is used because Bethel is higher in elevation than Shechem.
- **Build an altar there to God** - God speaks about himself in the third person. AT: “Build an altar there to me, your God” (See: **First, Second or Third Person**)
- **said to his household** - “said to his family”
- **Put away the foreign gods that are among you** - “Throw away your idols” or “Get rid of your false gods”
- **purify yourselves, and change your clothes** - This was the custom of cleansing oneself morally and physically before going to worship God.

- **change your clothes** - Putting on a new clothes was a sign that they had made themselves clean before approaching God. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **in the day of my distress** - Possible meanings for “day” are 1) the day when Jacob fled from Esau or 2) “day” stands for a period of time when Jacob was distressed. AT: “when I was in a difficult situation” or “when I was in trouble” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the idols that they had brought, and all their earrings. Jacob buried them in the ground under the big oak tree that was near the city of Shechem.

⁵ As they prepared to leave there, God caused the people who lived in the cities around them to be very afraid of Jacob's family, so that they did not pursue them.

ULB:

⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that were in their hand, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob buried them under the oak that was near Shechem. ⁵ As they traveled, God made panic to fall on the cities that were around them, so those people did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

translationWords:

- **Jacob, Israel**
- **false god, foreign god, god, goddess**
- **bury, buried, burial**
- **oak**
- **Shechem**

translationNotes:

- **So they gave** - "so everyone in Jacob's household gave" or "so all of his family and servants gave"
- **that were in their hand** - Here "in their hand" stands for what they own. AT: "that were in their possession" or "that they had" (See: **Metonymy**)
- **the rings that were in their ears** - "their earrings" (UDB). Possible meanings are 1) the gold in the earrings could have been used to make more idols or 2) they took these earrings from the city of Shechem after they attacked it and killed all the people. The earrings would have reminded them of their sin.
- **God made panic to fall on the cities** - God causing the people of the cities to be afraid of Jacob and his family is spoken of as if panic were an object that fell on the cities. The abstract noun "panic" can be stated as "afraid." AT: "God made the people in the surrounding cities afraid of Jacob and those with him" (See: **Metaphor** and **Abstract Nouns**)
- **on the cities** - Here "cities" stands for the people who live in the cities. (See: **Metonymy**)
- **the sons of Jacob** - It is implied that no one attacked anyone in Jacob's family. But two of the sons, Simeon and Levi had attacked the Canaanites relatives of Shechem after he seized and slept with Jacob's daughter. Jacob was afraid they would seek revenge in **34:30**. AT: "Jacob's family" or "Jacob's household" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ Jacob and all those who were with him went to Luz, which is now called Bethel, in Canaan land.

⁷ There he built an altar. He named the place El Bethel, which means “God of Bethel,” because it was there that God revealed himself to Jacob when he was fleeing from his older brother Esau.

⁸ Deborah, who had taken care of Isaac’s wife Rebekah when Rebekah was a small girl, was now very old. She died and was buried under an oak tree south of Bethel. So they named that place Allon Bacuth, which means “oak of weeping.”

ULB:

⁶ So Jacob arrived at Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. ⁷ He built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him, when he was fleeing from his brother. ⁸ Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died. She was buried down from Bethel under the oak tree, so it was called Allon Bacuth.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [altar](#)
- [God](#)
- [reveal, revelation](#)
- [Rebekah](#)
- [bury, buried, burial](#)
- [oak](#)

translationNotes:

- **Luz** - This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [28:19](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **El Bethel** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name El Bethel means ‘God of Bethel.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **there God had revealed himself to him** - “there God made himself known to Jacob”
- **Deborah** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Rebekah’s nurse** - A nurse is a woman who takes care of another woman’s child. The nurse was highly honored and important to the family.
- **She was buried down from Bethel** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “They buried her down from Bethel” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

- **down from Bethel** - The phrase “down from” is used because they buried her in a place that was lower in elevation than Bethel.
- **Allon Bacuth** - Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Allon Bacuth means ‘Oak tree where there is weeping.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ After Jacob and his family returned from Paddan Aram, while they were still at Bethel, God appeared to Jacob again and blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him again, “Your name will no longer be Jacob. It will be Israel.” So Jacob was then called “Israel.”

ULB:

⁹ When Jacob came from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but your name will no longer be called Jacob. Your name will be Israel.” So God called his name Israel.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Paddan Aram](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [name](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **When Jacob came from Paddan Aram** - It can be made explicit that they were in Bethel. AT: “After Jacob left Paddan Aram, and while he was in Bethel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **blessed** - Here “bless” means to pronounce a formal blessing on someone and to cause good things to happen to that person.
- **but your name will no longer be called Jacob** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “but your name will no longer be Jacob” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:11-13

UDB:

¹¹ Then God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Produce many children. Your descendants will become many nations, and some of your descendants will be kings. ¹² The land that I promised to give to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you. I will also give it to your descendants."

¹³ When God finished talking there with Jacob, he left him.

ULB:

¹¹ God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants. ¹² The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you. To your descendants after you I also give the land." ¹³ God went up from him in the place where he spoke with him.

translationWords:

- [Almighty](#)
- [fruit, fruitful](#)
- [multiply](#)
- [nation](#)
- [king](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [Abraham, Abram](#)
- [Isaac](#)

translationNotes:

- **God said to him** - "God said to Jacob"
- **Be fruitful and multiply** - God told Jacob to produce children so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how he was to be "fruitful." See how you translated this in [1:22](#). (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **A nation and a company of nations will come from you** - Here "nation" and "nations" refer to Jacob's descendants who will establish these nations. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **God went up from him** - Here "went up" is used because where God dwells is typically thought of as being up or above the world. AT: "God left him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 35 General Notes
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Jacob set up a large stone at the place where God had talked with him. He poured some wine and some olive oil on it to dedicate it to God. ¹⁵ Jacob named that place Bethel, which means “house of God,” because God had spoken to him there.

ULB:

¹⁴ Jacob set up a pillar in the place where God had spoken to him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering over it and poured oil on it. ¹⁵ Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

translationWords:

- [pillar, column](#)
- [drink offering](#)
- [oil](#)
- [Bethel](#)

translationNotes:

- **pillar** - This is a memorial pillar which was simply a large stone or boulder set up on its end.
- **He poured out a drink offering over it and poured oil on it** - This is a sign that he is dedicating the pillar to God. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Bethel** - Translators may also add a footnote that says “The name Bethel means ‘house of God.’”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:16-20**UDB:**

¹⁶ Jacob and his family left Bethel and traveled south toward Ephrath town. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to have severe childbirth pains. ¹⁷ When her pain was the most severe, the midwife said to Rachel, “Do not be afraid, because now you have given birth to another son!” ¹⁸ But she was dying, and with her last breath she said, “Name him Benoni,” which means “son of my sorrow,” but his father named him Benjamin, which means “son of my right hand.”

¹⁹ After Rachel died, she was buried alongside the road to Ephrath, which is now called Bethlehem.

²⁰ Jacob set up a large stone over her grave, and it is still there, showing where Rachel’s grave is.

ULB:

¹⁶ They journeyed on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor. She had hard labor. ¹⁷ While she was in hardest labor, the midwife said to her, “Do not be afraid, for now you will have another son.” ¹⁸ As she was dying, with her dying breath she named him Benoni, but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). ²⁰ Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave. It is the marker of Rachel’s grave to this day.

translationWords:

- Bethel
- Bethlehem, Ephrathah
- Rachel
- labor pains, in labor
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- Benjamin
- bury, buried, burial
- pillar, column
- tomb, grave, burial place

translationNotes:

- **Ephrath** - This is another name for the town of Bethlehem.
- **She had hard labor** - “She was having a very difficult time giving birth to the child”
- **While she was in hardest labor** - “When the labor pain was at its worst”
- **midwife** - a person who helps a woman when she is giving birth to a child
- **As she was dying, with her dying breath** - A “dying breath” is a person’s last breath before he or she dies. AT: “Just before she died, as she was taking her last breath” (See: **Idiom**)

- **Benoni** - Translator may add a footnote that says “The name Benoni means ‘son of my sorrow.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Benjamin** - Translator may add a footnote that says “The name Benjamin means ‘son of the right hand.’” The phrase “right hand” indicates a place of special favor.
- **and was buried** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “and they buried her” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **on the way** - “alongside the road” (UDB)
- **It is the marker of Rachel’s grave to this day** - “It marks Rachel’s grave still to this day”
- **to this day** - “up to the present time.” This means to the time that the author was writing this.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:21-22

UDB:

²¹ Jacob, whose new name was Israel, continued traveling with his family, and he set up his tents on the south side of the watchtower at Eder. ²² While they were living in that area, Jacob's son Reuben slept with Bilhah, one of his father's concubines. Someone told Jacob about it, and it made him very angry.

Now Jacob had twelve sons.

ULB:

²¹ Israel traveled on and pitched his tent beyond the watchtower of the flock. ²² While Israel was living in that land, Reuben slept with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it.

Now Jacob had twelve sons.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [tent](#)
- [Reuben](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)
- [concubine](#)

translationNotes:

- **Israel traveled on** - It is implied that Israel's family and servants are with him. The full meaning of this information can be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Now Jacob had twelve sons** - This sentence begins a new paragraph, which continues into the following verses.
- **twelve sons** - "12 sons" (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:23-25

UDB:

²³ The sons of Leah were Reuben, who was Jacob's oldest son, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴ The sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵ The sons of Rachel's female slave Bilhah were Dan and Naphtali.

ULB:

²³ His sons by Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴ His sons by Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵ His sons by Bilhah, Rachel's female servant, were Dan and Naphtali.

translationWords:

- [Leah](#)
- [Reuben](#)
- [firstborn](#)
- [Simeon](#)
- [Levite, Levi](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Issachar](#)
- [Zebulun](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Benjamin](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Dan](#)
- [Naphtali](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ The sons of Leah's female slave Zilpah were Gad and Asher. All those sons of Jacob, except Benjamin, were born while he was living in Paddan Aram.

²⁷ Jacob went back home to see his father Isaac at Mamre, which is also named Kiriath Arba, and which is now named Hebron. Isaac's father Abraham had also lived there.

ULB:

²⁶ The sons of Zilpah, Leah's female servant, were Gad and Asher. All these were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan Aram. ²⁷ Jacob came to Isaac, his father, in Mamre in Kiriath Arba (the same as Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had lived.

translationWords:

- Leah
- servant, slave, slavery
- Gad
- Asher
- Jacob, Israel
- Paddan Aram
- Isaac
- Hebron
- Abraham, Abram

translationNotes:

- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:24](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **who were born to him in Paddan Aram** - It is implied that this does not include Benjamin who was born in the land of Canaan near Bethlehem. It only mentions Paddan Aram since that is where most of them were born. The full meaning of this can be made explicit. AT: "who were born to him in Paddan Aram, except Benjamin who was born in the land of Canaan" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Jacob came to Isaac** - Here "came" can be stated as "went." (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **Mamre** - This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [13:18](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Kiriath Arba** - This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [23:02](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 35:28-29

UDB:

²⁸ Isaac lived until he was 180 years old. ²⁹ He was very old when he died and went to join his ancestors who had died previously. His sons Esau and Jacob buried his body.

ULB:

²⁸ Isaac lived for one hundred eighty years. ²⁹ Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his ancestors, an old man full of days. Esau and Jacob, his sons, buried him.

translationWords:

- [Isaac](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [bury, buried, burial](#)

translationNotes:

- **one hundred eighty years** - “180 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Isaac breathed his last and died** - “Isaac took his last breath and died.” The phrases “breathed his last” and “died” mean basically the same thing. See how you translated a similar phrase in [25:08](#). AT: “Isaac died” (See: [Doublet](#))
- **breathed his last** - This is a polite way of saying a person died. See how you translated this in [25:8](#). (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **was gathered to his ancestors** - This means that after Isaac died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. AT: “he joined his family members who had already died” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **an old man full of days** - The phrases “old man” and “full of days” mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that Isaac lived a very long time. AT: “after he had lived a very long time and was very old” (See: [Doublet](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 35 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 35 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Esau's descendants

Esau's descendants became known as the Edomite people group. They also become a great nation. This nation is prominent in the rest of the Old Testament. God graciously blessed Esau and he had many descendants. (See: [grace, gracious](#) and [bless, blessed, blessing](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 36:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 36:1-3**UDB:**

¹ These are those who descended from Esau, whose other name was Edom, and what happened concerning them. ² Esau married three women from Canaan land: Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hittite; ³ and Basemath, who was the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth.

ULB:

36 ¹ These were the descendants of Esau (also called Edom). ² Esau took his wives from the Canaanites. These were his wives: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite; ³ and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- Esau
- Edom, Edomite, Idumea
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Hittite
- Ishmael

translationNotes:

- **These were the descendants of Esau (also called Edom)** - "These are the descendants of Esau, who is also called Edom." This sentence introduces the account of Esau's descendants in Genesis 36:1-8. AT: "This is an account of the descendants of Esau, who is also called Edom." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Adah ... Oholibamah** - These are names of Esau's wives. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Elon the Hittite** - "Elon the descendant of Heth" or "Elon a descendant of Heth." This is the name of a man. See how you translate this in [26:34](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Anah ... Zibeon ... Nebaioth** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Hivite** - This refers to a larger group of people. See how you translated it in [10:17](#).
- **Basemath** - This is the name of one of Esau's wives. See how you translated this in [26:34](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Nebaioth** - This is the name of one of Ishmael's sons. See how you translated this in [28:9](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ Esau's wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz. Basemath gave birth to Reuel. ⁵ Oholibamah gave birth to Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. All these sons of Esau were born while he was living in Canaan land.

ULB:

⁴ Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. ⁵ Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **Adah ... Basemath ... Oholibamah** - These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these in [36:2-3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Eliphaz ... Reuel ... Jeush ... Jalam ... Korah** - These are names of Esau's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:6-8

UDB:

6-7 Jacob and Esau had very many possessions. For this reason, they needed more land for their livestock. The land where they were living was not big enough for all their livestock. So Esau, whose other name was Edom, had taken his wives and sons and daughters and all the other members of his household, his sheep and goats and his other animals, and all the other things he had obtained in Canaan land, and they had moved to an area that was away from Jacob. ⁸ They went to live in the hill country of Seir.

ULB:

⁶ Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock—all his animals, and all his possessions, which he had gathered in the land of Canaan, and went into a land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷ He did this because their possessions were too many for them to stay together. The land where they had settled could not support them because of their livestock. ⁸ So Esau, also known as Edom, settled in the hill country of Seir.

translationWords:

- Esau
- household
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Jacob, Israel
- Edom, Edomite, Idumea

translationNotes:

- **which he had gathered in the land of Canaan** - This refers to all of the things that he had accumulated while living in the land of Canaan. AT: “which he had accumulated while living in the land of Canaan” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **went into a land** - This means to moved to another place and live there. AT: “went to live in another land” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **their possessions** - “Esau’s and Jacob’s possessions”
- **could not support them because of their livestock** - The land was not large enough to support all of the livestock that Jacob and Esau owned. AT: “was not big enough to support all of their livestock” or “was not big enough for both Esau’s flocks and Jacob’s flocks” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **where they had settled** - The word “settled” means to move somewhere and live there. AT: “where they had moved to” (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:9-12

UDB:

⁹ These are those who descended from Esau, the ancestor of the Edom people group who live in the Seir area. ¹⁰ Esau's wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz, and Esau's wife Basemath gave birth to Reuel. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹² Esau's son Eliphaz also had a concubine. Her name was Timna. She gave birth to Amalek. Those six men were grandsons of Esau's wife Adah.

ULB:

⁹ These were the descendants of Esau, the ancestor of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. ¹⁰ These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz son of Adah, the wife of Esau; Reuel son of Basemath, the wife of Esau. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹² Timna, a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, bore Amalek. These were the grandsons of Adah, Esau's wife.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- Esau
- Edom, Edomite, Idumea
- concubine

translationNotes:

- **These were the descendants of Esau** - This sentence introduces the account of Esau's descendants in Genesis 36:9-43. AT: "This is an account of the descendants of Esau" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **in the hill country of Seir** - This means that they lived in the hill country of Seir. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. AT: "who lived in the hill country of Seir" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Eliphaz ... Reuel** - These are names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in 36:4. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Adah ... Basemath** - These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these names in 36:2-3. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz ... Amalek** - These are names of the sons of Eliphaz. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Timna** - This is the name of Eliphaz's concubine. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:13-14

UDB:

¹³ Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They were grandsons of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁴ Esau's wife Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon, gave birth to three sons: Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

ULB:

¹³ These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the grandsons of Basemath, Esau's wife. ¹⁴ These were the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife, who was the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon. She bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

translationWords:

- [Esau](#)

translationNotes:

- **Reuel ... Jeush, Jalam, and Korah** - These are names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in [36:4-5](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Nahath ... Zerah ... Shammah ... Mizzah** - These are names of Reuel's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Anah ... Zibeon** - These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Basemath ... Oholibamah** - These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these in [36:2-3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ These are the chiefs among the descendants of Esau. The descendants of Eliphaz, his firstborn son, these were the chiefs: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁶ Korah, Gatam, and Amalek people groups. These were chiefs that descended from Eliphaz who lived in Edom; they were grandsons of Adah.

ULB:

¹⁵ These were the clans among Esau's descendants: the descendants of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁶ Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These were the clans descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the grandsons of Adah.

translationWords:

- [clan](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [firstborn](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)

translationNotes:

- **Eliphaz** - This is the name of one of Esau's sons. See how you translated his name in [36:4](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, Korah, Gatam, and Amalek** - These are names of Eliphaz's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Adah** - This is the name of one of Esau's wives. See how you translated her name in [36:2-3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:17-19

UDB:

¹⁷ The sons of Esau's son Reuel were ancestors of the Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah people groups. They were descended from Esau's wife Basemath. They also lived in Edom.

¹⁸ The sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, whose mother was Anah, were ancestors of the Jeush, Jalam, and Korah people groups.

¹⁹ That is the list of the sons of Esau, and the people groups who were their descendants.

ULB:

¹⁷ These were the clans from Reuel, Esau's son: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah. These were the clans descended from Reuel in the land of Edom. They were the grandsons of Basemath, Esau's wife. ¹⁸ These were the clans of Oholibamah, Esau's wife: Jeush, Jalam, Korah. These are the clans that descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, daughter of Anah. ¹⁹ These were the sons of Esau, and these are their clans.

translationWords:

- [clan](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)

translationNotes:

- **Reuel ... Jeush, Jalam, Korah** - These are the names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in [36:4-5](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah** - These are the names of Reuel's sons. See how you translated these names in [36:13](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **in the land of Edom** - This means that they lived in the land of Edom. AT: "who lived in the land of Edom" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Basemath ... Oholibamah** - These are the names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these names in [36:2-3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Anah** - This the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [36:2](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:20-22**UDB:**

²⁰ This is a list of the descendants of Seir, who belonged to the Hor people group, who were the first people group who lived in the region of Edom: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. Those seven men each became ancestors of a people group. Each of the people groups had the same name as the name of their ancestor.

²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman. Lotan's sister was Timna.

ULB:

²⁰ These were the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the clans of the Horites, the inhabitants of Seir in the land of Edom. ²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman, and Timna was Lotan's sister.

translationWords:

- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)

translationNotes:

- **Seir** - The word "Seir" is the name of a man and of a country.
- **the Horite** - The word "Horite" refers to a people group. See how you translated it in [14:6](#).
- **the inhabitants of the land** - "who lived in the land of Seir, which is also called Edom"
- **Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan ... Hori and Heman** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Timna** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:23-24

UDB:

²³ The sons of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

²⁴ The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. This Anah was the one who discovered the hot springs in the desert while he was taking care of his father Zibeon's donkeys.

ULB:

²³ These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. ²⁴ These were the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. This is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he was pasturing donkeys of Zibeon his father.

translationWords:

- [fountain, spring](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)
- [donkey, mule](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **Shobal ... Zibeon** - These are names of men. See how you translated these names in [36:20](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam ... Aiah and Anah** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:25-28**UDB:**

²⁵ Anah had two children—a son named Dishon and a daughter named Oholibamah.

²⁶ Dishon's sons were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

²⁷ Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

²⁸ Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran.

ULB:

²⁵ These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah. ²⁶ These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran. ²⁷ These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. ²⁸ These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **Anah ... Dishon ... Ezer ... Dishan** - These are names of men. See how you translated these names in [36:20-21](#).
- **Oholibamah** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran ... Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan ... Uz and Aran** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:29-30

UDB:

29-30 The people groups who were descendants of Hor lived in Seir land. The names of the people groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.

ULB:

²⁹ These were the clans of the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah, ³⁰ Dishon, Ezer, Dishan: these were clans of the Horites, according to their clan lists in the land of Seir.

translationWords:

- [clan](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)

translationNotes:

- **the Horites** - This is the name of a people group. See how you translated this in [14:6](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah, Dishon, Ezer, Dishan** - These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in [36:20-21](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **in the land of Seir** - This means that they lived in the land of Seir. AT: “of those who lived in the land of Seir” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:31-33

UDB:

³¹ These are the names of the kings who ruled in Edom before any kings ruled over the Israelites.

³² Beor's son Bela became the first king in Edom. The city where he lived was named Dinhabah.

³³ When Bela died, Zerah's son Jobab became the king. He was from the city of Bozrah.

ULB:

³¹ These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites:

³² Bela son of Beor, reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. ³³ When Bela died, then Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his place.

translationWords:

- [king](#)
- [reign](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **Bela ... Beor ... Jobab ... Zerah** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the name of his city** - This means that this was the city where he lived. AT: "the name of the city where he lived" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Dinhabah ... Bozrah** - These are names of places. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:34-36

UDB:

³⁴ When Jobab died, Husham became the king. He was from the region where the Teman people group lived.

³⁵ When Husham died, Bedad's son Hadan became the king. Husham's army fought the army of the Midian people group in the region of Moab and defeated them. The city where Husham lived was Avith.

³⁶ When Hadad died, Samlah became the king. He was from Masrekah.

ULB:

³⁴ When Jobab died, Husham who was of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his place. ³⁵ When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad who defeated the Midianites in the land of Moab, reigned in his place. The name of his city was Avith. ³⁶ When Hadad died, then Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.

translationWords:

- [reign](#)
- [Midian, Midianites](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jobab** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [36:33](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Husham ... Hadad ... Bedad ... Samlah** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Husham who was of the land of the Temanites** - This means that Husham lived in the land of the Temanites. AT: "Husham who lived in the land of the Temanites" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Avith ... Masrekah** - These are names of places. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Temanites** - "the descendants of Teman" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **The name of his city** - This means that this was the city where he lived. AT: "The name of the city where he lived" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Samlah of Masrekah** - "Samlah from Masrekah" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 36 General Notes
- **Genesis 36 Translation Questions**

Genesis 36:37-39

UDB:

³⁷ When Samlah died, Shaul became the king. He was from Rehoboth, that was beside the Euphrates river.

³⁸ When Shaul died, Achbor's son Baal Hanan became king.

³⁹ When Achbor's son Baal Hanan died, Hadad became king. The city where he lived was named Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel. She was the daughter of Matred, who was the daughter of Me Zahab.

ULB:

³⁷ When Samlah died, then Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his place. ³⁸ When Shaul died, then Baal Hanan son of Achbor reigned in his place. ³⁹ When Baal Hanan son of Achbor, died, then Hadar reigned in his place. The name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the granddaughter of Me Zahab.

translationWords:

- **reign**

translationNotes:

- **Samlah** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [36:36](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **then Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his place** - Shaul lived in Rehoboth. Rehoboth was by the Euphrates river. This information can be made clear. AT: "then Shaul reigned in his place. He was from Rehoboth which is by the Euphrates River" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Shaul ... Baal Hanan ... Achbor ... Hadar ... Matred ... Me Zahab** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Rehoboth ... Pau** - These are names of places. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **The name of his city** - This means that this was the city where he lived. AT: "The name of the city where he lived" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **the daughter of Matred, the granddaughter of Me Zahab** - The missing information can be added. AT: "she was the daughter of Matred, and the granddaughter of Me Zahab" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Mehetabel** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 36:40-43

UDB:

40-43 Here is a list of all the people groups that were descendants of Esau: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, Magdiel, and Iram. They all lived in the land of Edom. The land where each people group lived got the same name as the name of the people group.

ULB:

⁴⁰ These were the names of the heads of clans from Esau's descendants, according to their clans and their regions, by their names: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁴¹ Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁴² Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁴³ Magdiel, and Iram. These were the clan heads of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they possessed. This was Esau, the father of the Edomites.

translationWords:

- [clan](#)
- [Esau](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **the heads of clans** - “the leaders of the clans”
- **according to their clans and their regions, by their names** - The clans and the regions were named after the heads of the clans. See the UDB for a clearer translation. AT: “the name of their clans and the regions where they lived were named after them. These are their names:” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, Magdiel, and Iram** - These are names of people groups. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **settlements** - “dwelling places” or “the places they lived”
- **This was Esau** - This list is said “to be” Esau, which means that it is the whole list of his descendants. AT: “This is the list of the descendants of Esau” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 36 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 36 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins to record the account of Jacob's sons. The rest of the book of Genesis focuses on Jacob's sons, especially Joseph. This chapter also references Jacob as "Israel" beginning in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Favoritism

Jacob's favoritism became a great problem for his sons. They are always jealous of Joseph because he is the favorite son. The beautiful garment Jacob gave to Joseph greatly strained the relationship between Joseph and his brothers. His dream is about how he will rule all of his brothers, even though he is not the oldest son. (See: [favor](#), [favorable](#), [favoritism](#))

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: [people of God](#), [my people](#) and [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 37:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 37:1-2

UDB:

¹ Jacob continued to live in Canaan land, where his father had lived previously. ² This is what happened to Jacob's family.

When his son Joseph was seventeen years old, he was taking care of the flocks of sheep and goats with some of his older brothers. They were sons of his father's concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah. Joseph told his father about bad things that his brothers were doing.

ULB:

37 ¹ Jacob lived in the land where his father was staying, in the land of Canaan. ² These were the events concerning Jacob. Joseph, who was a young man seventeen years old, was guarding the flock with his brothers. He was with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. Joseph brought an unfavorable report about them to their father.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Joseph (OT)
- flock, herd

translationNotes:

- **the land where his father was staying, in the land of Canaan** - "in the land of Canaan where his father had lived"
- **These were the events concerning Jacob** - This sentence introduces the account of Jacob's children in Genesis 37:1-50:26. Here "Jacob" refers to his whole family. AT: "This is the account of Jacob's family" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **seventeen years old** - "17 years old" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:24](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **wives** - "concubines" (UDB). These women were servants of Leah and Rachel given to Jacob to produce children.
- **an unfavorable report about them** - "a bad report about his brothers"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:3-4

UDB:

³ Jacob loved Joseph more than he loved any of his other children, because Joseph had been born when Jacob was an old man. Jacob had someone make for Joseph a beautiful piece of clothing with long sleeves. ⁴ When Joseph's older brothers realized that their father loved him more than he loved any of them, they hated him. They never spoke kindly to him.

ULB:

³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was the son of his old age. He made him a beautiful garment. ⁴ His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers. They hated him and would not speak cordially to him.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [love](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Israel and Joseph. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **loved** - This refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member. This is natural human love between friends or relatives.
- **of his old age** - This means that Joseph was born when Israel was an old man. AT: "who was born when Israel was an old man" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **He made him** - "Israel made Joseph"
- **a beautiful garment** - "a beautiful robe"
- **would not speak cordially to him** - "could not speak in a kind manner to him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ One night Joseph had a dream. He told his brothers about the dream, who hated him even more as a result. This is in detail what happened: ⁶ He said to them, "Listen to the dream I had!

ULB:

⁵ Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told his brothers about it. They hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I dreamed.

translationWords:

- [dream](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told his brothers about it. They hated him even more** - This is a summary of the events that will happen in 37:6-11.
- **They hated him even more** - "And Joseph's brothers hated him even more than they hated him before"
- **Please listen to this dream which I dreamed** - "Please listen to this dream that I had" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:7-8

UDB:

⁷ In the dream, we were tying up bundles of wheat in the field. Suddenly my bundle stood up straight, and your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it!" ⁸ His brothers said to him, "Do you think that some day you will rule over us? Are you going to be our king?" They hated him even more than before because of what he had told them about his dream.

ULB:

⁷ Behold, we were tying bundles of grain in the field and behold, my bundle rose and stood upright, and behold, your bundles came around and bowed down to my bundle." ⁸ His brothers said to him, "Will you really reign over us? Will you actually rule over us?" They hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

translationWords:

- grain
- bow, bow down
- reign
- dream
- word

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Joseph tells his brothers about his dream.
- **Behold** - The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **we were** - The word "we" refers to Joseph and includes all of his brothers. (See: **Inclusive "We"**)
- **tying bundles of grain** - When grain is reaped it is tied into bundles and stacked until it is time to separate the grain from the straw.
- **and behold** - Here the word "behold" here shows that Joseph was surprised by what he saw.
- **my bundle rose and stood upright ... your bundles came around and bowed down** - Here the bundles of grain are standing and kneeling as if they were people. These bundle represent Joseph and his brothers. (See: **Personification**)
- **Will you really reign over us? Will you actually rule over us?** - Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. Joseph's brothers are using questions to mock Joseph. They can be written as statements. AT: "You will never be our king, and we will never bow down to you!" (See: **Parallelism** and **Rhetorical Question**)

- **reign over us** - The word “us” refers to Joseph’s brothers but not Joseph. (See: [Exclusive “We”](#))
- **for his dreams and for his words** - “because of his dreams and what he said”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:9-11

UDB:

⁹ Later he had another dream, and again he told his older brothers about it. He said, “Listen to this! I had another dream. In this dream, the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!”
¹⁰ He also told his father about it. His father corrected him, saying “What are you suggesting by that dream? Do you think it means that your mother and I and your older brothers will some day bow down to the ground in front of you?”
¹¹ Joseph’s older brothers resented him, but his father kept thinking about what the dream might mean.

ULB:

⁹ He dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers. He said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream: The sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me.”
¹⁰ He told it to his father just as to his brothers, and his father rebuked him. He said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come to bow down to the ground to you?”
¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

translationWords:

- dream
- bow, bow down
- rebuke
- jealous, jealousy
- mind

translationNotes:

- **He dreamed another dream** - “Joseph had another dream”
- **eleven stars** - “11 stars” (See: **Numbers**)
- **his father rebuked him. He said to him** - “Israel scolded him, saying”
- **What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will your mother ... to the ground to you?**
 - Israel uses questions to correct Joseph. This can be written as statements. AT: “This dream you had is not real. Your mother, brothers, and I will not bow down before you!” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **jealous** - This means being angry because someone else is successful or more popular.
- **kept the matter in mind** - The means that he kept thinking about the meaning of Joseph’s dream. AT: “kept thinking about what the dream might mean” (See: **Idiom**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:12-14

UDB:

¹² One day Joseph's older brothers went to take care of their father's sheep and goats that were in fields near Shechem. ¹³ Some time later, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are taking care of the sheep and goats near Shechem. I am going to send you there to see them." Joseph replied, "I will go." ¹⁴ Jacob said, "Go and see if they are doing okay, and if the flocks are doing okay. Then come back and give me a report." So Jacob sent Joseph from the valley where they were living, the valley where Hebron is located, to go to find his brothers.

Then Joseph arrived near the city of Shechem.

ULB:

¹² His brothers went to tend their father's flock in Shechem. ¹³ Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers tending the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." Joseph said to him, "I am ready." ¹⁴ He said to him, "Go now, see whether it is well with your brothers and well with the flock, and bring me word." So Jacob sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and Joseph went to Shechem.

translationWords:

- flock, herd
- Shechem
- Jacob, Israel
- Joseph (OT)
- word
- Hebron

translationNotes:

- **Are not your brothers tending the flock in Shechem?** - Israel uses a question to begin a conversation. This can be written as a statement. AT: "You brothers are tending the flock in Shechem." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Come** - Here it is implied that Israel is asking Joseph to prepare himself to leave and go see his brothers. AT: "Get ready" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **I am ready** - He is ready to leave. "I am ready to go" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **He said to him** - "Israel said to Joseph"
- **bring me word** - Israel wants Joseph to come back and tell him about how his brother and flocks are doing. AT: "come tell me what you find out" or "give me a report" (UDB) (See: [Idiom](#))

- **out of the Valley** - “from the Valley”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:15-17

UDB:

¹⁵ While he was wandering around in the fields looking for his brothers, a man saw him and asked him, “Whom are you looking for?” ¹⁶ Joseph replied, “I am looking for my older brothers. Can you tell me where they are taking care of their sheep and goats?” ¹⁷ The man replied, “They are not here anymore. I heard one of them saying, ‘Let us take the sheep and goats and go to Dothan town.’”

So Joseph left there and went north, and found his older brothers near Dothan.

ULB:

¹⁵ A certain man found Joseph. Behold, Joseph was wandering in a field. The man asked him, “What do you seek?” ¹⁶ Joseph said, “I am seeking my brothers. Tell me, please, where they are tending the flock.” ¹⁷ The man said, “They left this place, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

translationWords:

- [flock, herd](#)

translationNotes:

- **A certain man found Joseph. Behold, Joseph was wandering in a field** - “A certain man found Joseph wandering in a field”
- **Behold** - This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.
- **What do you seek?** - “What are you looking for?”
- **Tell me, please, where** - “Please tell me where”
- **tending the flock** - “shepherding their flock”
- **Dothan** - This is the name of a place that is about 22 kilometers from Shechem. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:18-20

UDB:

¹⁸ But they saw him when he was still far away, and they decided to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to each other things like, “Here comes that dreamer!” ²⁰ “Come on, let us kill him and throw his body into one of the pits! Then we will tell people that a wild animal attacked and killed him and ate him. And then we will find out whether his dreams come true!”

ULB:

¹⁸ They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they plotted against him to kill him. ¹⁹ His brothers said to one another, “Look, this dreamer is approaching. ²⁰ Come now, therefore, let us kill him and cast him into one of the pits. We will say, ‘A wild animal has devoured him.’ We will see what will become of his dreams.”

translationWords:

- [dream](#)

translationNotes:

- **They saw him from a distance** - “Joseph’s brothers saw him while he was far away”
- **they plotted against him to kill him** - “they made plans to kill him”
- **this dreamer is approaching** - “here comes the one who has the dreams”
- **Come now, therefore** - This wording shows that the brothers acted upon their plans. AT: “So now” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **wild animal** - “dangerous animal” or “ferocious animal”
- **devoured** - to eagerly have eaten
- **We will see what will become of his dreams** - His brothers planned to kill him, therefore it is ironic that they would speak of his dream coming true, since he would be dead. AT: “That way we will make sure his dreams do not come true” (See: [Irony](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:21-22

UDB:

²¹ Reuben heard what they were saying, so he tried to persuade them not to kill Joseph. He said, "No, we should not kill him. ²² Do not take his life! We can throw him into this pit in the desert, but we should not harm him." He said that and then left them, planning to rescue Joseph later and take him back to his father.

ULB:

²¹ Reuben heard it and rescued him from their hand. He said, "Let us not take his life." ²² Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand to bring him back to his father.

translationWords:

- Reuben
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- blood
- pit
- desert, wilderness

translationNotes:

- **heard it** - "heard what they were saying"
- **from their hand** - The phrase "their hand" refers to the brothers' plan to kill him. AT: "from them" or "from their plans" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Let us not take his life** - The phrase "take his life" is a euphemism for killing someone. AT: "Let us not kill Joseph" (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **Shed no blood** - The negation can be placed on the verb. Also, "shedding blood" is a euphemism for killing someone. AT: "Do not spill any blood" or "Do not kill him" (See: [Litotes](#) and [Euphemism](#))
- **lay no hand upon him** - This means not to harm or injure him. AT: "do not harm him" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **that he might rescue him** - This can be translated as a new sentence: "Reuben said this so that he might rescue Joseph"
- **out of their hand** - The phrase "their hand" refers to the brothers' plan to kill him. AT: "from them" or "from their plans" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **to bring him back** - "and return him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:23-24**UDB:**

²³ When Joseph arrived where his older brothers were, they seized him and ripped off his long-sleeved clothing. ²⁴ Then they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was dry; there was no water in it.

ULB:

²³ It came about that when Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his beautiful garment. ²⁴ They took him and threw him into the pit. The pit was empty with no water in it.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about that when** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **they stripped him of his beautiful garment** - “they tore his beautiful garment off of him”
- **beautiful garment** - “beautiful robe.” See how you translated this in [37:3](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:25-26**UDB:**

²⁵ After they sat down to eat some food, they looked up and saw a caravan, descendants of Ishmael, coming from the Gilead area. Their camels were loaded with bags of spices and sweet-smelling resins. They were going down to Egypt to sell those things there. ²⁶ Judah said to his older and younger brothers, "If we kill our younger brother and hide his body, what will we gain?"

ULB:

²⁵ They sat down to eat bread. They lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing spices and balm and myrrh. They were traveling to carry them down to Egypt. ²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?"

translationWords:

- bread
- Ishmael
- Gilead
- camel
- myrrh
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Judah
- blood

translationNotes:

- **They sat down to eat bread** - "Bread" is a metonym for "food." AT: "They sat down to eat food" or "Joseph's brothers sat down to eat" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **They lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan** - Here looking up is spoken of as if a person literally lifted up his eyes. Also, the word "behold" is used here to draw the reader's attention to what the men saw. AT: "They looked up and they suddenly saw a caravan" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **bearing** - "carrying"
- **spices** - "seasonings"
- **balm** - an oily substance with a sweet smell used for healing and protecting skin. "medicine"
- **traveling to carry them down to Egypt** - "bringing them down to Egypt." This can be made more explicit. AT: "bringing them down to Egypt to sell them" ([Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **What profit is it if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?** - This can be written as a statement. AT: “We do not gain a profit by killing our brother and covering up his blood” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **cover up his blood** - This is a figure of speech referring to hiding Joseph’s death. AT: “hide his murder” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:27-28**UDB:**

²⁷ So instead of harming him, let us sell him to these men who are descendants of Ishmael. Do not forget, he is our own younger brother!” So they all agreed to do that.

²⁸ When those traders from the Midian area came near, Joseph’s brothers pulled him up out of the pit. Then they sold him to the men from Midian for twenty pieces of silver. The traders then took Joseph to Egypt.

ULB:

²⁷ Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands upon him. For he is our brother, our flesh.” His brothers listened to him. ²⁸ The Midianite merchants passed by. His brothers drew Joseph up and lifted him up out of the pit. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. The Ishmaelites carried Joseph into Egypt.

translationWords:

- Ishmael
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- flesh
- Midian, Midianites
- Joseph (OT)
- silver
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **to the Ishmaelites** - “to these men who are descendants of Ishmael” (UDB)
- **not lay our hands upon him** - This means not to harm or injure him. AT: “not hurt him” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **he is our brother, our flesh** - The word “flesh” is a metonym that stands for a relative. AT: “he is our blood relative” (See: [Metonymy](#)).
- **His brothers listened to him** - “Judah’s brothers listened to him” or “Judah’s brothers agreed with him”
- **Midianite ... Ishmaelites** - Both names refer to the same group of traders that Joseph’s brothers meet.
- **for twenty pieces of silver** - “for the price of 20 pieces of silver” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **carried Joseph into Egypt** - “took Joseph to Egypt” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit, he saw that his younger brother was not there. He was so grieved that he tore his clothes. ³⁰ He went back to his younger brothers and said, “The boy is not in the pit! What can I do now?”

ULB:

²⁹ Reuben returned to the pit, and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit. He tore his clothes. ³⁰ He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is not there! And I, where can I go?”

translationWords:

- [Reuben](#)

translationNotes:

- **Reuben returned to the pit, and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit** - “Reuben returned to the pit, and was surprised to see that Joseph was not there.” The word “behold” here shows that Reuben was surprised to find out Joseph was gone.
- **He tore his clothes** - This is an act of deep distress and grief. This can be written more clearly. AT: “He was so grieved that he tore his clothes” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **The boy is not there! And I, where can I go?** - Reuben uses questions for emphasis the problem that Joseph was missing. These can be written as statements. AT: “The boy is gone! I cannot go back home now!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:31-33

UDB:

³¹ They did not dare to tell their father what they had done. So they decided to invent a story about what had happened. They got Joseph's piece of long-sleeved clothing. Then they killed a goat and dipped the clothing into the goat's blood. ³² They took that piece of clothing back to their father and said, "We found this! Look at it. Is it your son's clothing?" ³³ He recognized it, and he said, "Yes, it is my son's! Some ferocious animal must have attacked and killed him! I am sure that the animal has torn Joseph to pieces!"

ULB:

³¹ They slaughtered a goat and then took Joseph's garment and dipped it into the blood. ³² Then they brought it to their father and said, "We found this. Please see whether it is your son's clothing or not." ³³ Jacob recognized it and said, "It is my son's clothing. A wild animal has devoured him. Joseph has certainly been torn to pieces."

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [blood](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph's garment** - This refers to the beautiful garment that his father made for him.
- **the blood** - "the goat's blood"
- **they brought it** - "they brought the garment"
- **has devoured him** - "has eaten him"
- **Joseph has certainly been torn to pieces** - Jacob thinks that a wild animal has torn Joseph's body apart. AT: "It has certainly torn Joseph to pieces" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 37:34-36**UDB:**

³⁴ Jacob was so grieved that he tore his clothes. He put on sackcloth. He mourned. ³⁵ All of his children came to try to comfort him, but he did not pay attention to what they said. He said, “No, I will still be mourning when I die and go to be with my son.” So Joseph’s father continued to cry because of what had happened to his son.

³⁶ In the meantime, the men from Midian took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, who was one of the king’s officials. He was the captain of the soldiers who protected the king.

ULB:

³⁴ Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth upon his loins. He mourned for his son many days. ³⁵ All his sons and daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, “Indeed I will go down to Sheol mourning for my son.” His father wept for him. ³⁶ The Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard.

translationWords:

- sackcloth
- loins
- hades, sheol
- Midian, Midianites
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Potiphar
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt

translationNotes:

- **Jacob tore his garments** - This is an act of deep distress and grief. This can be written more clearly. AT: “Jacob was so grieved that he tore his garments” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **put sackcloth upon his loins** - Here “loins” refers to the middle part of the body or the waist. AT: “put on sackcloth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **rose up** - Here the childrens’ coming to their father is spoke of as “rising up.” AT: “came to him” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **but he refused to be comforted** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “but he would not let them comfort him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Indeed I will go down to Sheol mourning** - The means that he be mourning from now until when he dies. AT: “Indeed when I die and go down to Sheol I will still be mourning” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **The Midianites sold him** - “The Midianites sold Joseph”
- **the captain of the bodyguard** - “the leader of the soldiers who guarded the king”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 37 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 37 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter focuses on Jacob's son Judah.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Spilling his seed"

Onan was to provide for his brother's widow and give her an heir. This phrase indicates that he used Tamar to fulfill his own sexual desires rather than help her. This was sinful. (See: [Euphemism](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#))

God preserves Judah's line

The Canaanite woman, Tamar, deceived her father-in-law, Judah into having sexual relations with her. If it had not been for this act, Judah would not have any descendants to carry on his family line. Although her actions were wrong, God used them to protect his people. (See: [people of God, my people](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 38:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 38:1-2

UDB:

¹ At that time, Judah left his older and younger brothers and went down from the hill country and stayed with a man who lived in Adullam. His name was Hiram. ² There he met a woman who was the daughter of a man from Canaan land named Shua. He married her and slept with her.

ULB:

38 ¹ It came about at that time that Judah left his brothers and stayed with a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. ² He met there a daughter of a Canaanite man whose name was Shua. He married her and slept with her.

translationWords:

- [Judah](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about at that time that Judah** - This introduces a new part of the story that focuses on Judah. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah** - Hirah is the name of a man who lived in Adullam. Adullamite is his nationality. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **whose name was Shua** - Shua is a Canaanite woman who married Judah. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:3-5**UDB:**

³ She became pregnant and later gave birth to a son. His father named him Er. ⁴ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, whom she named Onan. ⁵ Many years later, when Judah and his family went to live in Chezib, Judah's wife gave birth to another son, and she named him Shelah.

ULB:

³ She became pregnant and had a son. He was named Er. ⁴ She became pregnant again and had a son. She called his name Onan. ⁵ She again had a son and called his name Shelah. It was at Chezib where she gave birth to him.

translationWords:**translationNotes:**

- **She became pregnant** - "Judah's wife became pregnant"
- **He was named Er** - This can be written in active form. AT: "His father named him Er" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Er ... Onan ... Shelah** - These are the names of Judah's sons. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **called his name** - "named him"
- **Chezib** - This is the name of a place. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ When Judah's oldest son Er grew up, Judah got a wife for him, a woman named Tamar. ⁷ But Er did something that Yahweh considered to be very wicked, so Yahweh caused him to die.

ULB:

⁶ Judah found a wife for Er, his firstborn. Her name was Tamar. ⁷ Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Yahweh. Yahweh killed him.

translationWords:

- [firstborn](#)
- [Tamar](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Er** - This is the name of one of Judah's sons. See how you translated this name in [38:3](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **was wicked in the sight of Yahweh** - The phrase "in the sight" refers to Yahweh seeing Er's wickedness. AT: "was wicked and Yahweh saw it" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Yahweh killed him** - Yahweh killed him because he was wicked. This can be made clear. AT: "So Yahweh killed him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, “Your older brother died without having any sons. So marry his widow and sleep with her. That is what our customs require that you should do.” ⁹ But Onan knew if he did that, any children who would be born would not be considered to be his. So every time he slept with his brother’s widow, he spilled his semen on the ground, so that she would not get pregnant and produce children for his older brother. ¹⁰ Yahweh considered that what he did was wicked, so he caused him to die also.

ULB:

⁸ Judah said to Onan, “Sleep with your brother’s wife. Do the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up a child for your brother.” ⁹ Onan knew that the child would not be his. Whenever he slept with his brother’s wife, he spilled the semen on the ground so he would not have a child for his brother. ¹⁰ What he did was evil in the sight of Yahweh. Yahweh killed him also.

translationWords:

- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)
- [seed](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **Onan** - This is the name of one of Judah’s sons. See how you translated this name in [38:4](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Do the duty of a brother-in-law to her** - This refers to a custom that when the oldest brother dies before he and his wife have a son, the next oldest brother would marry and have sexual relations with the widow. When the widow gave birth to the first son, that son was considered the son of the oldest brother and he would receive the oldest brother’s inheritance.
- **was evil in the sight of Yahweh** - The phrase “in the sight” refers to Yahweh seeing Onan’s wickedness. AT: “was evil and Yahweh saw it” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Yahweh killed him also** - Yahweh killed him because what he did was evil. This can be made clear. AT: “So Yahweh killed him also” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 38 Translation Questions

Genesis 38:11

UDB:

¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Return to your father’s house, but do not marry anyone else. When my youngest son Shelah grows up, he can marry you.” But Judah really did not want Shelah to marry her, because he was afraid that then Shelah would die too, just as his older brothers had died. So Tamar obeyed Judah and went back to live in her father’s house again.

ULB:

¹¹ Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow in your father’s house until Shelah, my son, grows up.” For he feared, “He might also die, just like his brothers.” Tamar left and lived in her father’s house.

translationWords:

- [Judah](#)
- [Tamar](#)

translationNotes:

- **his daughter-in-law** - “his oldest son’s wife”
- **in your father’s house** - This means her to live in here father’s house. AT: “and live in your father’s house” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **until Shelah, my son, grows up** - Judah intends for Tamar to marry Shelah when he grows up. AT: “and when Shelah, my son, grows up, he can marry you” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Shelah** - This is the name of one of Judah’s sons. See how you translated this name in [38:5](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **For he feared, ”He might also die, just like his brothers** - Judah feared that if Shelah married Tamar he would also die like his brothers did. AT: “For he feared, ”If he marries her he may also die like his brothers did” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:12-14

UDB:

¹² Several years later, Judah's wife, who was the daughter of Shua, died. When the time of mourning for her was finished, Judah decided to go up to Timnah, to the place where his men were shearing his sheep. His friend Hiram, from Adullam, went with him. ¹³ Someone said to Tamar, "Your father-in-law is going to Timnah to help the men who are shearing his sheep." ¹⁴ She realized that now Shelah was grown up, but Judah had not given her to him to be his wife. So she took off her widow's clothes and covered her head with a veil, so that people would not recognize her. Then she sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah.

ULB:

¹² After a long time, Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died. Judah was comforted and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³ Tamar was told, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." ¹⁴ She took off the clothing of her widowhood and covered herself with her veil and wrapped herself. She sat in the gate of Enaim, which is by the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah had grown up but she had not been given to him as a wife.

translationWords:

- Judah
- Tamar
- sheep, ram, ewe
- gate, gate bar

translationNotes:

- **Shua's** - This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [38:2](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Judah was comforted and** - "When Judah was no longer grieving, he"
- **his sheepshearers at Timnah** - "Timnah, where his men were shearing sheep"
- **Timnah ... Enaim** - These are names of a places. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite** - "His friend Hiram, from Adullam, went with him" (UDB)
- **Hirah the Adullamite** - "Hiram" is the name of a man, and "Adullam" is the name of a village where he lived. See how you translated this name in [38:1](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Tamar was told** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "Someone told Tamar" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Look, your father-in-law** - "Listen." Here the word "look" is used to get Tamar attention.

- **your father-in-law** - “your husband’s father”
- **of her widowhood** - “that widows wear”
- **veil** - a very thin material used to cover a woman’s head and face
- **and wrapped herself** - This means that she hid herself with her clothing so that people would not recognize her. Traditionally, part of women’s clothing were large pieces of cloth they wrapped themselves with. AT: “and wrapped herself in her clothing so that people would not recognize her” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **by the road** - “along the road” or “on the way”
- **she had not been given to him as a wife** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “Judah had not given her to Shelah as a wife” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:15-16

UDB:

¹⁵ When Judah came along and saw her, he thought that she was a prostitute, because she had covered her head and sat where prostitutes often sat. ¹⁶ Judah did not realize that she was his daughter-in-law. So he said to her, “Let me sleep with you.” She replied, “What will you give me in exchange?”

ULB:

¹⁵ When Judah saw her he thought that she was a prostitute because she had covered her face. ¹⁶ He went to her by the road and said, “Come, please let me sleep with you”—for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law—and she said, “What will you give me so you can sleep with me?”

translationWords:

- prostitute, harlot, whore
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

translationNotes:

- **because she had covered her face** - Judah did not think she was a prostitute just because her face was covered but also because she was sitting in the gate. AT: “because she had covered her head and sat where prostitutes often sat” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **He went to her by the road** - Tamar was sitting by the road. AT: “He went to where she was sitting by the road” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Come** - “Come with me” or “Come now”
- **When Judah saw her** - “When Judah saw Tamar”
- **his daughter-in-law** - “his son’s wife”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ He replied, “I will send you a young goat from my flock of goats.” She asked, “Will you give me something now for me to keep until you send the goat?” ¹⁸ He replied, “What do you want me to give to you?” She replied, “Give me the ring that has your name on it that is tied by a cord around your neck, and give me the walking stick that you are holding in your hand.” So he gave them to her. Then he slept with her, and she became pregnant.

ULB:

¹⁷ He said, “I will send you a young goat from the flock.” She said, “Will you give me a pledge until you send it?” ¹⁸ He said, “What pledge can I give you?” She replied, “Your seal and cord, and the staff that is in your hand.” He gave them to her and slept with her, and she became pregnant by him.

translationWords:

- [goat, kid](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [pledge](#)
- [seal, to seal](#)
- [staff](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **from the flock** - “from my flock of goats”
- **seal and cord ... staff** - A “seal” is similar to a coin with a design engraved on it, used to imprint melted wax. The “cord” was put through the seal so the owner could wear it around his neck. A staff was long wooden stick that helped in walking over rough ground.
- **she became pregnant by him** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “he caused her to become pregnant” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ After she left, she took off the veil and put her widow's clothes on again.

²⁰ Judah gave a young goat to his friend from Adullam, for him to take back to the woman, as he had promised. But his friend could not find the woman.

ULB:

¹⁹ She got up and went away. She took off her veil and put on the clothing of her widowhood. ²⁰ Judah sent the young goat from the flock with his friend the Adullamite to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.

translationWords:

- [Judah](#)
- [goat, kid](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [pledge](#)

translationNotes:

- **veil** - This was a very thin material used to cover a woman's head and face. See how you translated these in [38:14](#).
- **clothing of her widowhood** - "clothing that widows wear." See how you translated these in [38:14](#).
- **from the flock** - "from his flock"
- **Adullamite** - "Adullam" is the name of a village where Hiram lived. See how you translated this name in [38:1](#). See how you translated this in [38:1](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **receive the pledge** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "take back the pledge"(See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **from the woman's hand** - Here "hand" emphasizes that they were in here possession. The woman's hand refers to the woman. AT: "from the woman" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:21-23

UDB:

²¹ So his friend asked the men who lived there, “Where is the prostitute who was sitting by the road at Enaim?” They replied, “There has never been a prostitute here!” ²² So he went back to Judah and said, “I did not find her. Furthermore, the men who live in that town said, ‘There has never been a prostitute here.’” ²³ Judah said, “She can keep the things that I gave to her. If we continued to search for her, people would ridicule us. I tried to send this young goat to her, but you could not find her to give it to her.”

ULB:

²¹ Then the Adullamite asked the men of the place, “Where is the cultic prostitute who was at Enaim by the road?” They said, “There has not been a cultic prostitute here.” ²² He returned to Judah and said, “I did not find her. Also, the men of the place said, ‘There has not been a cultic prostitute here.’” ²³ Judah said, “Let her keep the things, that we not be put to shame. Indeed, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her.”

translationWords:

- prostitute, harlot, whore
- shame, shameful, ashamed

translationNotes:

- **Adullamite** - “Adullam” is the name of a village where Hiram lived. See how you translated this name in [38:1](#). See how you translated this in [38:1](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **the men of the place** - “some of the men who lived there”
- **cultic prostitute** - “prostitute who serves in the temple”
- **Enaim** - This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in [38:14](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **that we not be put to shame** - When people found out what had happened they would ridicule Judah and laugh at him. This can be made clear and stated in active form. AT: “or else people will laugh at us when they find out what happened” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:24-26**UDB:**

²⁴ About three months later, someone told Judah, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has become a prostitute, and now she is pregnant!” Judah said, “Drag her outside of the city and burn her to death!”

²⁵ But as they were taking her outside of the city, she gave the ring and walking stick to someone, and told him to take them to Judah, and say to him, “The man who owns these things is the one who caused me to become pregnant.” She also said to tell him, “Look at this ring, and the cord that is attached to it, and this walking stick. Whose are they?” ²⁶ When the man did that, Judah recognized the ring and the stick. He said, “She is more right than I am. I did not tell my son Shelah to marry her, as I promised that I would.” And Judah did not sleep with her again.

ULB:

²⁴ It came about after about three months that it was told to Judah, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has committed prostitution, and indeed, she is pregnant by it.” Judah said, “Bring her here and let her be burned.” ²⁵ When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law a message, “By the man who owns these I am pregnant.” She said, “Determine please whose these are, the seal and cords and staff.” ²⁶ Judah recognized them and said, “She is more righteous than I am, since I did not give her as a wife to Shelah, my son.” He did not sleep with her again.

translationWords:

- Tamar
- prostitute, harlot, whore
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **it was told to Judah** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “someone told Judah” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Tamar your daughter-in-law** - “Tamar, your oldest son’s wife”
- **she is pregnant by it** - Here the word “it” refers to the “prostitution” that she committed. This can be stated in active form. AT: “it has made her pregnant” or “she is pregnant” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Bring her here** - “Bring her out”
- **let her be burned** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “we will burn her to death” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

- **When she was brought out** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “When they brought her out” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **her father-in-law** - “her husband’s father”
- **seal and cords and staff** - A “seal” is similar to a coin with a design engraved on it, used to make an impression in melted wax. The “cord” was put through the seal so the owner could wear it around his neck. A staff was long wooden stick that helped in walking over rough ground. See how you translated this in [38:18](#).
- **Shelah** - This is the name of one of Judah’s sons. See how you translated this name in [38:5](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:27-28

UDB:

²⁷ When it was time for her to give birth, she was surprised that there were twin boys in her womb.

²⁸ As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand. So the midwife fastened a scarlet thread around his wrist, saying, "This one came out first."

ULB:

²⁷ It came about at the time for her to give birth that, behold, twins were in her womb. ²⁸ It came about as she was giving birth one put out a hand, and the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his hand and said, "This one came out first."

translationWords:

- [womb](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about at the time** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **behold** - The word "behold" alerts us to the surprise that Tamar was carrying twins, which was previously unknown.
- **It came about as she was giving birth** - This phrase "It came about" marks an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **one put out a hand** - "one of the babies put out his hand"
- **midwife** - This is a person who helps a woman when she is giving birth to a child. See how you translated this in [35:17](#).
- **scarlet thread** - "bright red thread"
- **on his hand** - "around his wrist"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 38:29-30

UDB:

²⁹ But he pulled his hand back inside the womb, and his brother came out first. So she said, “So this is how you break your way out first!” So she named him Perez, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “breaking out.” ³⁰ Then his younger brother, the one who had the scarlet thread around his wrist, came out. And he was named Zerah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “redness of dawn.”

ULB:

²⁹ But then he drew back his hand, and, behold, his brother came out first. The midwife said, “How you have broken out!” So he was named Perez. ³⁰ Then his brother came out, who had the scarlet thread upon his hand, and he was named Zerah.

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase marks an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **behold** - The word “behold” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **How you have broken out!** - This shows the midwife’s surprise to seeing the second baby come out first. AT: “So this is how you break your way out first!” or “You have burst out first!” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **he was named** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “she named him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Perez** - This is the name of a boy. Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Perez means ‘breaking out.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Zerah** - This is the name of a boy. Translators may add a footnote that says: “The name Zerah means ‘scarlet or bright red.’” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 38 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 38 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. This is a sign of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness. (See: [people of God](#), [my people](#), [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [sign](#), [proof](#), [reminder](#) and [covenant faithfulness](#), [covenant loyalty](#), [loving kindness](#), [unfailing love](#))

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. He chose to do what was right, even when it could cause him harm. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 39:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 39:1-2

UDB:

¹ Meanwhile, the descendants of Ishmael took Joseph down to Egypt. There Potiphar bought Joseph from them. Potiphar was an Egyptian who was one of the king's officials and the captain of the king's palace guards. ² Because Yahweh helped Joseph, he was able to do his work very well. He worked in the house of his Egyptian master.

ULB:

39 ¹ Joseph was brought down to Egypt. Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh who was captain of the guard and an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had brought him down there. ² Yahweh was with Joseph and he became a prosperous man. He lived in the house of his Egyptian master.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Potiphar](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [Ishmael](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph was brought down to Egypt** - Travelling to Egypt is always considered as going “down” in contrast to going “up” to the promised land. This can be stated in active form. AT: “The Ishmaelites had taken Joseph to Egypt” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **Yahweh was with Joseph** - This means that Yahweh helped Joseph and was always with him. AT: “Yahweh guided Joseph and helped him” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **He lived in the house** - Here the author speaks of working in the master's house as if it were living in the master's house. Only the most trusted servants were permitted to work in their master's house. AT : “he worked in the house” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **his Egyptian master** - Joseph was now Potiphar's slave.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)

- Genesis 39 Translation Questions

Genesis 39:3-4**UDB:**

³ His master saw that Yahweh was helping Joseph and enabling him to be successful in everything that he did. ⁴ Joseph's master was pleased with him, so he appointed him to be his personal servant. Then he appointed him to be the one who would take care of everything in his household and all of his possessions.

ULB:

³ His master saw that Yahweh was with him and that Yahweh prospered everything that he did. ⁴ Joseph found favor in his sight. He served Potiphar. Potiphar made Joseph manager over his house, and everything that he possessed, he put under his care.

translationWords:

- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [favor, favorable, favoritism](#)
- [manager, steward](#)
- [house](#)

translationNotes:

- **His master saw that Yahweh was with him** - This means that the master saw how Yahweh was helping Joseph. AT: "His master saw that Yahweh was helping him" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **that Yahweh prospered everything that he did** - "Yahweh caused everything that Joseph did to prosper"
- **Joseph found favor in his sight** - "To find favor" means to be approved by someone. The idiom "in his sight" refers to a person's opinion. Possible meanings are 1) AT: "Potiphar was pleased with Joseph" or 2) AT: "Yahweh was pleased with Joseph" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **He served Potiphar** - This means that he was Potiphar's personal servant.
- **Potiphar made Joseph manager over his house, and everything that he possessed** - "Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household and everything that belonged to Potiphar"
- **put under his care** - When something is "put under someone's care," it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. AT: "he had Joseph care for" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)

- **Genesis 39 Translation Questions**

Genesis 39:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ From the time Potiphar appointed Joseph to take care of everything in his household and all that he owned, Yahweh blessed the people who lived in Potiphar's house because of Joseph. He also caused Potiphar's crops to grow well. ⁶ Potiphar allowed Joseph to take care of everything that he owned. Potiphar needed to decide only about the food he ate. He did not worry about anything else in his house.

Now Joseph was well built and handsome.

ULB:

⁵ It came about from the time that he made him manager over his house and over everything he possessed, that Yahweh blessed the Egyptian's house because of Joseph. The blessing of Yahweh was on everything that Potiphar had in the house and in the field. ⁶ Potiphar put everything that he had under Joseph's care. He did not have to think about anything except the food that he ate. Now Joseph was handsome and attractive.

translationWords:

- manager, steward
- house
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Joseph (OT)

translationNotes:

- **It came about from the time that** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of the next part of the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **he made him manager over his house and over everything he possessed** - "Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household and everything that belonged to him"
- **blessed** - Here "blessed" means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.
- **The blessing of Yahweh was on** - Here the author speaks of the blessing that Yahweh gave as if it were a physical covering put over something. AT: "Yahweh blessed" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **everything that Potiphar had in the house and in the field** - This refers his household and his crops and livestock. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: "Potiphar's household and all of his crops and livestock" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **Potiphar put everything that he had under Joseph's care** - When something is “put under someone's care,” it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. AT: “So Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything that he had” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **He did not have to think about anything except the food that he ate** - He did not have to worry about anything in his household; he only had to make decisions about what he wanted to eat. This can be stated in positive form. AT: “Potiphar only had to think about what he wanted to eat. He did not have to worry about anything else in his house” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Double Negatives](#))
- **Now** - The word “now” marks a break in the story line as the author gives background information about Joseph. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **handsome and attractive** - Both of the words have same meaning. They refer to Joseph's pleasing appearance. He was likely good-looking and strong. AT: “handsome and strong” (See: [Doublet](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:7-9**UDB:**

⁷ Because of that, after a while, his master's wife started to look fondly at Joseph. So one day she said to him, "Sleep with me!" ⁸ But he refused, saying to his master's wife, "Listen! My master is not concerned about anything in this house. He has appointed me to take care of everything that he owns. ⁹ No one in this household has more authority than I do. The only thing that he has not allowed me to have is you, because you are his wife! So how could I do this wicked thing that you are asking me to do? I would be sinning against God if I did that!"

ULB:

⁷ It came about after this that his master's wife lusted for Joseph. She said, "Sleep with me." ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not pay attention to what I do in the house, and he has put everything that he owns under my care. ⁹ No one is greater in this house than I am. He has not kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

translationWords:

- lust
- sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking
- lord, master, sir
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- sin, sinful, sinner, sinning
- God

translationNotes:

- **It came about after this that** - "And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **Look** - "Listen." Joseph uses this word to get Potiphar's wife's attention.
- **my master does not pay attention to what I do in the house** - "my master has no concern about his household with me in charge." This can be written in positive form. AT: "my master trusts me with his household" (See: [Double Negatives](#))
- **he has put everything that he owns under my care** - When something is "put under someone's care," it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. AT: "he has put me in charge of everything that belongs to him" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **No one is greater in this house than I am** - Here the author speaks of authority as if it were greatness. AT: "I have more authority in this house than anyone else" (See: [Metaphor](#))

- **He has not kept back anything from me but you** - This can be stated in positive form. AT: “He has given me everything except you” (See: [Litotes](#))
- **How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?** - Joseph uses a question for emphasis. This can be written as a statement. AT: “I certainly cannot do such a wicked thing and sin against God.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:10-12

UDB:

¹⁰ She kept on asking Joseph day after day to sleep with her, but he refused. He would not even go near her.

¹¹ One day Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the other household servants were in the house. ¹² Potiphar's wife grabbed his clothing and said, "Sleep with me!" Joseph ran out of the house, but his clothing was still in her hand!

ULB:

¹⁰ She spoke to Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her or to be with her. ¹¹ It came about one day that he went into the house to do his work. None of the men of the house were there in the house. ¹² She caught him by his clothes and said, "Sleep with me." He left his clothing in her hand, fled, and went outside.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **She spoke to Joseph day after day** - This means that she kept asking him to sleep with her. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: "She kept on asking Joseph to sleep with her" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **to be with her** - "to be near her"
- **It came about** - "And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **None of the men of the house** - "None of the other men who worked in the house"
- **fled, and went outside** - "and quickly ran outside" or "and quickly ran out of the house"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:13-15

UDB:

¹³ When she saw that he had run outside leaving his clothing in her hand, ¹⁴ she called the household servants. She said to them, "Look! This Hebrew man that my husband brought to us is insulting us! He came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him, but I screamed loudly. ¹⁵ As soon as he heard me scream, he left his clothing with me and ran outside!"

ULB:

¹³ It came about, when she saw that he had left his clothing in her hand and had fled outside, ¹⁴ that she called to the men of her house and told them, "See, Potiphar has brought in a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to sleep with me, and I screamed. ¹⁵ It came about when he heard me scream, that he left his clothing with me, fled, and went outside."

translationWords:

- [Potiphar](#)
- [Hebrew](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at](#)
- [sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about ... that she called** - "Then ... she called." The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark the next event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **and had fled outside** - "and had quickly ran out of the house"
- **the men of her house** - "the men who worked in her house"
- **See** - "Listen." Potiphar's wife uses this word to get the servants' attention.
- **He came in to me to sleep with me** - Here Potiphar's wife is accusing Joseph of trying to seize her and sleep with her.
- **It came about when he heard me scream, that he** - "When he heard me scream, he." The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark the next event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ She kept the clothing beside her until her husband, Joseph's master, came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave whom you brought here came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him! ¹⁸ As soon as I screamed loudly, he ran outside, leaving his clothing beside me!"

ULB:

¹⁶ She set his clothing next to her until his master came home. ¹⁷ She told him this explanation, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us, came in to mock me. ¹⁸ It came about that when I screamed, he left his clothing with me and fled outside."

translationWords:

- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [Hebrew](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at](#)

translationNotes:

- **his master** - "Joseph's master." This refers to Potiphar.
- **She told him this explanation** - "She explained it like this"
- **brought to us** - The word "us" refers to Potiphar, his wife, and includes the rest of the household. (See: [Inclusive "We"](#))
- **came in to mock me** - "came in to make a fool of me." Here, the word "mock" is a euphemism for "to seize and to sleep with." AT: "came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him" (UDB) (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **It came about that** - "Then." Potiphar's wife uses this phrase to mark the next event in the account she is telling him about Joseph trying to sleep with her. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **fled outside** - "ran quickly out of the house"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ When Joseph's master heard this story that his wife told him, and when she said, "This is how your slave treated me," he was very angry. ²⁰ Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there.

ULB:

¹⁹ It came about that, when his master heard the explanation his wife told him, "This is what your servant did to me," he became very angry. ²⁰ Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. He was there in the prison.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [prison, prisoner, imprison](#)
- [king](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about that** - "And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **his master** - "Joseph's master." This refers to Potiphar. This information can be made explicit. AT: "Joseph's master, Potiphar" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **heard the explanation his wife told him** - "heard his wife explain to him." The word "his" and "him" here refer to Potiphar.
- **he became very angry** - "Potiphar became very angry"
- **the place where the king's prisoners were confined** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "the place where the king put his prisoners" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **He was there** - "Joseph stayed there"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 39:21-23**UDB:**

²¹ But Yahweh was kind to Joseph and helped him because of his covenant with his ancestors; he caused the prison warden to be pleased with him. ²² So the prison warden put Joseph in charge of all those who were in the prison, and in charge of all the work that was done there. ²³ The warden was not concerned with anything that Joseph was taking care of, because Yahweh helped Joseph to do all his work well.

ULB:

²¹ But Yahweh was with Joseph and showed covenant faithfulness to him. He gave him favor in the sight of the prison warden. ²² The prison warden gave into Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever they did there, Joseph was in charge of it. ²³ The prison warden did not worry about anything that was in his hand, because Yahweh was with him. Whatever he did, Yahweh prospered.

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love
- favor, favorable, favoritism
- prison, prisoner, imprison

translationNotes:

- **But Yahweh was with Joseph** - This refers to how Yahweh took care of Joseph and was kind to him. AT: "But Yahweh was kind to Joseph" (UDB) or "But Yahweh took care of Joseph" (See: **Idiom**)
- **He gave him favor in the sight of the prison warden** - This means Yahweh caused the prison warden to approve of Joseph and to treat him well. AT: "Yahweh caused the prison warden to be pleased with Joseph" (See: **Idiom**)
- **the prison warden** - "the prison manager" or "the man in charge of the prison"
- **gave into Joseph's hand** - Here "hand" represents Joseph's power or trust. AT: "put Joseph in charge of" (See: **Metaphor**)
- **Whatever they did there, Joseph was in charge of it** - "Joseph was in charge of everything they did there"
- **because Yahweh was with him** - This refers to how Yahweh helped Joseph and guided him. AT: "because Yahweh guided Joseph" (See: **Idiom**)
- **Whatever he did, Yahweh prospered** - "Yahweh caused everything that Joseph did to prosper"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 39 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 39 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: [people of God, my people](#) and [bless, blessed, blessing](#))

Interpretation of dreams

The interpretation of dreams was important in the ancient Near East. It was seen as possible only through divine power. Yahweh gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams in order to bring himself glory and to protect Joseph and the Hebrew people. (See: [glory, glorious](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 40:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 40:1-3**UDB:**

¹ Some time later, two of the king of Egypt's officials did things that displeased him. One was his chief drink server and the other was his chief baker. ² The king became angry with both of them. ³ So he had them put in prison, in the house of the captain of the palace guards. That was the place where Joseph was being kept.

ULB:

40 ¹ It came about that after these things, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and king's baker offended their master, the king of Egypt. ² Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief of the cupbearers and the chief of the bakers. ³ He put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined.

translationWords:

- king
- Egypt, Egyptian
- lord, master, sir
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- prison, prisoner, imprison
- Joseph (OT)

translationNotes:

- **It came about that** - This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **the cupbearer** - This is the person who brought drinks to the king.
- **king's baker** - This is the person who made food for the king.
- **offended their master** - "upset their master"
- **the chief of the cupbearers and the chief of the bakers** - "the leading cupbearer and the leading baker"
- **He put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard** - "He put them in the prison that was in the house that was overseen by the captain of the guard"
- **He put them** - The king did not put them in prison but rather he commanded for them to be imprisoned. AT: "He had them put" or "He commanded his guard to put" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **in the same prison where Joseph was confined** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "This was the same prison that Joseph was in" or "This was the same prison Potiphar put Joseph in" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ The two men were in prison for a long time. During that time, the captain of the palace guards appointed Joseph to bring them the things they needed.

⁵ One night the king's chief drink server and chief baker each had a dream. Each dream had a different meaning.

ULB:

⁴ The captain of the guard assigned Joseph to be their servant. They remained in custody for some time. ⁵ Both of them dreamed a dream—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt who were confined in the prison—each man had his own dream in the same night, and each dream had its own interpretation.

translationWords:

- [dream](#)
- [interpret, interpretation](#)

translationNotes:

- **They remained in custody for some time** - “They remained in prison for a long time”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:6-8**UDB:**

⁶ The next morning, when Joseph came to them, he saw that both of them were looking sad. ⁷ So he asked them, “Why do you look so sad today?” ⁸ One of them answered, “We both had dreams last night, but there is no one who can tell us the meaning of the dreams.” Joseph said to them, “It is God who can tell the meaning of dreams. So tell me what you dreamed, and God will tell me the meaning.”

ULB:

⁶ Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them. Behold, they were sad. ⁷ He asked Pharaoh’s officials who were with him in custody in his master’s house, saying, “Why do you look so sad today?” ⁸ They said to him, “We have both dreamed a dream and no one can interpret it.” Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me, please.”

translationWords:

- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph came to them** - “Joseph came to the cupbearer and the baker”
- **Behold, they were sad** - The word “behold” here shows that Joseph was surprised by what he saw. AT: “He was surprised to see that they were sad” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Pharaoh’s officials who were with him** - This refers to the cupbearer and the baker.
- **in custody in his master’s house** - “In prison in his master’s house.” “His master” refers to Joseph’s master, the captain of the guard.
- **Do not interpretations belong to God?** - Joseph uses a question for emphasis. This can be written as a statement. AT: “Interpretations belong to God!” or “It is God who can tell the meaning of dreams!” (UDB) (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Tell me, please** - Joseph asks for them to tell him their dreams. AT: “Tell me the dreams, please” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:9-11

UDB:

⁹ So the king's chief drink server told his dream to Joseph. He said, "In my dream I saw a grapevine in front of me. ¹⁰ On the vine there were three branches. The branches budded, then they blossomed, and then they produced clusters of grapes. ¹¹ I was holding the king's cup, so I took the ripe grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I gave the cup to the king to drink the juice."

ULB:

⁹ The chief of the cupbearers told his dream to Joseph. He said to him, "In my dream, behold, a vine was in front of me. ¹⁰ In the vine were three branches. As it budded, its blossoms came out and the clusters of grapes ripened. ¹¹ Pharaoh's cup was in my hand. I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I placed the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

translationWords:

- [dream](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [vine](#)
- [grape](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)

translationNotes:

- **The chief of the cupbearers** - The most important person who brings drinks to the king. See how you translated this in [40:2](#).
- **In my dream, behold, a vine was in front of me** - "In my dream, I saw a vine in front of me!" The cupbearer uses word "behold" here to show that he was surprised by what he saw in his dream and to alert Joseph to pay attention.
- **the clusters of grapes ripened** - "its clusters ripened into grapes"
- **squeezed them** - This means that he squeezed the juice out of them. AT: "squeezed the juice from them" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:12-13

UDB:

¹² God immediately told Joseph what the dream meant. So Joseph said to him, "This is the meaning of your dream: The three branches of the vine represent three days. ¹³ Within three days the king will release you from prison. He will let you do the work that you did before. You will take cups of wine to the king as you did before, when you were his drink server.

ULB:

¹² Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it. The three branches are three days. ¹³ Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office. You will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand, just as when you were his cupbearer.

translationWords:

translationNotes:

- **This is the interpretation of it** - "Here is what the dream means"
- **The three branches are three days** - "The three branches represent three days"
- **Within three days** - "In three more days"
- **will lift up your head** - Here Joseph speaks of Pharaoh releasing the cupbearer from prison as if Pharaoh were causing him to lift up his head. AT: "will release you from prison" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **restore you to your office** - "will give you back your job"
- **just as when** - The missing words may be added. AT: "just as you did when" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:14-15

UDB:

¹⁴ But when you are out of prison and everything goes well for you, please do not forget me. ¹⁵ People took me away by force from the land where my fellow Hebrews live. I did nothing wrong there, and also while I have been here in Egypt, I have done nothing for which I deserved to be put in prison. So be kind to me and tell the king about me, so that he will release me from this prison!"

ULB:

¹⁴ But think of me when it goes well with you, and please show kindness to me. Mention me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this prison. ¹⁵ For indeed I was abducted out of the land of the Hebrews. Here also have I done nothing that they should put me in this dungeon."

translationWords:

- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [Hebrew](#)

translationNotes:

- **and please show kindness to me** - "and please be kind to me"
- **Mention me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this prison** - Joseph means for the cupbearer to tell Pharaoh about him so that Pharaoh will release him from prison. AT: "Help me get out of this prison by telling Pharaoh about me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **For indeed I was abducted** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "For indeed people took me" or "For indeed the Ishmaelites took me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **the land of the Hebrews** - "the land where the Hebrew people live"
- **Here also have I done nothing that they should put me in this dungeon** - "and also while I have been here in Egypt, I have done nothing for which I deserved to be put in prison" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:16-17

UDB:

¹⁶ When the chief baker heard that the meaning of the dream of the king's drink server was very good for the chief drink server, he also said to Joseph, "I also had a dream. In the dream I was surprised to see three baskets of bread stacked on my head. ¹⁷ In the top basket there were many kinds of baked goods for the king, but birds were eating them from the top basket that was on my head!"

ULB:

¹⁶ When the chief of the bakers saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream, and, behold, three baskets of bread were on my head. ¹⁷ In the top basket there were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."

translationWords:

- favor, favorable, favoritism
- dream
- bread
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt

translationNotes:

- **the chief of the bakers** - This refers to the leading person who made food for the king. See how this was translated in [40:2](#).
- **I also had a dream, and** - "I also had a dream, and in my dream,"
- **behold, three baskets of bread were on my head** - "there were three baskets of bread on my head!" The baker uses word "behold" here to show that he was surprised by what he saw in his dream and to alert Joseph to pay attention.
- **baked goods for Pharaoh** - "baked foods for Pharaoh"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:18-19

UDB:

¹⁸ God again told Joseph what the dream meant, so he said, "The three baskets also represent three days. ¹⁹ Within three days the king will command that your head be cut off. Then your body will be hung on a tree, and vultures will come and eat your flesh."

ULB:

¹⁸ Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation. The three baskets are three days. ¹⁹ Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a tree. The birds will eat your flesh off you."

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [flesh](#)

translationNotes:

- **This is the interpretation** - "Here is what the dream means"
- **The three baskets are three days** - "The three baskets represent three days"
- **will lift up your head from you** - Joseph also used the phrase "will lift up your head" when he spoke to the cupbearer in [40:13](#). Here it has a different meaning. Possible meanings are 1) "will lift up your head to put a rope around your neck" or 2) "will lift up your head to cut it off."
- **flesh** - Here "flesh" literally means the soft tissue on a person's body.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 40:20-23**UDB:**

²⁰ The third day after that was the king's birthday. On that day the king invited all his officials to celebrate his birthday. During the celebration, while they were all gathered there, the king summoned his chief drink server and chief baker from the prison. ²¹ He said that his chief drink server could have his previous job again, so once again he started to take cups of wine to the king. ²² But he commanded that the chief baker should be killed by being hanged, just as Joseph had said would happen when he told the two men the meaning of their dreams.

²³ But the chief drink server did not think about Joseph. Instead, he forgot to do what Joseph asked him to do.

ULB:

²⁰ It came about on the third day that it was Pharaoh's birthday. He made a feast for all his servants. He "lifted up" the head of the chief of the cupbearers and the head of the chief of the bakers, among his servants. ²¹ He restored the chief of the cupbearers to his responsibility, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand again. ²² But he hanged the chief of the bakers, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief of the did not remember to help Joseph. Instead, he forgot about him.

translationWords:

- feast
- servant, slave, slavery
- hang

translationNotes:

- **It came about on the third day that** - "Afterward, on the third day." The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark a new event in the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **He made a feast** - "He had a feast"
- **the chief of the cupbearers** - This was the leading person who prepared and served drinks to the king. See how these were translated in [40:2](#).
- **the chief of the bakers** - This refers to the leading person who made food for the king. See how this was translated in [40:2](#).
- **He restored the chief of the cupbearers to his responsibility** - The chief of the cupbearer's "responsibility" refers to his job as chief of the cupbearers. AT: "He gave the chief of the cupbearers his job back" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **But he hanged the chief of the bakers** - Pharaoh did not personally hang the baker, rather he commanded for him to be hanged. AT: "But he commanded for the chief of the bakers to be hanged" or "But he commanded his guards to hang the chief of the bakers" (See: [Metonymy](#))

- **just as Joseph had interpreted to them** - This refers to when Joseph interpreted their dreams. AT: “just as Joseph had said would happen when he interpreted the two men’s dreams” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 40 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 40 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: [people of God, my people](#) and [bless, blessed, blessing](#))

Interpretation of dreams

The interpretation of dreams was important in the ancient Near East. It was seen as possible only through divine power. Yahweh gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams in order to bring himself glory and to protect Joseph and the Hebrew people. (See: [glory, glorious](#))

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. It gained him great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh and helped to save his people. (See: [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#), [upright, uprightness](#) and [save, safe](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 41:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 41:1-3

UDB:

¹ Two complete years later, the king of Egypt had a dream. In the dream, he was standing alongside the Nile River. ² Suddenly seven healthy fat cows appeared. They started eating the grass that was on the riverbank. ³ Soon seven other cows, unhealthy-looking and thin, came up behind them from the Nile River. They stood alongside the fat cows that were on the riverbank.

ULB:

41 ¹ It came about at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream. Behold, he stood by the Nile. ² Behold, seven cows came up out of the Nile, desirable and fat, and they grazed in the reeds. ³ Behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the Nile, undesirable and thin. They stood by the other cows on the bank of the river.

translationWords:

- biblical time: year
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- dream
- Nile River, River of Egypt
- cow, calf, bull, cattle

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **at the end of two full years** - Two years passed after Joseph correctly interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker, who had been in prison with Joseph.
- **Behold, he stood** - The word "behold" here marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
- **he stood** - "Pharaoh was standing"
- **Behold** - "Suddenly." The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he saw.
- **desirable and fat** - "healthy and fat"
- **grazed in the reeds** - "were eating the grass along the side of the river"
- **reeds** - tall, thin grasses that grow in wet areas
- **Behold, seven other cows** - The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was again surprised by what he saw.
- **undesirable and thin** - "sick and thin"

- **bank of the river** - “beside the river” or “riverside.” This is the higher ground along the edge of a river.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:4-6**UDB:**

⁴ Then the unhealthy thin cows ate the seven healthy fat cows. And then the king woke up.

⁵ The king went to sleep again, and he had another dream. This time he saw seven heads of grain that were full of kernels of grain and ripe, and all growing on one stalk. ⁶ After that, the king saw that seven other heads of grain sprouted on that stalk. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot east wind.

ULB:

⁴ Then the undesirable and thin cows ate the seven desirable and fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵ Then he slept and dreamed a second time. Behold, seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, wholesome and good. ⁶ Behold, seven heads, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them.

translationWords:

- cow, calf, bull, cattle
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- dream
- grain

translationNotes:

- **undesirable and thin** - “weak and skinny.” See how you translated this phrase in [41:3](#).
- **desirable and fat** - “healthy and well-fed.” See how you translated this phrase in [41:2](#).
- **woke up** - “awakened”
- **a second time** - The word “second” is an ordinal number. AT: “again” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **Behold, seven heads** - The word “behold” here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he saw.
- **heads of grain** - The heads are parts of the corn plant on which the seeds grow.
- **came up on one stalk** - “grew up on one stem.” The stalk is the thick or tall part of a plant.
- **on one stalk, wholesome and good** - “on one stock and they were healthy and beautiful”
- **thin and scorched by the east wind** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “that were thin and burned because of the hot wind from the east” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **the east wind** - Wind from the east blew in from the desert. The heat of the east wind was often very destructive.
- **sprouted up** - “grew up” or “developed”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:7-8

UDB:

⁷ Then the thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven ripe full heads. Then the king woke up. He realized that he had been dreaming.

⁸ But the next morning he was worried about the meaning of the dream. So he summoned all the magicians and wise men who lived in Egypt. He told them what he had dreamed, but none of them could tell him the meaning of the two dreams.

ULB:

⁷ The thin heads swallowed up the seven wholesome and full heads. Pharaoh woke up, and, behold, it was a dream. ⁸ It came about in the morning that his spirit was troubled. He sent and called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- dream
- spirit, spiritual
- send, send out, sent
- call, calling, called, call out
- magic, magician
- wise, wisdom
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **The thin heads** - The words “of grain” are understood. AT: “The thin heads of grain” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **swallowed up** - “ate.” Pharaoh is dreaming that unhealthy corn could eat healthy corn just like a person eats food.
- **wholesome and full heads** - “healthy and good heads.” See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:5](#).
- **woke up** - “awakened”
- **behold** - The word “behold” here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he had seen.
- **it was a dream** - “he had been dreaming”
- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

- **his spirit was troubled** - Here the word “spirit” refers to his inner being or his emotions. AT: “he was troubled in his inner being” or “he was troubled” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **He sent and called** - It is understood that he sent servants. AT: “He sent his servants to call” or “He sent his servants to summon” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **all the magicians and wise men of Egypt** - Ancient kings and rulers used magicians and wise men as advisers.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:9-11

UDB:

⁹ Then the chief drink server said to the king, "Now I remember something that I should have told you! I made a mistake by forgetting to tell it to you. ¹⁰ One time you were angry with two of us. So you put me and the chief baker in the prison in the house of the captain of the palace guards. ¹¹ While we were there, one night each of us had a dream, and the dreams had different meanings.

ULB:

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am thinking about my offenses. ¹⁰ Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, the chief baker and me. ¹¹ We dreamed a dream the same night, he and I. We dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- angry, anger
- servant, slave, slavery
- house
- dream

translationNotes:

- **chief cupbearer** - The most important person who brings drinks to the king. See how you translated this in [40:2](#).
- **Today I am thinking about my offenses** - The word "Today" is used for emphasis. His "offenses" are that he should have told Pharaoh something much earlier but he did not. AT: "I just realized that I forgot to tell you something"
- **Pharaoh was angry** - The cupbearer is referring to Pharaoh in third person. This is a common way for someone with less power to speak to someone with greater power. AT: "You, Pharaoh, were angry" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **with his servants** - Here "his" refers to Pharaoh. Here "servants" refers to the cupbearer and the chief baker. AT: "with us, your servants" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, the chief baker and me** - "put the chief baker and me in the prison where the captain of the guard was in charge." Here "house" refers to the prison.
- **the captain of the guard** - The soldier in charge of the royal guards. See how you translated this in [40:2-3](#).

- **the chief baker** - The most important person who made food for the king. See how you translated this in [40:2-3](#).
- **We dreamed a dream the same night, he and I** - “One night we both had dreams”
- **We dreamed** - Here “We” refers to the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. (See: [Exclusive “We”](#))
- **We dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream** - “Our dreams had different meanings”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:12-13

UDB:

¹² There was a young Hebrew man there with us. He was a servant of the captain of the palace guards. We told him what we had dreamed, and he told us what our dreams meant. He told each of us the meaning of our dreams. ¹³ What happened after that was exactly the same as the meanings that he told us: You said I could have my previous job again, but the other man was killed by being hanged.”

ULB:

¹² There was with us there a young Hebrew man, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him and he interpreted for us our dreams. He interpreted for each of us according to his dream. ¹³ It came about as he interpreted for us, so it happened. Pharaoh restored me to my post, but the other one he hanged.”

translationWords:

- Hebrew
- servant, slave, slavery
- dream
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- restore, restoration
- hang

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - The chief cupbearer continues to speak to Pharaoh.
- **There was with us there** - “In prison there was with the chief baker and me”
- **the captain of the guard** - The soldier in charge of the royal guards. See how you translated this in [40:2-3](#).
- **We told him and he interpreted for us our dreams** - “We told him our dreams and he explained their meanings to us”
- **He interpreted for each of us according to his dream** - Here “his” refers to the cupbearer and baker individually, not to the one interpreting the dream. AT: “He explained what was going to happen to both of us” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **as he interpreted for us, so it happened** - “what he explained about the dreams is what later happened”

- **Pharaoh restored me to my post** - Here the cupbearer uses Pharaoh's title in speaking to him as a way of honoring him. AT: "You allowed me to return to my job" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))
- **the other one** - "the chief baker"
- **he hanged** - Here "he" refers to Pharaoh. And, it stands for the soldiers that Pharaoh commanded to hang the chief baker. AT: "you ordered your soldiers to hang" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ When the king heard that, he told some servants to bring Joseph to him, and they quickly brought Joseph out of the prison. Joseph shaved and put on better clothes, and then he went and stood in front of the king. ¹⁵ The king said to Joseph, “I had two dreams, and no one can tell me what they mean. But someone told me that when you hear someone tell about a dream he has had, you can tell that person what the dream means.” ¹⁶ But Joseph replied to the king, “No, I cannot do that. It is God who knows the meaning of dreams, but he will enable me to tell you their meaning, and they will mean something good.”

ULB:

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph. They quickly took him out of the dungeon. He shaved himself, changed his clothes, and came in to Pharaoh. ¹⁵ Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, but there is no interpreter for it. But I have heard about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” ¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, “It is not in me. God will answer Pharaoh with favor.”

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Joseph (OT)
- dream
- God
- favor, favorable, favoritism

translationNotes:

- **Pharaoh sent and called for** - It is understood that Pharaoh sent servants. AT: “Pharaoh sent his servants to get Joseph” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **out of the dungeon** - “out of the jail” or “out of the prison”
- **He shaved himself** - It was common practice to shave both the facial and head hair when preparing to go before Pharaoh.
- **came in to Pharaoh** - Here “came” can be stated as “went.” AT: “went before Pharaoh” (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **there is no interpreter for it** - “no one can explain the meaning”
- **you can interpret it** - “you can explain its meaning”
- **It is not in me** - “I am not the one who can explain the meaning”
- **God will answer Pharaoh with favor** - “God will answer Pharaoh favorably”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ The king said to Joseph, "In my first dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile River. ¹⁸ Suddenly seven healthy fat cows came up out of the river, and they started eating the grass that was on the riverbank.

ULB:

¹⁷ Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, behold, I stood on the bank of the Nile. ¹⁸ Behold, seven cows came up out of the Nile, fat and desirable, and they grazed among the reeds.

translationWords:

- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [dream](#)
- [Nile River, River of Egypt](#)
- [cow, calf, bull, cattle](#)

translationNotes:

- **behold, I stood** - Pharaoh uses the word "behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
- **bank of the Nile** - This is the higher ground along the edge of the Nile River. See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:3](#). AT: "beside the Nile"
- **Behold, seven cows** - Pharaoh uses the word "Behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
- **fat and desirable** - "well-fed and healthy." See how you translated this phrase in [41:2](#).
- **grazed among the reeds** - "were eating the grass along the side of the river." See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:2](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:19-21

UDB:

¹⁹ Soon seven other cows, ugly and thin ones, came up behind them from the river. I never saw such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt! ²⁰ The thin ugly cows ate the seven fat cows that came up first. ²¹ But afterwards, no one would have known that the thin cows ate them, because they were just as ugly as they were before. Then I woke up.

ULB:

¹⁹ Behold, seven other cows came up after them, weak, very undesirable, and thin. I never saw in all the land of Egypt such undesirableness like them. ²⁰ The thin and undesirable cows ate up the first seven fat cows. ²¹ When they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them, for they were still as undesirable as before. Then I awoke.

translationWords:

- [cow, calf, bull, cattle](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **Behold, seven other cows** - Pharaoh uses the word “Behold” to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
- **undesirable, and thin** - “weak, and skinny.” See how you translated this phrase in [41:3](#).
- **such undesirableness** - The abstract noun “undesirableness” can be translated with an adjective. AT: “such ugly cows” or “such worthless looking cows” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **fat cows** - “well-fed cows.” See how you translated this phrase in [41:2](#).
- **it could not be known that they had eaten them** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “no one would have been able to tell that the thin cows had eaten the fat cows” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:22-24

UDB:

²² Then I had another dream. I saw seven heads of grain. They were full of kernels of grain and ripe, and they were all growing on one stalk. ²³ Then to my surprise I saw seven other heads of grain that sprouted. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot east wind. ²⁴ The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven good heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but none of them could explain to me what they meant.”

ULB:

²² I looked in my dream, and, behold, seven heads came up upon one stalk, full and good. ²³ Behold, seven more heads, withered, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprang up after them. ²⁴ The thin heads swallowed up the seven good heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but there was none that could explain it to me.”

translationWords:

- dream
- good, goodness
- magic, magician

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Pharaoh continues telling Joseph his dreams.
- **I looked in my dream** - This begins Pharaoh’s next dream after he woke up and went back to sleep. AT: “Then I dreamed again” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **behold, seven heads** - Pharaoh uses the word “Behold” to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
- **seven heads** - The words “of grain” are understood. AT: “seven heads of grain” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **came up upon one stalk** - “grew up on one stem.” The stalk is the thick or tall part of a plant. See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:5](#).
- **Behold, seven more heads** - Pharaoh uses the word “Behold” to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
- **withered, thin and scorched by the east wind** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “that were withered, thin, and scorched because of the hot wind from the east” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **withered** - “decayed” or “wilted”
- **the east wind** - Wind from the east blew in from the desert. The heat of the east wind was often very destructive to crops.
- **sprang up** - “grew up” or “developed”

- **The thin heads** - The words “of grain” are understood. See how you translated this in [41:7](#). AT: “The thin heads of grain” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **swallowed up** - “ate.” Pharaoh is dreaming that unhealthy corn could eat healthy corn just like a person eats food. See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:7](#).
- **there was none that could** - “there was not a single one that could” or “none of them could”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:25-26

UDB:

²⁵ Then Joseph said to the king, "Both your dreams have the same meaning. God is revealing to you in your dreams what he is about to do. ²⁶ The seven healthy cows represent seven years. The seven good heads of grain also represent seven years. The two dreams both have the same meaning.

ULB:

²⁵ Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are the same. What God is about to do, he has declared to Pharaoh. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years. The dreams are the same.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [dream](#)
- [God](#)
- [declare, declaration](#)
- [good, goodness](#)
- [cow, calf, bull, cattle](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)

translationNotes:

- **The dreams of Pharaoh are the same** - It is implied that the meanings are the same. AT: "Both dreams mean the same thing" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **What God is about to do, he has declared to Pharaoh** - Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in the third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in the second person. AT: "God is showing you what he will soon do" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **seven good heads** - The words "of grain" are understood. AT: "seven good heads of grain" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:27-29**UDB:**

²⁷ The seven thin ugly cows that came up behind them and the seven worthless heads of grain that were dried up by the hot east wind each represent seven years of famine. ²⁸ It will happen just as I have told you, because God has revealed to you what he is about to do. ²⁹ There will be seven years in which there will be plenty of food throughout the land of Egypt.

ULB:

²⁷ The seven thin and undesirable cows that came up after them are seven years, and also the seven thin heads scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine. ²⁸ That is the thing which I spoke to Pharaoh. What God is about to do he has revealed to Pharaoh. ²⁹ Look, seven years of great abundance will come throughout all the land of Egypt.

translationWords:

- cow, calf, bull, cattle
- biblical time: year
- famine
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- God
- reveal, revelation
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Joseph continues his interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams
- **thin and undesirable cows** - "skinny and weak cows." See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:3](#).
- **seven thin heads scorched by the east wind** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "seven thin heads of grain scorched because of the hot wind from the east" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **That is the thing which I spoke to Pharaoh ... revealed to Pharaoh** - Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in the third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in second person. AT: "These events will happen just as I have told you ... revealed to you, Pharaoh" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **he has revealed** - "he has made known"
- **Look** - This is used to emphasize what Joseph says next. AT: "Pay attention to what I am saying"

- **seven years of great abundance will come throughout all the land of Egypt** - This speaks about the years of abundance as if time is something that travels and comes to a place. AT: “there will be seven years in which there will be plenty of food throughout the land of Egypt” (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:30-32**UDB:**

³⁰ Then there will be seven years of famine. Then people will forget all the years when there was plenty of food, because the famine that will come afterward will ruin the country. ³¹ The people will forget how plentiful food was previously, because the famine will be very terrible. ³² The reason God gave to you two dreams is that he has firmly decided that this will happen, and he will cause it to happen very soon.

ULB:

³⁰ Seven years of famine will come after them, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will devastate the land. ³¹ The abundance will not be remembered in the land because of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. ³² That the dream was repeated to Pharaoh is because the matter has been established by God, and God will soon do it.

translationWords:

- [famine](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [devastate, devastation](#)
- [dream](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [God](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Joseph continues interpreting Pharaoh's dreams.
- **Seven years of famine will come after them** - This speaks about the seven years of famine as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. AT: "Then there will be seven years when there is very little food" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **all the abundance will be forgotten ... and the famine will devastate the land. The abundance will not be remembered ... because of the famine that will follow** - Joseph expresses an idea in two ways to emphasize its importance. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt** - Here "land" refers to the people. This can be stated in active form. AT: "the people of Egypt will forget about the years in which there was plenty of food" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **will devastate the land** - Here "land" refers to the soil, the people, and the entire country. (See: [Metonymy](#))

- **because of the famine that will follow** - This speaks about the famine as if it were a thing that travels and follows behind something else. AT: “because of the time of famine that will happen afterwards” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **That the dream was repeated to Pharaoh is because the matter has been established by God** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “God gave you two dreams to show you that he will certainly cause these things to happen” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:33-34**UDB:**

³³ Now I suggest that you should choose a man who is wise and can make good decisions. I suggest that you appoint him to direct the affairs of the whole country. ³⁴ You should also appoint supervisors over the country, in order that they can arrange to collect one fifth of all the grain that is harvested during the seven years when food is plentiful.

ULB:

³³ Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and put him over the land of Egypt. ³⁴ Let Pharaoh do this: let him appoint overseers over the land. Let them take a fifth of the crops of Egypt in the seven abundant years.

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- discern, discernment
- wise, wisdom
- Egypt, Egyptian
- appoint, appointed
- overseer

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Joseph continues to address Pharaoh
- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **let Pharaoh look** - Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in second person. AT: “You, Pharaoh, should look” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **put him over the land of Egypt** - The phrase “put him over” means to give someone authority. AT: “give him authority over the kingdom of Egypt” or “put him in charge of the kingdom of Egypt” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **land of Egypt** - Here “land” stands for all the people and everything in Egypt. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Let them take a fifth of the crops of Egypt** - The word “fifth” is a fraction. AT: “Let them divide the crops of Egypt into five equal parts, then take one of those parts” (See: [Fractions](#))
- **in the seven abundant years** - “during the seven years in which there is plenty of food”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:35-36**UDB:**

³⁵ They should collect this amount of grain during those seven years that are coming, when there will be plenty of food. Each of the cities should supervise and protect the food that is stored up.

³⁶ This grain should be kept so that it can be eaten during the seven years when there will be a famine here in Egypt, so that the people in this country will not die from hunger.”

ULB:

³⁵ Let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, for food to be used in the cities. They should preserve it. ³⁶ The food will be a supply for the land for the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt. In this way the land will not be devastated by the famine.”

translationWords:

- good, goodness
- grain
- authority
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- famine
- Egypt, Egyptian
- devastate, devastation

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Joseph continues to counsel Pharaoh
- **Let them gather** - “Allow the overseers to gather”
- **of these good years that are coming** - This speaks of years as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. AT: “during the good years that will soon happen” (See: **Metaphor**)
- **store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh** - The phrase “under the authority of Pharaoh” means Pharaoh gives them authority. AT: “use the authority of Pharaoh to store the grain” (See: **Idiom**)
- **They should preserve it** - Store up the grain for a time when there is little food available. AT: “The overseers should leave soldiers there to guard the grain” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **The food will be a supply for the land** - Here “land” refers to the people. AT: “This food will be for the people” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **In this way the land will not be devastated by the famine** - Here “land” stands for the people. This can be stated in active form. AT: “This way the people will not starve during the famine” (See: **Metonymy** and **Active or Passive**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:37-38**UDB:**

³⁷ The king and his officials thought that this would be a good plan. ³⁸ So the king said to them, "Can we find any other man like Joseph, a man to whom God has given his spirit?"

ULB:

³⁷ This advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. ³⁸ Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a man as this, in whom is the Spirit of God?"

translationWords:

- [good, goodness](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord](#)

translationNotes:

- **This advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants** - Here "eyes" stands for a person's thoughts or opinions. AT: "Pharaoh and his servants thought this was a good plan" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **his servants** - This means Pharaoh's officials.
- **such a man as this** - "a man like the one Joseph described"
- **in whom is the Spirit of God** - "in whom the Spirit of God lives"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:39-41**UDB:**

³⁹ Then the king said to Joseph, "Because God has revealed all this to you, it seems to me that there is no one who is as wise as you and who can decide wisely about things. ⁴⁰ So I will put you in charge of everything in my palace. All the people here in Egypt must obey what you command. Only because I am king will I have more authority than you."

⁴¹ Then the king said to Joseph, "I am now putting you in charge of the whole country of Egypt."

ULB:

³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You will be over my house, and according to your word will all my people be ruled. Only in the throne will I be greater than you." ⁴¹ Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have put you over all the land of Egypt."

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Joseph (OT)
- God
- discern, discernment
- wise, wisdom
- house
- word
- ruler, rulers, rule
- throne
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **there is none so discerning** - "no one else is as capable in making decisions." See how you translated "discerning" in [41:33](#).
- **You will be over my house** - Here "house" stands for Pharaoh's palace and the people in the palace. The phrase "will be over" means Joseph will have authority over. AT: "You will be in charge of everyone in my palace" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **according to your word will all my people be ruled** - Here "word" refers to a command or what is said. This can be stated in active form. AT: "you will rule over my people and they will do what you command" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **Only in the throne** - Here "throne" stands for Pharaoh's rule as king. AT: "Only in my role as king"

- **See, I have put you** - The word “See” adds emphasis to what Pharaoh says next. AT: “Look, I have put you”
- **I have put you over all the land of Egypt** - The phrase “put you over” means to give authority. Here “land” refers to the people. AT: “I put you in charge of everyone in Egypt” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:42-43

UDB:

⁴² The king took from his finger the ring that had his seal on it, and he put it on Joseph's finger. He put robes made of fine linen on him, and he put a gold chain around his neck. ⁴³ Then he arranged for Joseph to ride around in the chariot that showed that he was the second most important man in the country. When Joseph rode in the chariot, men shouted to the people who were on the road in front of him, "Bow down!" So the Joseph went out to supervise this work all over Egypt.

ULB:

⁴² Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand. He clothed him with clothes of fine linen, and put a gold chain on his neck. ⁴³ He had him ride in the second chariot which he possessed. Men shouted before him, "Bend the knee." Pharaoh put him over all the land of Egypt.

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Joseph (OT)
- gold
- chariot
- possess, possession
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **Pharaoh took off his signet ring ... gold chain on his neck** - All of these actions symbolize that Pharaoh is giving Joseph the authority to do everything that Joseph planned. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **signet ring** - This ring had Pharaoh's seal engraved on it. This gave Joseph the authority and money needed to carry out his plans.
- **clothes of fine linen** - "Linen" is a smooth, strong cloth made from the blue-flowered flax plant.
- **He had him ride in the second chariot which he possessed** - This act makes clear to the people that Joseph is second only to Pharaoh. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Bend the knee** - "Bow down and honor Joseph." To bend the knee and bow down was a sign of honor and respect. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Pharaoh put him over all the land** - The phrase "put you over" means to give authority. Here "land" refers to the people. See how you translated a similar phrase in [41:41](#). AT: "I put you in charge of everyone in Egypt"(See: [Idiom](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:44-45**UDB:**

⁴⁴ The king said to Joseph, “I am the king, but no one in the whole land of Egypt will do anything if you do not permit them to do it.” ⁴⁵ The king gave Joseph a new name, Zaphenath Paneah. He also gave him Asenath to be his wife. She was the daughter of Potiphera, who was a priest in a temple in the city of On. In this way Joseph became known through all the land of Egypt.

ULB:

⁴⁴ Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and apart from you, no man will lift his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.” ⁴⁵ Pharaoh called Joseph’s name “Zaphenath Paneah.” He gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife. Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Joseph (OT)
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- Egypt, Egyptian
- priest, priesthood
- authority

translationNotes:

- **I am Pharaoh, and apart from you** - Pharaoh is emphasizing his authority. AT: “As Pharaoh, I command that apart from you”
- **apart from you, no man will lift his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt** - Here “hand” and “foot” stand for a person’s actions. AT: “no person in Egypt will do anything without your permission” or “every person in Egypt must ask your permission before they do anything” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **no man** - Here “man” refers to any person in general, whether male or female. (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))
- **Zaphenath Paneah** - Translators may add the following footnote: The name Zaphenath Paneah means “a revealer of secrets.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **He gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife** - Priests in Egypt were the highest and most privileged caste. This marriage signifies Joseph’s place of honor and privilege. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **gave him Asenath** - “Asenath” is the name of the woman whom Pharaoh gave to Joseph as his wife. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **daughter of Potiphera** - “Potiphera” is the father of Asenath. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

- **priest of On** - On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was “the City of the Sun” and the center of worship of the sun god Ra. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Joseph went out over the land of Egypt** - Joseph traveled over the land to supervise the preparations for the coming drought.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:46-47

UDB:

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he started to work for the king of Egypt. To do his work, he left the king's palace and traveled throughout Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the next seven years, the land produced abundant crops, so there was plenty of food.

ULB:

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ In the seven bountiful years the land produced abundantly.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [king](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **thirty years old** - "30 years old" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **when he stood before Pharaoh** - Here "stood before" stands for Joseph starting to serve Pharaoh. AT: "when he started to serve Pharaoh" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **went throughout all the land of Egypt** - Joseph is inspecting the country as he prepares to carry out his plans.
- **In the seven bountiful years** - "During the seven good years"
- **the land produced abundantly** - "the land produced big harvests"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:48-49

UDB:

⁴⁸ As Joseph supervised them, his helpers collected one fifth of all the grain that was produced during those years, and stored it in the cities. In each city, he had his helpers store up the grain that was grown in the fields that surrounded that city. ⁴⁹ Joseph had them store up a huge amount of grain. It looked as plentiful as the sand on the seashore. There was so much grain that after a while they stopped keeping records of how much grain was stored, because there was more grain than they could measure.

ULB:

⁴⁸ He gathered up all the food of the seven years that was in the land of Egypt and put the food in the cities. He put into each city the food from the fields that surrounded it. ⁴⁹ Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea, so much that he stopped counting, because it was beyond counting.

translationWords:

- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **He gathered up ... He put** - Here “He” stands for Joseph’s servants. AT: “Joseph ordered his servants to gather ... They put” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea** - This compares the grain to the sand of sea to emphasize its great quantity. AT: “The grain that Joseph stored was as plentiful as the sand on the seashore” (See: [Simile](#))
- **Joseph stored up ... he stopped** - Here “Joseph” and “he” stand for Joseph’s servants. AT: “Joseph had his servants store up ... they stopped” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:50-52

UDB:

⁵⁰ Before the seven years of famine started, Joseph’s wife Asenath gave birth to two sons. ⁵¹ Joseph named the first one Manasseh, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “forget,” because he said, “God has caused me to forget all my troubles and all my father’s family.” ⁵² He named his second son Ephraim, which means “to have children,” because he said, “God has given me children here in this land where I have suffered.”

ULB:

⁵⁰ Joseph had two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore to him. ⁵¹ Joseph called the name of his firstborn Manasseh, for he said, “God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” ⁵² He called the name of the second son Ephraim, for he said, “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

translationWords:

- Joseph (OT)
- son, son of
- famine
- priest, priesthood
- name
- firstborn
- Manasseh
- God
- ancestor, father, forefather
- household
- Ephraim
- fruit, fruitful
- afflict, affliction

translationNotes:

- **before the years of famine came** - This speaks about years as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. AT: “before the seven years of the famine began” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Asenath** - “Asenath” is the name of the woman whom Pharaoh gave to Joseph as his wife. See how you translated this is [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **daughter of Potiphera** - “Potiphera” is the father of Asenath. See how you translated this in [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

- **priest of On** - On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was “the City of the Sun” and the center of worship of the sun god Ra. See how you translated this in [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Manasseh** - Translators may also add a footnote that says, “The name ‘Manasseh’ means ‘to cause to forget.’”
- **father’s household** - This refers to Joseph’s father Jacob and his family.
- **Ephraim** - Translators may also add a footnote that says, “The name ‘Ephraim’ means ‘to be fruitful’ or ‘to have children.’”
- **made me fruitful** - Here “fruitful” means to prosper or to have children. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **in the land of my affliction** - The abstract noun “affliction” can be stated as “I have suffered.” AT: “in this land where I have suffered” (UDB) (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:53-54

UDB:

⁵³ Finally the seven years in which there was plenty of food ended. ⁵⁴ Then the seven years of famine started, just as Joseph had predicted. There was also a famine in all the other nearby lands, but although the crops did not grow, there was food everywhere in Egypt, because of the grain they had stored up in the cities.

ULB:

⁵³ The seven years of abundance that was in the land of Egypt came to an end. ⁵⁴ The seven years of famine began, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was food.

translationWords:

- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [famine](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)

translationNotes:

- **in all lands** - In all the surrounding nations beyond Egypt, including the land of Canaan.
- **but in all the land of Egypt there was food** - It is implied that there was food because of Joseph commanded his people to store food during the seven good years. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 41:55-57**UDB:**

⁵⁵ When all the people of Egypt had eaten all of their own food and were still hungry, they begged the king for food. So the king told all the people of Egypt, “Go to Joseph and do what he tells you to do.”

⁵⁶ When the famine was very bad over the whole country, Joseph ordered his helpers to open the storehouses. Then they sold the grain in the storehouses to the people of Egypt, because the famine was very severe all over Egypt. ⁵⁷ People from many nearby countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was very severe everywhere.

ULB:

⁵⁵ When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people loudly called on Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph and do what he says.” ⁵⁶ The famine was over all the face of the whole land. Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. The famine was severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ All the earth was coming to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

translationWords:

- Egypt, Egyptian
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Joseph (OT)
- famine
- face
- storehouse
- grain

translationNotes:

- **When all the land of Egypt was famished** - Here “land” stands for the people. AT: “When all the Egyptians were starving” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **The famine was over all the face of the whole land** - The word “face” refers to the surface of the land. AT: “The famine had spread throughout the land” (See: **Idiom**)
- **Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians** - Here “Joseph” stands for Joseph’s servants. AT: “Joseph had his servants open all the storehouses and sell grain to the Egyptians” (See: **Metonymy**)

- **All the earth was coming to Egypt** - Here “earth” stands for the people from all regions. AT: “People were coming to Egypt from all the surrounding regions” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **in all the earth** - “throughout the land.” It is likely that all the different trading partners and nations that were part of the Egyptian trading routes effected by the drought came to Egypt for grain.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 41 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 41 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Famine

Apparently this famine extended beyond Egypt and encompassed the land of Canaan too. Because of Egypt's size and power, it would not have been unusual for people to go there in times of need. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Joseph's test

Joseph tests his brothers to see if they are good. They treat their brother Benjamin better than they treated Joseph and tried to protect him.

Links:

- [Genesis 42:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 42:1-4**UDB:**

¹ When someone told Jacob that there was grain in Egypt that people could buy, he said to his sons, “Why do you just sit there looking at each other? We need some grain!” ² He said to them, “Someone told me that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, in order that we can stay alive!”

³ So Joseph’s ten older brothers went down to Egypt to buy some grain. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s younger brother, to go with the others, because he was afraid that something terrible might happen to him like what happened to Joseph.

ULB:

42 ¹ Now Jacob became aware that there was grain in Egypt. He said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?” ² He said, “See here, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy for us from there so we may live and not die.” ³ Joseph’s ten brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. ⁴ But Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, Jacob did not send with his brothers, for he feared that harm might come to him.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- grain
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Joseph (OT)
- Benjamin

translationNotes:

- **Now Jacob became** - The word “Now” marks a new part of the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **Why do you look at one another?** - Jacob uses a question to scold his sons for not doing anything about the grain. AT: “Do not just sit here!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Go down there ... went down** - It was common to speak of going from Canaan to Egypt as going “down.”
- **from Egypt** - Here “Egypt” refers to the people selling grain. AT: “from those selling grain in Egypt” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, Jacob did not send** - Benjamin and Joseph had the same father and mother. Jacob did not want to risk sending Rachel’s last son. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ So Jacob's sons went down from Canaan to Egypt to buy grain, and others went too, because there was a famine in Canaan also.

⁶ At that time Joseph was the governor of Egypt. He was the one who sold grain to people who came from all over Egypt and from many other countries to buy grain. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they prostrated themselves before him with their faces to the ground.

ULB:

⁵ The sons of Israel came to buy among those who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was the governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [famine](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [governor, govern, proconsul, government](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)

translationNotes:

- **The sons of Israel came to buy among those who came** - The word "came" can be translated as "went." Also, the words "grain" and "Egypt" are understood. AT: "The sons of Israel went to buy grain along with other people who went to Egypt" (See: [Go and Come](#) and [Ellipsis](#))
- **Now Joseph** - "Now" marks a change from the story to background information about Joseph. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **over the land** - Here "land" refers to Egypt. AT: "over Egypt" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **all the people of the land** - Here "land" includes Egypt and other surrounding countries. AT: "all the people of all the nations that came to buy grain" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Joseph's brothers came** - Here "came" can be translated as "went." (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **bowed down to him with their faces to the ground** - This is a way of showing respect. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:7-8

UDB:

⁷ As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he pretended that he did not know them. He spoke harshly to them, saying, “Where do you come from?” One of them replied, “We have come from Canaan land, to buy some grain.”

⁸ Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him.

ULB:

⁷ Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke harshly with them. He said to them, “Where have you come from?” They said, “From the land of Canaan to buy food.” ⁸ Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them** - “When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them”
- **he disguised himself to them** - “he acted like he was not their brother” or “he did not let them know that he was their brother”
- **Where have you come from?** - This was not a rhetorical question even though Joseph knew the answer. It was part of his choice to keep his identity from his brothers.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:9-11

UDB:

⁹ Then Joseph remembered what he had dreamed about them many years previously. But he decided not to tell them yet that he was their younger brother. He said to them, “You are spies! You have come to find out whether we will be able to defend ourselves if you attack us!” ¹⁰ One of them replied, “No, sir! We have come to buy grain. ¹¹ We are all sons of one man. We are honest men, not spies.”

ULB:

⁹ Joseph remembered the dreams that he had had about them. He said to them, “You are spies. You came to see the undefended parts of the land.” ¹⁰ They said to him, “No, my master. Your servants have come to buy food. ¹¹ We are all one man’s sons. We are honest men. Your servants are not spies.”

translationWords:

- [dream](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **You are spies** - Spies are people who secretly try to get information about a country to help another country.
- **You came to see the undefended parts of the land** - The full meaning can be stated explicitly. AT: “You came to find out where we are not guarding our land so that you can attack us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **my master** - This is a way to refer to someone to honor them.
- **Your servants have** - The brothers refer to themselves as “your servants.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: “We, your servants, have” or “We have” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:12-13

UDB:

¹² He said to them, “I do not believe you! You have come just to see whether we would be able to defend ourselves if we were attacked!” ¹³ But one of them replied, “No, that is not true! Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one man. Our youngest brother is with our father. One of them is no longer alive. ”

ULB:

¹² He said to them, “No, you have come to see the undefended parts of the land.” ¹³ They said, “We your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. See, the youngest is this day with our father, and one brother is no longer alive.”

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)

translationNotes:

- **He said to them** - “Joseph said to his brothers”
- **No, you have come to see the undefended parts of the land** - The full meaning can be stated explicitly. AT: “No, you have come to find out where we are not guarding our land so that you can attack us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **twelve brothers** - “12 brothers” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **See, the youngest** - “Listen to us, the youngest.” The word “See” is used to emphasize what they say next.
- **the youngest is this day with our father** - “right now our youngest brother is with our father”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:14-17**UDB:**

¹⁴ Joseph replied, "You are lying! I think it is just as I told you. You are spies! ¹⁵ But this is how I will find out whether what you are saying is true. I think that as surely as the king lives, you are spies. So you will not leave this place until your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Send one of your group to go and get your younger brother and bring him here. I will put the rest of you in prison, in order that I may test what you have said to find out whether what you are telling me is true. If the one who goes does not bring your younger brother here, then, just as surely as the king lives, it will be clear that you are lying and that you are spies." ¹⁷ Then Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

ULB:

¹⁴ Joseph said to them, "It is what I said to you; you are spies. ¹⁵ By this you will be tested. By the life of Pharaoh, you will not leave here, unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶ Send one of yourselves and let him get your brother. You will remain in prison, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you." ¹⁷ He put them all in custody for three days.

translationWords:

- Joseph (OT)
- test
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- prison, prisoner, imprison
- biblical time: day

translationNotes:

- **It is what I said to you; you are spies** - "like I already said, you are spies." See how you translated "spies" in 42:9.
- **By this you will be tested** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "This is how I will test you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **By the life of Pharaoh** - This phrase indicates a solemn oath. AT: "I swear by the life of Pharaoh" (See: [oath, swear, swear by](#))
- **Send one of yourselves and let him get your brother** - "Choose one of you to go get your brother"
- **You will remain in prison** - "The rest of you will remain in prison"
- **that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you** - Here "words" stands for what was said. This can be stated in active form. AT: "so that I may find out if you are telling the truth" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **in custody** - "in prison" (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:18-20**UDB:**

¹⁸ On the third day after that, Joseph went to the prison and said to them, "I am a man who fears that God will punish me if I do not do what I promise. So do what I tell you, and I will spare your lives. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, let one of you brothers stay here in prison, and the rest of you can take some grain back to your families who are very hungry because of the famine. ²⁰ But if you come back here again, you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that you can prove that what you told me is true, and as a result I will not have you executed." So they agreed to do that.

ULB:

¹⁸ Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in this prison, but you go, carry grain for the famine of your houses. ²⁰ Bring your youngest brother to me so your words will be verified and you will not die." So they did so.

translationWords:

- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- God
- prison, prisoner, imprison
- grain
- famine
- house
- word

translationNotes:

- **on the third day** - The word "third" is an ordinal number. AT: "after the second day" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))
- **Do this and live** - The understood information can be stated clearly. AT: "If you will do what I say, I will let you live" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **fear God** - This refers to deeply respecting God and showing that respect by obeying him.
- **let one of your brothers be confined in this prison** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "leave one of your brothers here in prison" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **but you go** - Here "you" is plural and refers to all the brothers that will not stay in prison. AT: "but the rest of you go" (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **carry grain for the famine of your houses** - Here "houses" stands for families. AT: "carry grain home to help your family during this famine" (See: [Metonymy](#))

- **so your words will be verified** - Here “words” stands for what was said. This can be stated in active form. AT: “so I may know what you say is true” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **you will not die** - This implies that Joseph would have his soldiers execute the brothers if he finds out they are spies. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ They said to each other, “It is surely because of what we did to our younger brother that we are being punished! We saw that he was very distressed when he pleaded with us not to harm him. But we did not pay any attention to him, and that is why we are having this trouble!”

²² Reuben said to them, “I told you not to harm the boy, but you did not pay attention to what I said! Now we are being paid back for killing him!”

ULB:

²¹ They said to one another, “We are truly guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us and we would not listen. Therefore this distress has come upon us.” ²² Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy,’ but you would not listen? Now, see, his blood is required of us.”

translationWords:

- **guilt, guilty**
- **soul**
- **Reuben**
- **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning**
- **blood**

translationNotes:

- **in that we saw the distress of his soul** - The word “soul” stands for Joseph. AT: “because we saw how distressed Joseph was” or “because we saw that Joseph was suffering” (See: **Synecdoche**)
- **Therefore this distress has come upon us** - The abstract noun “distress” can be stated as the verb “suffering.” AT: “That is why we are suffering like this now” (See: **Abstract Nouns**)
- **Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy,’ but you would not listen?** - Reuben uses a question to scold his brothers. AT: “I told you not to hurt the boy, but you would not listen!” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’** - This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy” or “I told you not to harm the boy” (See: **Quotes within Quotes** and **Direct and Indirect Quotations**)
- **Now, see** - Here “Now” does not mean “at this moment,” but both “Now” and “see” are used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **his blood is required of us** - Here “blood” stands for Joseph’s death. His brothers thought Joseph was dead. The phrase “is required of us” means they must be punished for what they

did. AT: “we are getting what we deserve for his death” or “we are suffering for having killed him” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:23-25**UDB:**

²³ While they were talking with Joseph, they were speaking to an interpreter, but when they said these things among themselves, they were speaking in their own language. They did not know that Joseph could understand their language and that he understood what they were saying. ²⁴ Because of what they said, Joseph realized that they admitted that what they had done to him many years previously was wrong. But he knew that he could not keep from crying, and he did not want them to see him crying, so he left them and went outside the room and began to cry. But then he returned to them and talked to them again. Then he took Simeon, and while they were watching, he told his servants to tie him up. He left Simeon in the prison and told the others that they could go.

²⁵ Joseph told his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, but he also told them to put the money that each one had paid for the grain in the top of his sack. He also told them to give them food to eat along the way. And his brothers received the food from Joseph's servants.

ULB:

²³ They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. ²⁴ He turned from them and wept. He returned to them and spoke to them. He took Simeon from among them and bound him before their eyes. ²⁵ Then Joseph commanded his servants to fill his brothers' bags with grain, and to put every man's money back into his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. It was done for them.

translationWords:

- Joseph (OT)
- Simeon
- bind, bond, bound
- command, to command, commandment
- servant, slave, slavery
- grain

translationNotes:

- **They did not know ... an interpreter between them** - This shifts from the main storyline to background information that explains why the brothers thought Joseph could not understand them. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **an interpreter** - An "interpreter" is someone who translates what one person says into another language. Joseph placed an interpreter between himself and his brothers to make it seem like he did not speak their language.

- **He turned from them and wept** - It is implied that Joseph wept because he was emotional after hearing what his brothers said. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **spoke to them** - Joseph was still speaking a different language and using the interpreter to speak to his brothers. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **bound him before their eyes** - Here “eyes” refers to their sight. AT: “bound him in their sight” or “bound him as they watched” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **to give them provisions** - “to give them the supplies they needed”
- **It was done for them** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “The servants did for them everything that Joseph commanded” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:26-28**UDB:**

²⁶ His older brothers loaded the sacks of grain on their donkeys and left.

²⁷ At the place where they stopped to sleep that night, one of them opened his sack to get some grain for his donkey. He was amazed to see his money in the top of the sack. ²⁸ He exclaimed to his brothers, "Someone has returned my money! Here it is in my sack!" They started shaking with fear, and said to each other, "What is this that God has done to us?"

ULB:

²⁶ The brothers loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there. ²⁷ As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed in the lodging place, he saw his money. Behold, it was in the opening of his sack. ²⁸ He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back. Look at it; it is in my sack." Their hearts sank and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

translationWords:

- brother
- donkey, mule
- grain
- heart
- God

translationNotes:

- **As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed in the lodging place, he saw his money. Behold, it was in the opening of his sack** - "When they stopped at a place for the night, one of the brothers opened his sack to get food for his donkey. In the sack he saw his money!"
- **Behold** - The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
- **My money has been put back** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "Someone has put my money back" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Look at it** - "Look in my sack!"
- **Their hearts sank** - To become afraid is spoken of as if their heart were sinking. Here "hearts" stands for courage. AT: "They became very afraid" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:29-32**UDB:**

²⁹ When they returned to their father in Canaan land, they told him all that had happened to them. One of them said, ³⁰ "The man who governs the whole land of Egypt talked very harshly to us. He acted toward us as though we were spying on his country. ³¹ But we told him, 'We are honest men! We are not spies. ³² Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one father. One has died, and our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan.'

ULB:

²⁹ They went to Jacob, their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them. They said, ³⁰ "The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly with us and thought that we were spies in the land. ³¹ We said to him, 'We are honest men. We are not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no longer alive, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.'

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)

translationNotes:

- **lord of the land** - "the lord of Egypt"
- **spoke roughly** - "spoke harshly"
- **we were spies** - Spies are people who secretly try to get information about a country to help another country. See how you translated "spies" in [42:9](#).
- **We said to him, 'We are honest men. We are not spies. We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no longer alive ... land of Canaan.'** - This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "We told him that we are honest men and not spies. We said that we are twelve brothers, sons of our father, and that one brother is no longer alive ... land of Canaan" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **One is no longer alive** - The word "brother" is understood. AT: "One brother is no longer alive" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **the youngest is this day with our father** - The word "brother" is understood. AT: "the youngest brother is with our father right now" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:33-34

UDB:

³³ The man who is the governor of the land did not believe us, so he said to us, 'This is how I will know if you are truly honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me. Then the rest of you can take some grain for your families that are starving from hunger and go. ³⁴ But when you return, bring your youngest brother to me, in order that I will know that you are not spies, but instead, that you are honest men. Then I will release your brother for you. And then you can buy whatever you want in this country.'

ULB:

³³ The man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers with me, take grain for the famine in your houses, and go your way. ³⁴ Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I will know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. Then I will release your brother to you, and you will trade in the land.'

translationWords:

- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [grain](#)
- [famine](#)
- [house](#)

translationNotes:

- **the lord of the land** - "The lord of Egypt"
- **take grain for the famine in your houses** - Here "houses" stands for "family." AT: "take grain to help your family during the famine" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **go your way** - "go home" or "leave"
- **and you will trade in the land** - "and I will allow you to buy and sell in this land"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:35-36

UDB:

³⁵ As they were emptying their sacks, they were surprised that in each man's sack was his pouch of money! When they and their father saw all the pouches of money, they were frightened. ³⁶ Their father Jacob said to them, "You have caused two of my children to be taken from me! Joseph is dead, and Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin from me! It is I who am suffering because of all these things that are happening!"

ULB:

³⁵ It came about as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bag of silver was in his sack. When they and their father saw their bags of silver, they were afraid. ³⁶ Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children. Joseph is no longer alive, Simeon is gone, and you will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me."

translationWords:

- [silver](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Simeon](#)
- [Benjamin](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **behold** - "to their surprise." The word "behold" here shows that the brothers were surprised by what they saw.
- **You have bereaved me of my children** - "you have deprived me of my children" or "you have caused me to lose two of my children"
- **All these things are against me** - "all these things hurt me"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 42:37-38**UDB:**

³⁷ Reuben said to his father, “I will bring Benjamin back to you. Let me take care of him. If I do not bring Benjamin back to you, you may kill both of my sons.” ³⁸ But Jacob said, “No, I will not let my son go down there with you. His older brother is dead, and he is the only one of my wife Rachel’s sons who is left! If something harms him while you are traveling, you would cause me, a gray-haired old man, to die because of sorrow.”

ULB:

³⁷ Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “You may kill my two sons if I do not bring Benjamin back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him to you again.” ³⁸ Jacob said, “My son will not go down with you. For his brother is dead and he alone is left. If harm comes to him on the road in which you go, then you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol.”

translationWords:

- Reuben
- Benjamin
- authority
- Jacob, Israel
- hades, sheol

translationNotes:

- **Put him in my hands** - This is a request for Reuben to take Joseph with him and to care for him on the journey. AT: “Put me in charge of him” or “Let me take care of him” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **My son will not go down with you** - It was common to use the phrase “go down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. AT: “My son, Benjamin, will not go with you to Egypt”
- **with you** - Here “you” is plural and refers to Jacob’s older sons. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **For his brother is dead and he alone is left** - The full meaning can be made explicit. AT: “For my wife, Rachel, only had two children. Joseph is dead and Benjamin is the only one left” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **on the road in which you go** - “while you a traveling to Egypt and back” or “while you are away.” Here “road” stands for traveling.
- **then you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol** - To “bring down ... to Sheol” is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word “down” because it was commonly believed sheol is somewhere underground. AT: “then you will cause me, an old man, to die of sorrow” (See: [Idiom](#))

- **my gray hair** - This stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. AT: “me, an old man” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 42 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 42 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's concern

Israel is concerned over his favored son, Benjamin. He is also confused about the reason the Egyptian official treated them so kindly. This caused him some concern. It is possible he thought his sons were lying to him. (See: [favor](#), [favorable](#), [favoritism](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 43:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 43:1-2

UDB:

¹ The famine in Canaan got worse. ² Finally, when Jacob and his family had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, Jacob said to them, “Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain for us!”

ULB:

43 ¹ The famine was severe in the land. ² It came about when they had eaten the grain that they had brought out of Egypt, their father said to them, “Go again; buy us some food.”

translationWords:

- [famine](#)
- [grain](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **The famine was severe in the land** - The word “Canaan” is understood. This information can be made explicit. AT: “The famine was severe in the land of Canaan” (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **when they had eaten** - “when Jacob and his family had eaten”
- **they had brought** - “Jacob’s older sons had brought”
- **buy us** - Here “us” refers to Jacob, his sons, and the rest of the family. (See: [Inclusive “We”](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:3-5

UDB:

³ But Judah said to him, "The man who sold us the grain warned us sternly, 'I will not let you see me again if you come and your younger brother is not with you.' ⁴ So if you will send our younger brother with us, we will go down to Egypt and buy some grain for you. ⁵ But if you will not send him, we will not go down there, because that man said to us, 'I will not let you see me again if your younger brother is not with you.'"

ULB:

³ Judah told him, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴ If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵ But if you do not send him, we will not go down. For the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

translationWords:

- [Judah](#)
- [face](#)

translationNotes:

- **Judah told him** - "Judah told his father Jacob"
- **The man** - This refers to Joseph, but the brothers did not know it was Joseph. They referred to him as "the man" or "the man, the lord of the land" as in [42:30](#).
- **warned us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'** - This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "warned us that we would not see his face unless we brought our youngest brother with us" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **solemnly warned us** - "was very serious when he warned us, saying"
- **You will not see my face** - Judah uses this phrase twice in 43:3-5 to emphasize to his father that they cannot return to Egypt without Benjamin. The phrase "my face" refers to the man, who is Joseph. AT: "You will not see me" (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **your brother is with you** - Judah is referring to Benjamin, Rachel's last born before she died.
- **we will not go down** - It was common to use the phrase "go down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 43 General Notes
- **Genesis 43 Translation Questions**

Genesis 43:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Jacob asked, “Why did you cause me to have this trouble by telling the man that you had a younger brother?” ⁷ One of them replied, “The man asked about us and about our family. He said, ‘Is your father still living? Do you have another brother?’ We had to answer his questions. We could not know that he would say, ‘The next time that you come down here, bring your brother with you!’”

ULB:

⁶ Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man that you had another brother?” ⁷ They said, “The man asked details about us and our family. He said, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ We answered him according to these questions. How could we have known that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’”

translationWords:

- **Jacob, Israel**
- **brother**
- **ancestor, father, forefather**

translationNotes:

- **Why did you treat me so badly** - “Why did you cause me so much trouble”
- **The man asked details** - “The man asked many questions”
- **about us** - Here “us” is exclusive and refers to the brothers who went to Egypt and spoke with “the man.” (See: **Exclusive “We”**)
- **He said, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “He asked us directly if our father was still alive and if we had another brother.” (See: **Quotes within Quotes and Direct and Indirect Quotations**)
- **We answered him according to these questions** - “We answered the questions he asked us”
- **How could we have known that he would say ... down?** - The sons use a question emphasize that they did not know what the man would tell them to do. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. AT: “We did not know he would say ... down!” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **he would say, ‘Bring your brother down’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “he would tell us to bring our brother down to Egypt” (See: **Quotes within Quotes and Direct and Indirect Quotations**)
- **Bring your brother down** - It was common to use the word “down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ Then Judah said to his father Jacob, "Send the boy with me, and we will go immediately, in order that we and you and our children may get grain and not die from hunger. ⁹ I myself will guarantee that he will return. You can require me to do what I am promising. If I do not bring him back to you safely, you can say forever that I am to blame. ¹⁰ If we had not wasted so much time, by now we could have gone there and returned two times!"

ULB:

⁸ Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the boy with me. We will rise and go that we may live and not die, both we, you, and also our children. ⁹ I will be a guarantee for him. You will hold me responsible. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰ For if we had not delayed, surely by now we would have come back here a second time."

translationWords:

- Judah
- Jacob, Israel
- forever

translationNotes:

- **We will rise and go that we may live and not die, both we, you, and also our children** - The phrases "we may live" and "not die" mean the same thing. Judah is emphasizing that they have to buy food in Egypt in order to survive. AT: "We will go now to Egypt and get grain so our whole family will live" (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **We will rise** - Here "We" refers to the brothers who will travel to Egypt. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **we may live** - Here "we" refers to the brothers, Israel, and the whole family. (See: [Inclusive "We"](#))
- **both we** - Here "we" refers to the brothers. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **we, you** - Here "you" is singular and refers to Israel. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **also our children** - Here "our" refers to the brothers. This refers to the small children who were most likely to die during a famine. (See: [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **I will be a guarantee for him** - The abstract noun "guarantee" can be stated as the verb "promise." AT: "I will promise to bring him back" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **You will hold me responsible** - How Jacob will hold Judah responsible can be stated clearly. AT: "You will make me answer to you about what happens to Benjamin" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **let me bear the blame** - This speaks about “blame” as if it were an object that a person has to carry. AT: “you may blame me” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **For if we had not delayed** - Judah is describing something that could have happened in the past but did not. Judah is scolding his father for waiting so long to send his sons to Egypt to get more food. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))
- **we would have come back here a second time** - “we would have returned twice”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ Then their father Jacob said to them, "If there is no other way, do this: Put in your sacks some of the best things that are grown in this land, and take them down to the man as a gift. Take some balm and honey and spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts, and almonds. ¹² Take twice as much money as you took the previous time, because you must return the silver that someone put in the tops of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake that it was put in your sacks.

ULB:

¹¹ Their father Israel said to them, "If it be so, now do this. Take some of the best products of the land in your bags. Carry down to the man a gift: some balm and honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. ¹² Take double money in your hand. The money that was returned in the opening of your sacks, carry again in your hand. Perhaps it was a mistake.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [gift](#)
- [honey, honeycomb](#)

translationNotes:

- **If it be so, now do this** - "If this is our only choice, then do it"
- **Carry down** - It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
- **balm** - an oily substance with a sweet smell used for healing and protecting skin. See how you translated these words in [37:25](#). AT: "medicine"
- **spices** - "seasonings." See how you translated these words in [37:25](#).
- **pistachio nuts** - a small, green tree nut (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **almonds** - a tree nut with a sweet flavor (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **Take double money in your hand** - Here "hand" stands for the whole person. AT: "Take double the money with you" (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **The money that was returned in the opening of your sacks, carry again in your hand** - Here "hand" stands for the whole person. The phrase "that was returned" can be stated in active form. AT: "take back to Egypt the money someone put in your sacks" (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:13-15**UDB:**

¹³ Take your youngest brother and go back to that man. ¹⁴ I will pray that God Almighty will cause that man to act mercifully toward you, so that he will let your other brother, as well as Benjamin, come back here with you. But as for me, if my sons are taken from me, then I will not have my sons!”

¹⁵ So the men took the gifts that Jacob said that they should take, and twice the amount of money that the grain would cost. They also took Benjamin. They went down quickly to Egypt, and they stood in front of Joseph.

ULB:

¹³ Take also your brother. Rise and go again to the man. ¹⁴ May God Almighty give you mercy before the man, so that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.” ¹⁵ The men took this gift, and in their hand they took double the amount of money, along with Benjamin. They got up and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

translationWords:

- brother
- God
- Almighty
- mercy, merciful
- Benjamin
- Joseph (OT)

translationNotes:

- **Take also your brother** - “Take also Benjamin”
- **go again** - “return”
- **May God Almighty give you mercy before the man** - The abstract noun “mercy” can be stated as the adjective “kind.” AT: “May God Almighty cause the man to be kind to you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **your other brother** - “Simeon”
- **If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved** - “If I lose my children, then I lose my children.” This means that Jacob knows he must accept whatever happens to his sons.
- **in their hand they took** - Here “hand” refers to the entire person. AT: “they took” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

- **went down to Egypt** - It was common to use the phrase “went down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:16-17

UDB:

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the man who was in charge of things in his house, “Take these men to my house. Slaughter an animal and prepare a meal, because I want them to eat with me at noon.” He told his servant in what order they were to be seated.

¹⁷ The man did as Joseph said; he took them to Joseph’s house.

ULB:

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Bring the men into the house, slaughter an animal and prepare it, for the men will eat with me at noon.” ¹⁷ The steward did as Joseph said. He brought the men to Joseph’s house.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Benjamin](#)
- [manager, steward](#)
- [house](#)

translationNotes:

- **Benjamin with them** - “Benjamin with Joseph’s older brothers”
- **the steward of his house** - The “steward” was responsible for managing Joseph’s household activities.
- **He brought the men** - Here “brought” can be translated as “took.” (See: [Go and Come](#))
- **to Joseph’s house** - “into Joseph’s house”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:18-20

UDB:

¹⁸ But they were afraid because he was taking them to Joseph's house. They were thinking, "He is taking us here because of the silver that was put in our sacks the first time that we came here. While we are eating, he will have his servants attack us and seize us and cause us to become his slaves, and also take our donkeys."

¹⁹ They went with the man who was in charge of things in Joseph's house. When they arrived at the entrance of the house, ²⁰ one of them said to him, "Please, sir, listen to me. We came down here previously and bought some grain.

ULB:

¹⁸ The men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house. They said, "It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time we were brought in, that he may seek an opportunity against us. He might arrest us and take us as slaves, and take our donkeys." ¹⁹ They approached the steward of Joseph's house, and they spoke to him at the door of the house, ²⁰ saying, "My master, we came down the first time to buy food.

translationWords:

- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- Joseph (OT)
- servant, slave, slavery
- donkey, mule
- manager, steward
- lord, master, sir

translationNotes:

- **The men were afraid** - "Joseph's brothers were afraid"
- **they were brought to Joseph's house** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "they were going into Joseph's house" or "the steward was taking them into Joseph's house" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time we were brought in** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "The steward is bringing us into the house because of the money that someone put back in our sacks" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **that he may seek an opportunity against us. He might arrest us** - This can be translated as a new sentence. AT: "He is waiting for the opportunity to accuse us, so that he might arrest us"

- **we came down** - It is common to use the phrase “came down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:21-23

UDB:

²¹ But at the place where we stopped for the night as we were returning home, we opened our sacks. We were astonished to see that in the top of each of our sacks was the exact amount of silver that we had paid for the grain! So we have brought it back with us. ²² We have also brought more silver with us to buy more grain. We do not know who put the silver in our sacks.”

²³ The man replied, “Relax! Do not worry about it! I received the silver that you brought. Your God, the God your father worships, must have put it in your sacks.” And then he brought Simeon to them from the prison.

ULB:

²¹ It came about, when we reached the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man’s money was in the opening of his sack, our money in full weight. We have brought it back in our hands. ²² Other money we have also brought down in our hand to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.” ²³ The steward said, “Peace be to you, do not fear. Your God and the God of your father must have put your money in your sacks. I received your money.” The steward then brought Simeon out to them.

translationWords:

- manager, steward
- peace, peaceful
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- God
- Simeon

translationNotes:

- **Connecting Statement:** - The brothers continue speaking to the steward of the house.
- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **when we reached the lodging place** - “when we came to the place that we were going to stay for the night”
- **behold** - The word “behold” here shows that the brothers were surprised by what they saw.
- **every man’s money was in the opening of his sack, our money in full weight** - “each one of us found the full amount of his money in his sack”
- **We have brought it back in our hands** - Here “hands” stands for the whole person. AT: “We have brought the money back with us” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

- **Other money we have also brought down in our hand to buy food** - Here “hand” stands for the whole person. AT: “We have also brought more money to buy food” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **brought down** - It common to use the word “down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
- **Peace be to you** - The abstract noun “Peace” can be stated as a verb. AT: “Relax” (UDB) or “Calm yourselves” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **Your God and the God of your father** - The stewards is not speaking about two different Gods. AT: “Your God, the God your father worships” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:24-25**UDB:**

²⁴ Then he took them into Joseph's house. He gave them water to wash their feet and gave them food for their donkeys. ²⁵ He told them that they were going to eat with Joseph at noon. So the men prepared their gifts to give to Joseph when he arrived.

ULB:

²⁴ The steward took the men into Joseph's house. He gave them water, and they washed their feet. He gave feed to their donkeys. ²⁵ They prepared the gifts for Joseph's coming at noon, for they had heard that they would eat there.

translationWords:

- [manager, steward](#)
- [donkey, mule](#)
- [gift](#)

translationNotes:

- **washed their feet** - This custom helped tired travelers to refresh themselves after walking long distances. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **feed to their donkeys** - "Feed" is dry food that is set aside for animals

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts that they had brought into the house. Then they bowed down to the ground in front of him. ²⁷ He asked them if they were well, and then he asked, “How is the health of your old father, the one that you told me about? Is he still living?”

ULB:

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought the gifts which were in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the ground. ²⁷ He asked them about their welfare and said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”

translationWords:

- [bow, bow down](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)

translationNotes:

- **they brought the gifts which were in their hand** - Here “hand” stands for the entire person. AT: “the brothers brought the gifts they had with them” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **bowed down before him** - This is a way of showing honor and respect. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:28-29**UDB:**

²⁸ One of them replied, “Yes, your servant, our father, is still alive, and he is well.” Then again they bowed down in front of him.

²⁹ Then he saw his younger brother Benjamin, his own mother’s other son. He asked them, “Is this your youngest brother, the one whom you told me about?” After they said “Yes,” he said to Benjamin, “Young man, I pray that God will act kindly toward you.”

ULB:

²⁸ They said, “Your servant our father is well. He is still alive.” They prostrated and bowed down.
²⁹ When he lifted up his eyes he saw Benjamin his brother, his mother’s son, and he said, “Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?” Then he said, “May God be gracious to you, my son.”

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- prostrate
- bow, bow down
- Benjamin
- grace, gracious

translationNotes:

- **Your servant our father** - They refer to their father as “Your servant” to show respect. AT: “Our father who serves you”
- **They prostrated and bowed down** - These words basically mean the same thing. They laid down in front of the man to show him respect. AT: “They bowed down in front of him” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **he lifted up his eyes** - This means “he looked up.” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **his mother’s son, and he said** - This can be translated with a new sentence. AT: “his mother’s son. Joseph said”
- **Is this your youngest brother ... me?** - Possible meanings are 1) Joseph is truly asking a question to confirm that this man is Benjamin, or 2) it is a rhetorical question. AT: “So this is your youngest brother ... me.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **my son** - This is a friendly way one man speaks to another man of lower rank. AT: “young man” (UDB)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:30-31

UDB:

³⁰ Joseph quickly left the room. He realized that he was about to cry because he was full of emotion about his younger brother. He went into his private room and cried there. ³¹ Then, after he washed the tears from his face, he came out, and controlling his emotions, he said to the servants, “Serve the food!”

ULB:

³⁰ Joseph hurried to go out of the room, for he was deeply moved about his brother. He sought somewhere to weep. He went to his room and wept there. ³¹ He washed his face and came out. He controlled himself, saying, “Serve the food.”

translationWords:

- [serve, service](#)

translationNotes:

- **hurried to go out of the room** - “hurried out of the room”
- **for he was deeply moved about his brother** - The phrase “deeply moved” refers to having a strong feeling or emotion when something important happens. AT: “for he had strong feelings of compassion for his brother” or “for he had strong feelings of affection for his brother” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **saying** - It can be made explicit to whom Joseph is speaking. AT: “and said to his servants” (UDB) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Serve the food** - This means to distribute the food so that people may eat.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 43:32-34**UDB:**

³² Now the people of Egypt thought that it was disgraceful for them to eat with Hebrews, so the servants served food to Joseph by himself, and served the other people of Egypt who ate with him by themselves, and they served Joseph's older brothers and younger brother by themselves. ³³ His brothers were astonished to see that their seats were arranged according to their ages, from the youngest to the oldest! ³⁴ When their portions of food were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's portion! So they ate food and drank wine with Joseph until they became very cheerful.

ULB:

³² The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves. The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is detestable to the Egyptians. ³³ The brothers sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth. The men were astonished together. ³⁴ Joseph sent portions to them from the food in front of him. But Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of his brothers. They drank and were merry with him.

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- Joseph (OT)
- Egypt, Egyptian
- bread
- Hebrew
- detestable, detest
- firstborn
- birthright
- marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished

translationNotes:

- **The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves. The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves** - This means that Joseph, the brothers, and the other Egyptians are eating in three different places within the same room. AT: "The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves and the Egyptians, who were eating with him, by themselves"
- **The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves** - These are probably other Egyptian officials who ate with Joseph, but they still sat separately from him and the Hebrew brothers.

- **because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is detestable to the Egyptians** - This can be translated as a new sentence: “They did this because the Egyptians thought it was shameful to eat with the Hebrews”
- **could not eat bread** - Here “bread” stands for food in general. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **The brothers sat before him** - It is implied that Joseph had arranged where each brother would sit. You can make clear the implied information. AT: “The brothers sat across from the man, according to how he arranged their places” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth** - The “firstborn” and the “youngest” are used together to mean all the brothers were sitting in order according to their age. (See: [Merism](#))
- **The men were astonished together** - “The men were very surprised when they realized this”
- **But Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as any of his brothers** - The phrase “five times” can be stated more generally. AT: “But Benjamin received a portion that was much bigger than what his brothers received”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 43 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 43 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah's sacrifice

Judah is willing to sacrifice himself in order to save Benjamin, the favored son of Jacob. Judah's descendants will become the leaders of the Israelites and the godliest of the twelve tribes of Joseph. (See: [favor](#), [favorable](#), [favoritism](#) and [godly](#), [godliness](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Joseph's test

Joseph tests his brothers to see if they are good. They treat their brother Benjamin better than they treated Joseph and tried to protect him. (See: [test](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 44:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 44:1-2**UDB:**

¹ When his brothers were ready to return home, Joseph said to the man who was in charge of things in his house, "Fill the sacks of those men with as much grain as they can carry on their donkeys. And put in the top of each man's sack the silver that he paid for the grain. ² Then put my silver cup in the top of the youngest brother's sack, along with the silver that he paid for the grain." So the servant did what Joseph told him to do.

ULB:

44 ¹ Joseph commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's opening. ² Put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's opening of the youngest, and also his money for the grain." The steward did as Joseph had said.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [manager, steward](#)
- [house](#)
- [silver](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This begins a new event in the story. Most likely this is the next morning after the feast.
- **steward of his house** - The "steward" was responsible for managing Joseph's household activities.
- **every man's money** - Their money was silver coins most likely in a small bag.
- **in his sack's opening** - "in his sack"
- **Put my cup, the silver cup** - "Put my silver cup"
- **in the sack's opening of the youngest** - The word "brother" is understood. AT: "in the youngest brother's sack" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 44 General Notes
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:3-5**UDB:**

³ The next morning at dawn the men were allowed to leave for home with their donkeys. ⁴ When they had not gone far from the city, Joseph said to the servant in charge of things in his house, "Pursue those men immediately. When you catch up to them, say to them, 'We did good things for you! Why have you paid us back by doing something bad to us?' ⁵ You have stolen the cup that my master drinks from! It is the cup that he uses to find out things that nobody knows! What you did was very wicked!"

ULB:

³ The morning dawned, and the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. ⁴ When they were out of the city but were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow after the men, and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you returned evil for good?' ⁵ Is this not the cup from which my master drinks, and the cup that he uses for divination? You have done evil, this thing that you have done."

translationWords:

- donkey, mule
- Joseph (OT)
- manager, steward
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- good, goodness
- lord, master, sir
- divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer

translationNotes:

- **The morning dawned** - "The morning light shown"
- **the men were sent away, they and their donkeys** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "they sent the men away, along with their donkeys" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Why have you returned evil for good?** - This question is used to scold the brothers. AT: "You have treated us badly, after we were good to you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Is this not the cup from which my master drinks, and the cup that he uses for divination?** - This question is used to scold the brothers. AT: "You already know that this is the cup that my master uses for drinking and for fortune telling!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **You have done evil, this thing that you have done** - This repeats "you have done" for emphasis. AT: "What you have done is very evil" (See: [Parallelism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:6-7

UDB:

⁶ When the servant caught up with them, he told them what Joseph had told him to say. ⁷ But one of them replied to him, "Sir, why do you say such things? We are your servants, and we would never do anything like that!"

ULB:

⁶ The steward overtook them and spoke these words to them. ⁷ They said to him, "Why does my master speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants that they would do such a thing."

translationWords:

- [manager, steward](#)
- [word](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **spoke these words to them** - Here "words" stands for what was said. AT: "spoke what Joseph told him to say"
- **Why does my master speak such words as these?** - Here "words" stands for what was said. The brothers refer to the steward as "my master." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in the second person. AT: "Why are you saying this, my master?" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **Far be it from your servants that they would do such a thing** - The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants" and "they." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: "We would never do such a thing!" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **Far be it from your servants** - Something that a person would never do is spoken of as if it were an object that person wants to put very far from himself. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ We even brought back to you from Canaan the silver that we found inside the tops of our sacks! So we certainly would not steal silver or gold from your master's house! ⁹ If you discover that any of us has that cup, you can execute him, and the rest of us will become your slaves."

¹⁰ The man replied, "I will do what you say. But the one who has the cup will not be executed. Instead, he will become my slave, and the rest of you may return home."

ULB:

⁸ Look, the money that we found in our sacks' openings, we brought again to you out of the land of Canaan. How then could we steal out of your master's house silver or gold? ⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my master's slaves." ¹⁰ The steward said, "Now also let it be according to your words. He with whom the cup is found will be my slave, and you others will be innocent."

translationWords:

- **Canaan, Canaanite**
- **silver**
- **gold**
- **servant, slave, slavery**
- **manager, steward**
- **word**
- **innocent**

translationNotes:

- **Look** - This adds emphasis to what the brothers say next.
- **the money that we found in our sacks' openings** - "you know the money that we found in our sacks"
- **we brought again to you out of the land of Canaan** - "we brought back to you from Canaan"
- **How then could we steal out of your master's house silver or gold?** - The brothers use a question to emphasize that they would not steal from the lord of Egypt. AT: "So we would never take anything from your master's house!" (See: **Rhetorical Question**)
- **silver or gold** - These words are used together to mean that they would not steal anything of any value.
- **With whomever of your servants it is found** - The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be

stated in the first person. Also, “is is found” can be stated in active form. AT: “If you find that one of us has stolen the cup” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

- **we also will be my master’s slaves** - The phrase “my master” refers to the steward. This can be stated in the second person. AT: “you may take us as your slaves” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **Now also let it be according to your words** - Here “now” does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows. Also, “words” stands for what was said. AT: “Very well. I will do what you said” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **He with whom the cup is found will be my slave** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “If I find the cup in one of your sacks, that person will be my slave” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:11-13**UDB:**

¹¹ Each of the men quickly lowered his sack down from the donkey to the ground and opened it. ¹² Then the servant started to search for the cup in each sack. He started with the oldest brother's sack and ended with the youngest one's sack. He found the cup in Benjamin's sack and showed it to them. ¹³ The brothers tore their clothes because they were so dismayed. They loaded the sacks on the donkeys again and returned to the city.

ULB:

¹¹ Then each man hurried and brought his sack down to the ground, and each man opened his sack. ¹² The steward searched. He began with the oldest and finished with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes. Each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

translationWords:

- [Benjamin](#)
- [manager, steward](#)
- [donkey, mule](#)

translationNotes:

- **brought his sack down** - "lowered his sack"
- **the oldest ... the youngest** - The word "brother" is understood. AT: "the oldest brother ... the youngest brother" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack** - This can be translated as a new sentence and in active form. AT: "youngest. The steward found the cup in Benjamin's sack" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **Then they tore their clothes** - The word "they" refers to the brothers. Tearing clothes was a sign of great distress and sorrow. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **and returned** - "and they returned"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:14-15

UDB:

¹⁴ When Judah and his older and younger brothers entered Joseph's house, Joseph was still there. The servant told Joseph what had happened. Then the brothers threw themselves down on the ground in front of Joseph. ¹⁵ He said to them, "Why did you do this? Do you not know that a man like me can find out things that nobody knows?"

ULB:

¹⁴ Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house. He was still there, and they bowed before him to the ground. ¹⁵ Joseph said to them, "What is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?"

translationWords:

- Judah
- bow, bow down
- divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer

translationNotes:

- **He was still there** - "Joseph was still there"
- **they bowed before him** - "they fell before him." This is a sign of the brothers wanting the lord to be merciful to them. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?** - Joseph uses a question to scold his brothers. AT: "Surely you know that a man like me can learn things by magic!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ Judah replied, “Sir, what can we say? How can we prove that we are innocent? God has paid us back for the sins we committed many years ago. So now we will become your slaves—both we and the one in whose sack the cup was found.” ¹⁷ But Joseph replied, “No, I could never do anything like that. Only the man in whose sack the cup was found will become my slave. The rest of you can return to your father peacefully.”

ULB:

¹⁶ Judah said, “What can we say to my master? What can we speak? Or how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants. Look, we are my master’s slaves, both we and he also in whose hand the cup was found.” ¹⁷ Joseph said, “Far be it from me that I should do so. The man in whose hand the cup was found, that person will be my slave, but as for you others, go up in peace to your father.”

translationWords:

- Judah
- lord, master, sir
- justify, justification
- God
- iniquity
- servant, slave, slavery
- peace, peaceful

translationNotes:

- **What can we say to my master? What can we speak? Or how can we justify ourselves?** - All 3 questions mean basically the same thing. They use these questions to emphasize that there is nothing they can say to explain what happened. AT: “We have nothing to say, my master. We cannot speak anything of value. We cannot justify ourselves.” (See: **Parallelism** and **Rhetorical Question**)
- **What can we say to my master ... my master’s slaves** - Here “my master” refers to Joseph. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in second person. AT: “What can we say to you ... your slaves” (See: **First, Second or Third Person**)
- **God has found out the iniquity of your servants** - Here “found out” does not mean God just found out what the brothers did. It means God is now punishing them for what they did. AT: “God is punishing us for our past sins”

- **the iniquity of your servants** - The brothers refer to themselves as “your servants.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in first person. AT: “our iniquity” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **and he also in whose hand the cup was found** - Here “hand” stands for the whole person. Also, “was found” can be stated in active form. AT: “and the one who had your cup” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **Far be it from me that I should do so** - Something that a person would never do is spoken of as if it were an object the person wants put far away from him. AT: “It is not like me to do something like that” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **The man in whose hand the cup was found** - Here “hand” stands for the whole person. Also, “was found” can be stated in active form. AT: “The man who had my cup” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ Then Judah came near to Joseph and said, "Sir, please let me say something to you. You are equal to the king himself, so you could command that I be executed; but do not be angry with me for speaking to you. ¹⁹ You asked us, 'Is your father still living, and do you have another brother?'"

ULB:

¹⁸ Then Judah came near to him and said, "My master, please let your servant speak a word in my master's ears, and do let your anger burn against your servant, for you are just like Pharaoh. ¹⁹ My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'"

translationWords:

- Judah
- servant, slave, slavery
- word
- angry, anger
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt

translationNotes:

- **came near to** - "approached"
- **let your servant** - Judah refers to himself as "your servant." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in first person. AT: "let me, your servant" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **speak a word in my master's ears** - Here "word" is a metonym that stands for what is said. And "ear" is a synecdoche that stands for the whole person. AT: "speak to you, my master" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Synecdoche](#))
- **in my master's ears** - Here "my master" refers to Joseph. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in second person. AT: "to you" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **do let your anger burn against your servant** - Being angry is spoke of as if it were a burning fire. AT: "please do not be angry with me, your servant" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **for you are just like Pharaoh** - Judah compares the master to Pharaoh to emphasize the great power that the master has. He is also implying that he does want the master to become angry and execute him. AT: "for you are as powerful as Pharaoh and could have your soldiers kill me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "My master

asked us if we have a father or a brother.” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

- **My master asked his servants** - Judah refers to Joseph with the words “my master” and “his.” He also refers to himself and his brothers as “his servants.” AT: “You, my master, asked us, your servants” or “You asked us” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:20-22**UDB:**

²⁰ We answered, ‘Our father is alive, but he is an old man. He has a young son who was born after our father became an old man. That son had an older brother, who is now dead. So the youngest son is the only one of his mother’s sons who is still alive, and his father loves him very much.’ ²¹ Then you said to us, ‘The next time you come here, bring your younger brother down to me, so that I can see him.’ ²² We said to you, ‘No, we cannot do that, because the boy cannot leave his father. If he leaves his father, his father will die because of sorrow.’

ULB:

²⁰ We said to my master, ‘We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one. But his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.’ ²¹ Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me that I may see him.’ ²² After that, we said to my master, ‘The boy cannot leave his father. For if he should leave his father his father would die.’

translationWords:

- love
- servant, slave, slavery

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Judah continues to speak before Joseph
- **We said to my master, ‘We have a father ... his father loves him.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “And we said to my master that we have a father ... his father loves him” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **we said to my master** - Judah refers to Joseph as “my master.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: “we said to you, my master” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **his father loves him** - This refers to love for a friend or family member.
- **Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me that I may see him.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “And you said to your servants that we should bring our youngest brother to you so that you may see him” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Then you said to your servants** - Judah refers to himself and his brothers as “your servants.” AT: “Then you said to us, your servants” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

- **Bring him down to me** - It was common to use the word “down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. AT: “Bring him to me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **After that, we said to my master, ‘The boy cannot ... father would die.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “In response, we said to my master that the boy cannot ... father would die” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **his father would die** - It is implied that their father would die from sorrow. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:23-26**UDB:**

²³ But you told us, ‘If your youngest brother does not come down with you, I will not let you see me again!’ ²⁴ When we returned to our father, we told him what you said. ²⁵ Months later our father said, ‘Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain!’ ²⁶ But we said, ‘We cannot go back by ourselves. We will go only if our youngest brother is with us. We will not be able to see the man who sells grain if our youngest brother is not with us.’

ULB:

²³ Then you said to your servants, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.’ ²⁴ Then it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my master. ²⁵ Our father said, ‘Go again, buy us some food.’ ²⁶ Then we said, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then will we go down, for we will not be able to see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- word

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Judah continues his story to Joseph
- **Then you said to your servants, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “Then you said to your servants that unless our youngest brother comes with us, we would not see you again” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Then you said to your servants** - Judah refers to himself and his brothers as “your servants.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: “Then you said to us, your servants” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **comes down ... go down** - It was common to use the word “down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
- **you will not see my face again** - Here “face” stands for the whole person. AT: “you will not see me again” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **Then it came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

- **we went up to your servant my father** - It was common to use the phrase “went up” when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **we told him the words of my master** - Judah refers to Joseph as “my master.” Also, “words” stands for what was said. AT: “we told him what you said, my master” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) and [Metonymy](#))
- **Our father said, ‘Go again, buy us some food’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “Our father told us to go again to Egypt to buy food for us and our families” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Then we said, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother ... is with us.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “Then we said to him that we cannot go down to Egypt. We told him that if our youngest brother is with us ... is with us” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **to see the man’s face** - Here “face” stands for the whole person. AT: “to see the man” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:27-29**UDB:**

²⁷ Our father replied, 'You know that my wife Rachel gave birth to two sons for me. ²⁸ One of them disappeared, and I said, "A wild animal has surely torn him to pieces." And I have not seen him since then. ²⁹ If you take this other one from me, too, and something harms him, you would cause me, an old gray-haired man, to die because of my sorrow.'

ULB:

²⁷ Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. ²⁸ One of them went out from me and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since." ²⁹ Now if you also take this one from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol.'

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- hades, sheol

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Judah continues his story to Joseph
- **said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. One of them went out from me and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since." Now if you also take this one from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol.'** - This has a two level and three level quotation. They can be stated as indirect quotations. AT: "said to us that we know that his wife, Rachel, bore him only two sons, and that one of them went out and an animal tore him to pieces, and he has not seen him since. Then he said that if we take his other son and something bad happens to him, then we would cause him to die of sorrow." (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **said to us** - Here "us" does not include Joseph. (See [Exclusive "We"](#))
- **You know** - Here "You" is plural and refers to the brothers. (See: [Forms of You](#))
- **he is torn in pieces** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "a wild animal has torn him to pieces" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **harm comes to him** - Something bad happening to a person is spoken of as if "harm" were something that travels and comes to a person. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol** - To "bring down ... to Sheol" is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word "down" because it

was commonly believed Sheol is somewhere underground. AT: “then you will cause me, an old man, to die of sorrow” (See: [Idiom](#))

- **my gray hair** - This stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. AT: “me, an old man” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:30-32**UDB:**

³⁰ So please listen. My father will remain alive only if his youngest son remains alive. ³¹ If he sees that the boy is not with us when we return to him, he will die. We will cause our gray-haired father to die because of his sorrow. ³² I guaranteed that the boy would return safely. I told him, ‘You can require me to do what I am promising. If I do not bring him back to you, you can say forever that I am to blame for not bringing him back to you.’

ULB:

³⁰ Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the boy’s life, ³¹ it will come about, when he sees the boy is not with us, he will die. Your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. ³² For your servant became a guarantee for the boy to my father and said, ‘If I do not bring him to you, then I will bear the guilt to my father forever.’

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- bind, bond, bound
- forever

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **therefore, when I come ... sorrow to Sheol** - Judah is describing to Joseph a realistic but hypothetical case of what he will expect will happen to Jacob when he returns without Benjamin. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))
- **when I come to your servant** - Here “come” can be translated as “go” or “return.”
- **the lad is not with us** - “the boy is not with us”
- **since his life is bound up in the boy’s life** - The father saying he would die if his son died is spoken of as if their two lives were physically bound together. AT: “since he said he would die if the boy did not come back” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **it will come about** - Judah is speaking about a hypothetical case in the future as if it would certainly happen. (See [Hypothetical Situations](#))
- **Your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol** - To “bring down ... to Sheol” is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word “down” because it was commonly believed Sheol is somewhere underground. AT: “And we will have caused our old father to die of sorrow” (See: [Idiom](#))

- **Your servants** - Judah refers to himself and his brothers as “your servants.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: “And we, your servants” or “And we” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **the gray hair of your servant our father** - Here “gray hair” stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. AT: “our old father” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **For your servant became a guarantee for the boy to my father** - The abstract noun “guarantee” can be stated with the verb “promised.” AT: “For I promised my father concerning the boy” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **For your servant** - Judah refers to himself as “your servant.” AT: “For I, your servant” or “For I” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **then I will bear the guilt to my father** - Being considered guilty is spoken of as if “guilt” were something that a person carries. AT: “then my father may blame me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 44 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 44 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 44:33-34**UDB:**

³³ So, please let me remain here as your slave instead of my youngest brother, and let the boy return home with his other older brothers. ³⁴ I cannot return to my father if the boy is not with me! I do not want to see how miserable my father would become!”

ULB:

³³ Now therefore, please let your servant stay instead of the boy as slave to my master, and let the boy go up with his brothers. ³⁴ For how can I go up to my father if the boy is not with me? I am afraid to see the evil that would come on my father.”

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **let your servant** - Judah refers to himself as “your servant.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. AT: “let me, your servant” or “let me” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **to my master** - Judah refers to Joseph as “my master.” AT: “to you, my master” or “to you” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **let the boy go up** - It was going to use the phrase “go up” when speaking about traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **For how can I go up to my father if the boy is not with me?** - Judah uses a question to emphasize the grief he would have if Benjamin did not return home. AT: “I cannot return to my father if the boy is not with me.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **I am afraid to see the evil that would come on my father** - A person suffering terribly is spoken of as if “evil” were a thing that comes upon a person. AT: “I am afraid to see how much my father would suffer” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 44 General Notes
- **Genesis 44 Translation Questions**

Genesis 45 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers in this chapter. This chapter forms the conclusion of the story which began in chapter 43.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: [people of God, my people](#) and [bless, blessed, blessing](#))

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. It gained him great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh and helped to save his people. (See: [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning save, safe](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 45:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 45:1-3

UDB:

¹ Joseph was not able to control his feelings any longer. He did not want to cry in front of his servants, so he said to them loudly, "All of you go outside!" After they went outside, there were no Egyptians there with Joseph when he told his brothers who he was. ² He cried so loudly that even the people outside heard it, and even the people in the king's palace heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is our father still alive?" But his brothers were not able to reply, because they were frightened because of what he said.

ULB:

45 ¹ Then Joseph could not control himself before all the servants who stood by him. He said loudly, "Everyone must leave me." So no servant stood by him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² He wept loudly, the Egyptians heard it, and the house of Pharaoh heard of it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" His brothers could not answer him, for they were shocked in his presence.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [house](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)

translationNotes:

- **could not control himself** - This means he could not control his emotions. It can be stated in positive form. AT: "was about to start crying"
- **by him** - "near him"
- **house of Pharaoh** - Here "house" stands for the people in the Pharaoh's palace. AT: "everyone in Pharaoh's palace" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **shocked in his presence** - "terrified of him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:4-6**UDB:**

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me!” When they came closer to him, he said, “I am your brother Joseph! I am the one you sold to traders who brought me here to Egypt! ⁵ But now, do not be distressed, and do not be angry with yourselves for having sold me as a slave. It was God who sent me here ahead of you in order to keep you from dying in the famine. ⁶ There has been a famine in this country for two years, and it will continue for five more years. During this time, no one will plow the ground, and there will be no crops to harvest.

ULB:

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” They came near. He said, “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to preserve life. ⁶ For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.

translationWords:

- Egypt, Egyptian
- God
- biblical time: year
- famine
- harvest

translationNotes:

- **whom you sold into Egypt** - The meaning can be stated more explicitly. AT: “whom you sold as a slave to the trader who brought me to Egypt” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Do not be grieved** - “do not be upset” or “do not be distressed”
- **that you sold me here** - The meaning can be stated more explicitly. AT: “that you sold me as a slave and sent me here to Egypt” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **to preserve life** - Here “life” stands for the people that Joseph saved from dying during the famine. AT: “so I could save many lives” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest** - “there will be five more years without planting or harvesting.” Here “neither plowing nor harvest” stands for the fact that the crops still will not grow because of the famine. AT: “and the famine will last five more years” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ God sent me here ahead of you to keep you from starving, and to make sure that your descendants would survive. ⁸ Therefore, it was not you who sent me here; it was God who sent me here! He has caused me to become like a father to the king. I am in charge of everything in his palace and the governor of everyone in Egypt!

ULB:

⁷ God sent me ahead of you to preserve you as a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. ⁸ So now it was not you who sent me here but God, and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, master of all his house, and ruler of all the land of Egypt.

translationWords:

- remnant
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- lord, master, sir
- house
- ruler, rulers, rule
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **to preserve you as a remnant in the earth** - “so that you and your families would not completely perish from the earth” or “to make sure your descendants would survive” (UDB)
- **to keep you alive by a great deliverance** - The abstract noun “deliverance” can be stated as “rescuing.” AT: “to keep you alive by rescuing you in a mighty way” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **he has made me a father to Pharaoh** - Joseph advising and helping Pharaoh is spoken of as if Joseph were Pharaoh’s father. AT: “he has made me a guide to Pharaoh” or “he has made me the chief adviser to Pharaoh” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **of all his house** - Here “house” stands for the people who live in his palace. AT: “of all his household” or “of all his palace” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **ruler of all the land of Egypt** - Here “land” stands for the people. AT: “ruler over all the people of Egypt” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **ruler** - Here Joseph means that he is ruler in second place to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. This understood information can be made clear. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ Now return to my father quickly and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: "God has caused me to become the governor over the whole land of Egypt. Come down to me immediately!
¹⁰ You can live in the region of Goshen. You and your children and your grandchildren, your sheep and goats and cattle, and everything that you own, will be near me. ¹¹ Since there will be five more years of famine, I will make sure that you have food. If you do not come here, you and your family and all of your servants will starve. "'

ULB:

⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says, "God has made me master of all Egypt. Come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You will live in the land of Goshen, and you will be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, for there are still five years of famine, so that you do not come to poverty, you, your household, and all that you have.'"

translationWords:

- Goshen
- children, child
- flock, herd
- biblical time: year
- famine
- household

translationNotes:

- **go up to my father** - It was common to use the phrase "go up" when speaking about going from Egypt to Canaan. AT: "go back to my father"
- **say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says, "God has ... all that you have** - This is a quotation with three layers. It can be simplified to two layers. AT: "tell him that this is what I said: 'God has ... all that you have" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Come down to me** - It was common to use the phrase "come down" when speaking about going from Canaan to Egypt. AT: "Come here to me"
- **come to poverty** - This speaks about "poverty" as if it were a destination. AT: "waste away" or "starve" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:12-13**UDB:**

¹² If you—and Benjamin, too—look closely at me, all of you will see that it is really I, Joseph, who am speaking to you. ¹³ Go and tell my father about how much honor I have here in Egypt. And tell him about everything else that you have seen. Bring my father down here quickly!”

ULB:

¹² Look, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You will tell my father about all my honor in Egypt and of all that you have seen. You will hurry and bring my father down here.”

translationWords:

- Benjamin
- power, powers
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin** - The word “eyes” stands for the entire person. AT: “All of you and Benjamin can see” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **that it is my mouth that speaks to you** - The word “mouth” stands for the entire person. AT: “that I, Joseph, am speaking to you” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **about all my honor in Egypt** - “how the people in Egypt greatly honor me”
- **my father down here** - It was common to use the word “down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. AT: “my father here to me”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his younger brother Benjamin's neck and cried. And Benjamin hugged him and cried. ¹⁵ Then he kissed his older brothers on their cheeks, and he cried. After that, his brothers started to talk with him.

ULB:

¹⁴ He hugged his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ He kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that his brothers talked with him.

translationWords:

- [kiss](#)

translationNotes:

- **He hugged his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck** - "Joseph hugged his brother Benjamin, and they both wept"
- **He kissed all his brothers** - In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.
- **wept over them** - This means Joseph was crying while he kissed them.
- **After that his brothers talked with him** - Earlier they were too afraid to speak. Now they feel they can speak freely. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. AT: "After that his brothers talked freely with him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ Someone went to the palace and told the news that Joseph's brothers had come. The king and all his officials were pleased. ¹⁷ The king said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers this: 'Put loads of grain on your animals and return to Canaan land. ¹⁸ Then bring your father and your families back here. I will give you the best land in Egypt, and you will have the best food in the land to eat.'

ULB:

¹⁶ The news of the matter was told in Pharaoh's house: "Joseph's brothers have come." It pleased Pharaoh and his servants very much. ¹⁷ Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your animals and go to the land of Canaan. ¹⁸ Get your father and your households and come to me. I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- house
- servant, slave, slavery
- Canaan, Canaanite
- household
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **The news of the matter was told in Pharaoh's house: "Joseph's brothers have come"** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. It may also be stated in active form. AT: "Everyone in Pharaoh's palace heard that Joseph's brothers had come" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **Pharaoh's house** - This stands for Pharaoh's palace.
- **Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your animals and go to the land of Canaan. Get your father and your households and come to me. I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "Tell your brothers to load their animals and go to Canaan to get their father and families. Tell them to come here, and I will give them the best land in Egypt and the best food we have to offer" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **I will give you the good of the land of Egypt** - "I will give you the best land in Egypt"
- **you will eat the fat of the land** - The best food that a land produces is spoken of as if it were the fat portion of the land. AT: "you will eat the best food in the land" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:19-20

UDB:

¹⁹ Also tell this to your brothers: "Take some carts from Egypt to carry your children and your wives, and get them and your father and come back here quickly. ²⁰ Do not worry about bringing your possessions, because the best things in Egypt will be yours. Because of that, you will not need to bring things from Canaan."

ULB:

¹⁹ Now you are commanded, 'Do this, take carts out of the land of Egypt for your children and for your wives. Get your father and come. ²⁰ Do not be concerned about your possessions, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.'

translationWords:

- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [possess, possession](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Pharaoh continues to tell Joseph what to tell his brothers.
- **Now** - This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **you are commanded, 'Do this, take carts out of the land of Egypt for your children and for your wives. Get your father and come. Do not be concerned about your possessions, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "also tell them to take carts out of the land of Egypt for their children and wives, and to get their father and come here. They should not worry about bringing their possessions, for I will give them the best things we have in Egypt" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **you are commanded** - This can be stated in active form. AT: "I also command you to tell them" or "also tell them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **take carts out** - "Carts" are wagons with two or four wheels. Animals pull the carts.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:21-23**UDB:**

²¹ Jacob's sons did what the king commanded. Joseph gave them carts and food to eat along the way, as the king had ordered. ²² To each of them he gave new clothes, but he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of new clothes to Benjamin! ²³ This is what he sent to his father: Ten male donkeys, loaded with some of the best things that came from Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and other food for his father's trip to Egypt.

ULB:

²¹ The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. ²² To all of them he gave each man changes of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing. ²³ For his father he sent this: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt; and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and other supplies for his father for the journey.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- Joseph (OT)
- command, to command, commandment
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Benjamin
- silver
- donkey, mule
- Egypt, Egyptian
- grain
- bread

translationNotes:

- **and gave them provisions for the journey** - "and gave them what they needed for traveling"
- **he gave each man changes of clothing** - Each man received a set of clothes except for Benjamin who received 5 sets of clothes. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **three hundred pieces** - "300 pieces" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **ten donkeys ... and ten female donkeys** - The donkeys were included as part of the gift. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:24-26

UDB:

²⁴ Then he sent his brothers on their way, saying to them “Do not quarrel along the way!”

²⁵ So the brothers left Egypt and came to their father Jacob in Canaan land. ²⁶ One of them told him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is the governor over all of Egypt!” Jacob was extremely astonished; he could not believe that it was true.

ULB:

²⁴ So he sent his brothers away and they left. He said to them, “See that you do not quarrel on the journey.” ²⁵ They went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan, to Jacob their father. ²⁶ They told him saying “Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” His heart was astonished, for he could not believe what they told him.

translationWords:

- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [ruler, rulers, rule](#)
- [heart](#)
- [marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished](#)
- [believe, believe in, belief](#)

translationNotes:

- **do not quarrel** - Possible meanings include 1) “do not argue” and 2) “do not become afraid”
- **went up out of Egypt** - It was common to use the word “up” when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **he is ruler over all the land of Egypt** - Here “land of Egypt” stands for the people of Egypt. AT: “he rules all the people of Egypt” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **His heart was astonished** - Here “heart” stands for the whole person. AT: “and he was astonished” or “he was very surprised” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **he could not believe what they told him** - “he did not accept that what they said was true”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 45:27-28**UDB:**

²⁷ But they told him everything that Joseph had said to them, and Jacob saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him and his family and possessions to Egypt. Then Jacob's shock ended. ²⁸ He said, "What you have said is enough to convince me! My son Joseph is still alive, and I will go and see him before I die!"

ULB:

²⁷ They told him all the words of Joseph that he had said to them. When Jacob saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. ²⁸ Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

translationWords:

- [word](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [spirit, spiritual](#)

translationNotes:

- **They told him** - "They told Jacob"
- **all the words of Joseph that he had said to them** - Here "words" stands for what was said. AT: "everything that Joseph had said to them" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the spirit of Jacob their father revived** - The word "spirit" stands for the whole person. AT: "Jacob their father recovered" or "Jacob their father became very excited" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 45 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 45 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Going to Egypt

Yahweh allowed Israel to go to Egypt. He was to trust in Yahweh and his covenant faithfulness. God continued to bless them in Egypt. (See: [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#), [covenant faithfulness](#), [covenant loyalty](#), [loving kindness](#), [unfailing love](#) and [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Shepherds

Because of the regular flooding of the Nile River, the Egyptians economy revolved around farming more than the raising of animals. Therefore, the Egyptians despised the nomadic lifestyle of shepherds. Joseph's instructions permitted the Hebrew people to live separately from the Egyptians.

Links:

- [Genesis 46:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 46:1-4**UDB:**

¹ So Jacob left, taking with him all his family and possessions. When they arrived at Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God, the one whom his father Isaac worshiped. ² That night, God called to Jacob in a vision, saying, “Jacob! Jacob!” He replied, “I am here!” ³ God said, “I am God, the one your father worshiped. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, because I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation there. ⁴ I will go down to Egypt with you, and later I will bring your descendants back to Canaan again. And Joseph will be with you when you die.”

ULB:

46 ¹ Israel made his journey with all that he had and went to Beersheba. There he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ² God spoke to Israel in a vision at night, saying, “Jacob, Jacob.” He said, “Here I am.” ³ He said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not fear to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you a great nation. ⁴ I will go down with you into Egypt, and I will surely bring you up again and Joseph will close your eyes with his own hand.”

translationWords:

- **Jacob, Israel**
- **Beersheba**
- **sacrifice, offering**
- **God**
- **Isaac**
- **vision**
- **fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh**
- **Egypt, Egyptian**
- **nation**

translationNotes:

- **went to Beersheba** - “came to Beersheba”
- **Here I am** - “Yes, I am listening”
- **to go down to Egypt** - It was common to use the phrase “go down” when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
- **I will make you a great nation** - Here “you” is singular and refers to Jacob. This “you” also stands for Israel’s descendants that will become a large nation. AT: “I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation” (See: **Forms of You** and **Synecdoche**)
- **into Egypt** - “to Egypt”

- **I will surely bring you up again** - The promise was made to Jacob, but the promise would be fulfilled to all of Israel's descendants. AT: "I will surely bring your descendants out of Egypt again" (See: [Forms of You](#) and [Synecdoche](#))
- **bring you up again** - It was common to use the word "up" when speaking about traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **and Joseph will close your eyes with his own hand** - The phrase "close you eyes with his own hand" is a way of saying that Joseph will be present when Israel dies and it will be Joseph who will close Jacob's eyelids at the time of his death. AT: "And Joseph will even be present with you at the time of your death" (See: [Idiom](#))
- **will close your eyes** - It was a custom to pull down the eyelids when a person died with their eyes open. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ So Jacob left Beersheba, and his sons took their father, their wives, and their children, in the carts that the king had sent for them to travel in. ⁶ In this way, Jacob and all his family went to Egypt. They took with them the livestock and all the other possessions that they had acquired in Canaan. ⁷ Jacob went to Egypt with all his sons, his daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters—his whole family.

ULB:

⁵ Jacob rose up from Beersheba. The sons of Israel transported Jacob their father, their children, and their wives, in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶ They took their livestock and their possessions that they had accumulated in the land of Canaan. They came into Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him. ⁷ He brought with him to Egypt his sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [livestock](#)
- [possess, possession](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)

translationNotes:

- **rose up from** - “set out from”
- **in the carts** - “Carts” are wagons with two or four wheels. Animals pull the carts. See how you translated “carts” in [45:19](#).
- **they had accumulated** - “they had acquired” (UDB) or “they had gained”
- **He brought with him** - “Jacob brought with him”
- **his sons' sons** - “his grandsons”
- **his sons' daughters** - “his granddaughters”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 46 General Notes
- **Genesis 46 Translation Questions**

Genesis 46:8-11**UDB:**

⁸ This is a list of the names of the members of Jacob's family who went with him to Egypt:

- Reuben, Jacob's oldest son;
- ⁹ Reuben's sons Hanoah, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi;
- ¹⁰ Simeon and his sons Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, who was the son of woman who came from the Canaanite people group;
- ¹¹ Levi and his sons Gershon, Kohath, and Merari;
-

ULB:

⁸ These were the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn; ⁹ the sons of Reuben Hanoah and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi; ¹⁰ the sons of Simeon, Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; ¹¹ the sons of Levi Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

translationWords:

- [children, child](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [firstborn](#)
- [Reuben](#)
- [Simeon](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Levite, Levi](#)

translationNotes:

- **These were the names** - This refers to the names of the people that the author is about to list.
- **of the children of Israel** - "of Israel's family members"
- **Hanoah and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi ... Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul ... Gershon, Kohath, and Merari** - These are all names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 46 General Notes
- **Genesis 46 Translation Questions**

Genesis 46:12-15**UDB:**

¹² Judah and his sons, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (his other sons, Er, and Onan, had died in Canaan land);

- the two sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul;
- ¹³ Issachar and his sons Tola, Puvah, Jashub, and Shimron;
- ¹⁴ Zebulun and his sons Sered, Elon, and Jahleel
- ¹⁵ These were the sons of Jacob and Leah, who were born in Paddan Aram, in addition to Dinah his daughter. There were thirty-three sons and daughters altogether.
-

ULB:

¹² The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah, (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puvah, Lob, and Shimron; ¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel ¹⁵ These were the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, along with his daughter Dinah. His sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three.

translationWords:

- son, son of
- Judah
- Issachar
- Zebulun
- Leah
- Jacob, Israel
- Paddan Aram

translationNotes:

- **Er, Onan, Shelah** - These were the sons of Judah by his wife, Shua. See how you translated these names in [38:3-5](#).
- **Perez, and Zerah** - These were the sons of Judah by his daughter-in-law, Tamar. See how you translated these names in [38:29-30](#).
- **Hezron ... Hamul ... Tola, Puvah, Lob ... Shimron ... Sered, Elon ... Jahleel** - These are all names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Dinah** - This is the name of Leah's daughter. See how you translated this name in [30:21](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

- **His sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three** - Here “sons” and “daughters” refer to Jacob’s sons, daughters, and grandchildren related to Leah. AT: “Altogether he had 33 sons, daughters, and grandchildren” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ Gad and his sons Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli;

- ¹⁷ Asher and his sons Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah; and their sister Serah;
- Beriah's sons: Heber and Malkiel;
- ¹⁸ (Those were the children and grandchildren of Jacob and Zilpah, the slave woman whom Laban had given to his daughter Leah. These were sixteen people altogether.)
-

ULB:

¹⁶ The sons of Gad were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Er, Arodi, and Areli. ¹⁷ The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah; and Serah was their sister. The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel ¹⁸ These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban had given to Leah his daughter. These sons she bore to Jacob—sixteen in all.

translationWords:

- Gad
- Asher
- Laban
- Leah

translationNotes:

- **Ziphion ... Haggi, Shuni ... Ezbon, Er, Arodi ... Areli ... Imnah ... Ishvah, Ishvi ... Beriah ... Heber ... Malchiel** - These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Serah** - This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Zilpah** - This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:24](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **These sons she bore to Jacob—sixteen in all** - This refers to 16 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren that were related to Zilpah. (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:19-22**UDB:**

¹⁹ Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of Jacob's wife Rachel;

- ²⁰ (Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's two sons. They did not go down to Egypt because they had been born in Egypt. They were sons of Asenath, the daughter of On, who was the priest in the temple in the city of On.)
- ²¹ Benjamin and his sons Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard;
- ²² (These were the sons and grandsons of Rachel and Jacob. They were fourteen people altogether.)
-

ULB:

¹⁹ The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ In Egypt Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph by Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. ²¹ The sons of Benjamin were Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. ²² These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob—fourteen in all.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Benjamin](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Manasseh](#)
- [Ephraim](#)
- [priest, priesthood](#)

translationNotes:

- **Asenath** - "Asenath" is the name of the woman whom Pharaoh gave to Joseph as his wife. See how you translated this in [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Potiphera** - "Potiphera" is the father of Asenath. See how you translated this in [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **priest of On** - On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was "the City of the Sun" and the center of worship of the sun god Ra. See how you translated this in [41:45](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

- **Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard** - These are names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **fourteen in all** - This refers to the 14 sons and grandsons related to Rachel. (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:23-25

UDB:

²³ Dan and his son Hushim;

- ²⁴ Naphtali and his sons Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.
- ²⁵ (These were the sons and grandsons of Jacob and Bilhah, the slave girl whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel. They were seven people altogether.)

ULB:

²³ The son of Dan was Hushim. ²⁴ The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. ²⁵ These were the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter—seven in all.

translationWords:

- [Dan](#)
- [Naphtali](#)
- [Laban](#)
- [Rachel](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **Hushim ... Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer ... Shillem** - These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Bilhah** - This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [29:29](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **seven in all** - This refers to the 7 children and grandchildren related to Bilhah. (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:26-27**UDB:**

²⁶ Altogether there were sixty-six descendants of Jacob who went to Egypt with him. That number does not include his sons' wives. ²⁷ Including Jacob and Joseph and Joseph's two sons who were born in Egypt, there were seventy members of Jacob's family when they were all there in Egypt.

ULB:

²⁶ All those who went to Egypt with Jacob, who were his descendants, not counting Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six in all. ²⁷ With the two sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt, the members of his family who went to Egypt were seventy in all.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [house](#)

translationNotes:

- **sixty-six** - "66" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **seventy** - "70" (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:28-30**UDB:**

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah to go ahead of the rest of them to talk with Joseph and to ask for directions on how to travel to Goshen. Then Judah returned to the rest of his family and they all traveled to the region of Goshen. When they arrived there, ²⁹ Joseph got his chariot ready and went to Goshen to meet his father. When Joseph arrived, he threw his arms around his father's neck and cried for a long time. ³⁰ Jacob said to Joseph, "I have seen you, and now I know that you are still alive! So I am ready to die."

ULB:

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen. ²⁹ Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He saw him, hugged his neck, and wept on his neck a long time. ³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive."

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Goshen](#)
- [chariot](#)
- [life, live, living, alive](#)

translationNotes:

- **to show the way before him to Goshen** - "to show them the way to Goshen"
- **Joseph prepared his chariot and went up** - Here "Joseph" stands for his servants. AT: "Joseph's servants prepared his chariot and Joseph went up" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **went up to meet Israel** - The phrase "went up" is used because Joseph is traveling to a higher elevation to meet his father. AT: "went to meet Israel"
- **hugged his neck, and wept on his neck a long time** - "put his arms around his father, and wept for a long time"
- **Now let me die** - "Now I am ready to die" or "Now I will die happy"
- **since I have seen your face, that you are still alive** - Here "face" stands for the entire person. Jacob was expressing joy at seeing Joseph. AT: "since I have seen you alive again" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:31-32

UDB:

³¹ Then Joseph said to his brothers and to the rest of his father's family, "I will go to the king and say to him, 'My brothers and my father and the rest of his family, who were living in Canaan land, have all come to me. ³² The men are all shepherds. They take care of their livestock, and they have brought with them their sheep, goats, and cattle, and everything else that they own.'

ULB:

³¹ Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's house, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, saying, 'My brothers and my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. ³² The men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock. They have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'

translationWords:

- ancestor, father, forefather
- house
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- Canaan, Canaanite
- shepherd, to shepherd
- livestock
- flock, herd

translationNotes:

- **his father's house** - Here "house" stands for his family. AT: "his father's family" or "his father's household" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **I will go up and tell Pharaoh** - It was common to use the phrase "go up" when referring to someone going to speak with someone with greater authority. AT: "I will go tell Pharaoh"
- **tell Pharaoh, saying, 'My brothers ... all that they have.'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "tell Pharaoh that my brothers ... all that they have" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 46:33-34

UDB:

³³ When the king summons you and asks, ‘What work do you do?’ ³⁴ answer by saying, ‘From the time when we were young, we have taken care of livestock, just as our ancestors did.’ If you tell him that, he will let you live in the region of Goshen.” Joseph told them to say that because the people of Egypt despised shepherds.

ULB:

³³ It will come about, when Pharaoh calls you and asks, ‘What is your occupation?’ ³⁴ that you should say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth until now, both we, and our forefathers.’ Do this so that you may live in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.”

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- ancestor, father, forefather
- shepherd, to shepherd
- abomination, abominable

translationNotes:

- **It will come about** - This phrase is used here to mark an important event that is about to happen in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
- **and asks, ‘What is your occupation?’ that you should say** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “and asks you about what kind of work you do, you should say” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **you should say, ‘Your servants have ... both we, and our forefathers.’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “you should say that you have ... both you and your forefathers” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Your servants** - Joseph’s family are to refer to themselves as “your servants” when they speak to Pharaoh. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in the first person. AT: “We, your servants” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians** - The abstract noun “abomination” can be translated with the adjective “disgusting.” AT: “Egyptians think shepherds are disgusting” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 46 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 46 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abrahamic covenant

Part of the Abrahamic covenant was that Yahweh would bless those who bless Abraham's descendants. Since Pharaoh cared for the Hebrew people, Yahweh blessed the Egyptians while the Hebrew people lived in Egypt. The Hebrew people also multiplied greatly as this covenant promised. (See: [covenant](#), [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#) and [promise](#))

Jacob was not buried in Egypt

In the ancient Near east, a person was typically buried in their hometown. Since Egypt was not the Israelites' home, Jacob did not wish to be buried in Egypt. This was a lesson to the Israelites that Canaan was their true home, the promised land. (See: [Promised Land](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 47:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 47:1-2

UDB:

1-2 Joseph chose five of his brothers to go with him to talk to the king. He introduced them to the king, and then he said, “My father and my brothers have come from Canaan land. They have brought all their sheep, goats, cattle, and everything else that they own, and they are living now in region of Goshen.”

ULB:

47 ¹ Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, “My father and my brothers, their flocks, their herds, and all that they own, have arrived from the land of Canaan. See, they are in the land of Goshen.”

² He took five of his brothers and introduced them to Pharaoh.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [brother](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [Goshen](#)

translationNotes:

- **He took five of his brothers** - The UDB reorders the event with Pharaoh chronologically, whereas the ULB lists the events as the author wrote it. (See: [Order of Events](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:3-4**UDB:**

³ The king asked the brothers, “What work do you do?” They replied to the king, “We are shepherds, just as our ancestors were.” ⁴ They also said to him, “We have come here to live for a while in this land, because the famine is very severe in Canaan, and our animals have no pasture there. So now, please let us live in the region of Goshen.”

ULB:

³ Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?” They said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, as our ancestors.” ⁴ Then they said to Pharaoh, “We come as temporary residents in the land. There is no pasture for your servants’ flocks, because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. So now, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen.”

translationWords:

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [shepherd, to shepherd](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [famine](#)

translationNotes:

- **Your servants are shepherds** - “Your servants shepherd flocks”
- **Your servants** - Joseph’s brothers refer to themselves as “your servants.” This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in first person. AT: “We, your servants” or “We” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **as our ancestors** - “both we and our forefathers” or “both we and our ancestors”
- **We come as temporary residents in the land** - “We have come to stay for a while in Egypt”
- **There is no pasture** - “There is no grass to eat”
- **now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:5-6

UDB:

⁵ The king said to Joseph, "So your father and brothers have come to you. ⁶ They can live wherever you want in all of of Egypt. Give your father and your brothers the best part of the land. They can live in Goshen. And if you know that any of them have any special ability to work with livestock, have them be in charge of my own livestock, too."

ULB:

⁵ Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt is before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best region, the land of Goshen. If you know any capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."

translationWords:

- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Goshen](#)
- [livestock](#)

translationNotes:

- **The land of Egypt is before you** - "The land of Egypt is open to you" or "All of the land of Egypt is available to you"
- **Settle your father and your brothers in the best region, the land of Goshen** - "Settle your father and your brothers in the land of Goshen, which is the best region"
- **If you know any capable men among them** - It is implied that they are capable of taking care of animals. AT: "If you know of any men among them who have great skill taking care of animals" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:7-10**UDB:**

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father Jacob into the palace and introduced him to the king. Jacob asked God to bless the king. ⁸ Then the king asked Jacob, “How old are you?” ⁹ Jacob replied, “I have been traveling around for 130 years. I have not lived as long as my ancestors, but my life has been full of troubles.” ¹⁰ Then Jacob again asked God to bless the king and left him.

ULB:

⁷ Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and presented him to Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How long have you lived?” ⁹ Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my travels are a hundred and thirty. The years of my life have been few and painful. They have not been as long as those of my ancestors.” ¹⁰ Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)

translationNotes:

- **Jacob blessed Pharaoh** - Here “blessed” means to express a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- **How long have you lived?** - “How old are you?”
- **The years of my travels are a hundred and thirty** - The phrase “years of my travels” refers to how long he has lived on the earth traveling from one place to another. AT: “I have traveled on the earth for 130 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **The years of my life have been few ... not been as long as those of my ancestors** - Jacob means his life is short compared to the lives of Abraham and Isaac.
- **and painful** - Jacob has experienced much pain and trouble during his life.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ That is how Joseph enabled his father and brothers to start living in Egypt. As the king had commanded, he gave them property in the best part of the land, in Goshen, which is now called Rameses. ¹² Joseph also provided food for all his father's family. The amounts that he gave them were according to how many children each of them had.

ULB:

¹¹ Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers. He gave them a territory in the land of Egypt, the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹² Joseph provided food for his father, his brothers, and all his father's household, according the number of their dependents.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [household](#)

translationNotes:

- **Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers** - "Then Joseph took care of his father and his brothers and helped them establish where they would live"
- **the land of Rameses** - This is another name for the land of Goshen. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **according the number of their dependents** - Here, the word "dependents" means the small children in the family. AT: "according to how many small children were in their families"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:13-14

UDB:

¹³ There was no food growing in the whole country because the famine was very severe. The people of Egypt and Canaan became weak because they did not have enough food to eat. ¹⁴ Joseph received all the money that the people in Egypt and Canaan paid for the grain he sold them, and he brought it to the king's palace.

ULB:

¹³ Now there was no food in all the land; for the famine was severe. The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan wasted away because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph gathered all the money that was in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, by selling grain to the inhabitants. Then Joseph brought the money to Pharaoh's palace.

translationWords:

- [famine](#)
- [Canaan, Canaanite](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This word is used here to mark a break in the main storyline. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.
- **The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan** - This refers to the people living in these lands. AT: "The people of Egypt and the people of Canaan" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **wasted away** - "became thin and weak"
- **Joseph gathered all the money that was in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, by selling grain to the inhabitants** - "The people of Egypt and Canaan spent all of their money buying grain from Joseph"
- **Joseph gathered ... Joseph brought** - Most likely Joseph ordered his servants to gather and bring the money. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:15-17

UDB:

¹⁵ When the people of Egypt and Canaan had spent all their money for grain, they all kept coming to Joseph and saying, “Please give us some food! If you do not give us grain, we will die! We have used all our money to buy food, and we have no money left!” ¹⁶ Joseph replied, “Since your money is all gone, bring me your livestock. If you do that, I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock.” ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph. He gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle, and their donkeys.

ULB:

¹⁵ When all the money of the lands of Egypt and Canaan was spent, all the Egyptians came to Joseph saying, “Give us food! Why should we die in your presence because our money is gone?” ¹⁶ Joseph said, “If your money is gone, bring your livestock and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock.” ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph. Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, for the flocks, for the herds, and for the donkeys. He fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year.

translationWords:

- Egypt, Egyptian
- Canaan, Canaanite
- livestock
- horse
- flock, herd
- donkey, mule
- bread
- biblical time: year

translationNotes:

- **When all the money of the lands of Egypt and Canaan was spent** - Here “lands” stands for the people who live in the lands. This can be stated in active form. AT: “When the people of Egypt and Canaan used up all their money” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **of the lands of Egypt and Canaan** - “from the land of Egypt and from the land of Canaan”
- **Why should we die in your presence because our money is gone?** - The people used a question to emphasize how desperate they are to buy food. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: “Please, do not let us die because we have used up all of our money!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **He fed them with bread** - Here “bread” stands for food in general. AT: “He gave them food” (UDB) or “He provided them with food” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ When that year was ended, the next year they came to him and said, "We cannot hide this from you: We have no more money, and now all our cattle belong to you. We have only our bodies and our land to give to you. We have nothing else left. ¹⁹ If you do not give us some food, we will die! If you do not give us seeds, our fields will become useless. Buy us and our land in exchange for food. Then we will be the king's slaves, and he will own the land. Give us seeds so that we can plant and grow food, in order that we will not die, and in order that our land will not become like a desert."

ULB:

¹⁸ When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my master that our money is all gone, and the herds of cattle are my master's. There is nothing left in the sight of my master, except our bodies and our land. ¹⁹ Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we and our land will be servants to Pharaoh. Give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate."

translationWords:

- lord, master, sir
- flock, herd
- servant, slave, slavery
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- desolate, desolation

translationNotes:

- **they came to him** - "the people came to Joseph"
- **We will not hide from my master** - The people refer to Joseph as "my master." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in second person. AT: "We will not hide from you, our master" or "We will not hide from you" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **There is nothing left in the sight of my master** - Here "sight" stands for Joseph himself. AT: "We have nothing left to give you, our master" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land?** - The word "eyes" refers to Joseph's sight. The people use a question to emphasize how desperate they are to buy food. This question can be translated as a statement. AT: "Please do not just watch as we die and our land is ruined!" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Why should we die ... both we and our land** - The land becomes useless and ruined because there is no seed to plant; thus it is spoken of as if the land would die. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:20-22

UDB:

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the farms in Egypt for the king. The people of Egypt each sold their land to him because the famine was very severe and they had no other way to buy food. So all the farms became the king's farms. ²¹ As a result, Joseph caused all the people from one border of the country to the other to become the king's slaves. ²² But he did not buy the priests' land, because they received their food from the king regularly. That is the reason they did not sell their land to him.

ULB:

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. For every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was very severe. In this way, the land became Pharaoh's. ²¹ As for the people, he made them slaves from one end of Egypt's border to the other end. ²² It was only the land of the priests that Joseph did not buy, because the priests were given an allowance. They ate from the allotment which Pharaoh gave them. Therefore they did not sell their land.

translationWords:

- Egypt, Egyptian
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- famine
- servant, slave, slavery
- priest, priesthood

translationNotes:

- **In this way, the land became Pharaoh's** - "So the land became Pharaoh's"
- **It was only the land of the priests that Joseph did not buy** - "But he did not buy the land of the priests"
- **the priests were given an allowance** - An "allowance" is an amount of money or food that someone regularly gives to another person. This can be stated in active form. AT: "Pharaoh gave the priests a certain amount of food each day" (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **They ate from the allotment which Pharaoh gave them** - "They ate from what Pharaoh gave them"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)

- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:23-24

UDB:

²³ Joseph said to the people, "Listen to me! Today I have bought you and your land for the king. So here are seeds for you so that you can plant them in the ground. ²⁴ But when you harvest the crop, you must give one fifth of the crop to the king. The rest of the crop you can keep to be seed to plant in the fields and to be food for you and your children and for everyone else in your household to eat."

ULB:

²³ Then Joseph said to the people, "See, I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you will plant the land. ²⁴ At the harvest, you must give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be your own, for seed of the field and for food for your households and your children."

translationWords:

- [harvest](#)
- [household](#)

translationNotes:

- **and you will plant** - "that you might sow"
- **At the harvest, you must give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be your own** - The word "fifth" is a fraction. AT: "At harvest time you will divide the crops into five parts. You will give one part back to Pharaoh for payment and the four parts are for your own" (See: [Fractions](#))
- **for food for your households and your children** - You can state clearly the understood information. AT: "for food for your households and for food for your children" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:25-26**UDB:**

²⁵ They replied, “You have saved our lives! We want you to be pleased with us. And we will be the king’s slaves.”

²⁶ So Joseph made a law about all the land in Egypt, stating that one fifth of the crops that are harvested belongs to the king. That law still exists. Only the land that belonged to the priests did not become the king’s land.

ULB:

²⁵ They said, “You have saved our lives. May we find favor in your eyes. We will be Pharaoh’s servants.” ²⁶ So Joseph made it a statute which is in effect in the land of Egypt to this day, that one-fifth belongs to Pharaoh. Only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh’s.

translationWords:

- [save, safe](#)
- [favor, favorable, favoritism](#)
- [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [statute, statutes](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [priest, priesthood](#)

translationNotes:

- **May we find favor in your eyes** - Here “eyes” stands for thoughts or opinions. AT: “May you be pleased with us” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **find favor** - This means that someone is approved of by someone else. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **in the land of Egypt** - “over the land of Egypt” or “throughout the land of Egypt”
- **to this day** - This means to the time that the author was writing this.
- **one-fifth** - Translate this the same way you did “a fifth” in [47:24](#).

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:27-28

UDB:

²⁷ Jacob and his family started to live in Egypt, in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there. Many children were born to them there. As a result, their population increased greatly.

²⁸ Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years. Altogether he lived 147 years.

ULB:

²⁷ So Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. His people gained possessions there. They were fruitful and multiplied greatly. ²⁸ Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years, so the years of Jacob's life were one hundred forty-seven years.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Goshen](#)
- [possess, possession](#)
- [fruit, fruitful](#)
- [multiply](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)

translationNotes:

- **They were fruitful and multiplied greatly** - The word “multiplied” explains how they were “fruitful.” AT: “They had very many children” (See: [Doublet](#))
- **were fruitful** - Here “fruitful” means to prosper or to have children. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **seventeen years** - “17 years” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **so the years of Jacob's life were one hundred forty-seven years** - “so Jacob lived to be 147 years old” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 47:29-31**UDB:**

²⁹ When it was almost time for him to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have pleased you, put your hand between my thighs to solemnly promise that you will be faithful to me as your father and do what I am now trusting you to do: When I die, do not bury me here in Egypt.

³⁰ Instead, when I die and join my ancestors who have died previously, take my body out of Egypt, and bury it in Canaan where they are buried." Joseph replied, "I will do what you have said." ³¹ Jacob said, "Swear to me that you will do it!" So Joseph swore to do it. Then Jacob bowed down as he worshiped God, near the head of his bed.

ULB:

²⁹ When the time approached for Israel to die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh, and show me faithfulness and trustworthiness. Please do not bury me in Egypt. ³⁰ When I sleep with my fathers, you will carry me out of Egypt and bury me in my forefathers' burial place." Joseph said, "I will do as you have said." ³¹ Israel said, "Swear to me," and Joseph swore to him. Then Israel bowed down at the head of his bed.

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- faithful, faithfulness
- trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness
- bury, buried, burial
- ancestor, father, forefather
- oath, swear, swear by
- bow, bow down

translationNotes:

- **When the time approached for Israel to die** - This speaks about time as if it travels and comes to a place. AT: "When it was almost time for Israel to die" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **If now I have found favor in your sight** - Here "sight" stands for thoughts or opinions. AT: "If I have found favor with you" or "If I have pleased you" (UDB)
- **now** - This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **found favor** - This means that someone is approved of by someone else. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **put your hand under my thigh** - This act is a sign of making a serious promise. See how you translated this in [24:2](#). (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

- **show me faithfulness and trustworthiness** - The abstract nouns “faithfulness” and “trustworthiness” can be translated as adjectives. AT: “treat me in a faithful and trustworthy manner” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **Please do not bury me in Egypt** - The word “please” adds emphasis to this request.
- **When I sleep with my fathers** - Here “sleep” is a polite way to refer to dying. AT: “When I die and join my family members who died before me” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **Swear to me** - “Promise me” or “Make an oath to me”
- **swore to him** - “promised him” or “made an oath to him”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 47 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 47 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 48:15-16, 20, which are important quotations.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessing

The blessing of Jacob is given to Joseph, and his sons Manasseh and Ephraim. It is probably distinct from inheriting the promises Yahweh gave to Abraham because Scripture talks about all of Israel's descendants inheriting those promises. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#) and [promise](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 48:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 48:1-2

UDB:

¹ Some time after this, someone told Joseph, “Your father is ill.” When Joseph heard that, he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to see his father. ² When someone told Jacob, “Look, your son Joseph has come to see you!” Jacob, also called Israel, made an effort and sat up on the bed, even though it was difficult for him to do that.

ULB:

48 ¹ It came about after these things, that one said to Joseph, “Look, your father is sick.” So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ² When Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph has arrived to see you,” Israel gathered strength and sat up in bed.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [Manasseh](#)
- [Ephraim](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **It came about** - This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **one said to Joseph** - “someone said to Joseph”
- **Look, your father** - “Listen, your father.” Here the word “look” is used to get Joseph’s attention.
- **So he took** - “So Joseph took”
- **When Jacob was told** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “When someone told Jacob” (UDB) (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **your son Joseph has arrived to see you** - “your son Joseph has come to you”
- **Israel gathered strength and sat up in bed** - Here the author speaks of Israel struggling to sit up in bed as if he were gathering “strength” as someone gathers actual things. AT: “Israel made a great effort to sit up in bed” or “Israel struggled as he sat up in bed” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:3-4**UDB:**

³ He said to Joseph, "When I was at Luz in the land of Canaan, God Almighty appeared to me. He blessed me ⁴ and said to me, 'I am going to enable you to become the father of many children. You will have many descendants, and they will become many people groups. And I will give this land to your descendants to possess forever.'

ULB:

³ Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan. He blessed me ⁴ and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you. I will make of you an assembly of nations. I will give this land to your descendants as an everlasting possession.'

translationWords:

- God
- Almighty
- Canaan, Canaanite
- bless, blessed, blessing
- fruit, fruitful
- multiply
- assembly, assemble
- nation
- descendant, descended from
- everlasting, eternal, eternity
- possess, possession

translationNotes:

- **Luz** - This is the name of a city. See how you translated the name of this city in [28:19](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **in the land of Canaan. He blessed me and said to me** - This can be translated with the new sentence starting in a different place. AT: "in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me. And he said to me"
- **blessed** - This refers to God pronouncing a formal blessing on someone.
- **and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you. I will make of you an assembly of nations. I will give this land to your descendants as an everlasting possession.'** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: "and said to me that he would make me fruitful and multiply me. And, he said that he would make me an assembly of nations and he would give this land to my descendants as an everlasting possession." (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

- **Behold** - God used the word “behold” here to alert Jacob to pay attention to what he was about to tell him.
- **I will make you fruitful, and multiply you** - The phrase “multiply you” explains how God would make Jacob “fruitful.” AT: “I will give you very many descendants” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Idiom](#))
- **I will make of you an assembly of nations** - Here “you” refers to Jacob, but it stands for Jacob’s descendants. AT: “I will make your descendants into many nations” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **an everlasting possession** - “a permanent possession”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ And now I will consider that your two sons, who were born to you here in Egypt before I came here, belong to me. Ephraim and Manasseh will be my sons, and they will inherit my possessions, just like my sons Reuben and Simeon and the others will. ⁶ If you later become the father of any more children, they will not be considered to be my children, but instead as my grandchildren. They will receive as part of what they inherit some of the same land that is in the territory that their brothers will inherit. ⁷ Many years ago, as I was returning from Paddan Aram, your mother Rachel sadly died in the land of Canaan, while we were still traveling, not far from the town of Ephrath. So I buried her body there alongside the road to Ephrath” (which is now called Bethlehem).

ULB:

⁵ Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you into Egypt, they are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. ⁶ The children you have after them will be yours; they will be listed under the names of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷ But as for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, while there was still some distance to go to Ephrath. I buried her there on the way to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).

translationWords:

- Egypt, Egyptian
- Ephraim
- Manasseh
- Reuben
- Simeon
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir
- Paddan Aram
- Rachel
- Canaan, Canaanite
- bury, buried, burial
- Bethlehem, Ephrathah

translationNotes:

- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine** - Ephraim and Manasseh each will receive a portion of land just like Joseph’s brothers.

- **they will be listed under the names of their brothers in their inheritance** - Possible meanings are 1)the rest of Joseph’s children would inherit land as part of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh or 2) Joseph will be given separate land from Ephraim and Manasseh and Joseph’s other children will inherit that land. AT: “as for their inheritance, you will list them under the names of their brothers”
- **Ephrath** - This is another name for the town of Bethlehem. See how you translated the name of this city in [35:16](#).
- **(that is, Bethlehem)** - The author is giving background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:8-10

UDB:

⁸ When Jacob saw Joseph's sons, he asked, "Who are these boys?" ⁹ Joseph replied to his father, "They are the sons that God has given to me here in Egypt." Jacob said, "Bring them close to me so that I can bless them." ¹⁰ Jacob was almost blind because he was very old. He could not see well. So Joseph brought his sons close to his father, and Jacob kissed them and hugged them.

ULB:

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Whose are these?" ⁹ Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." Israel said, "Bring them to me, that I may bless them." ¹⁰ Now Israel's eyes were failing because of his age, so he could not see. So Joseph brought them near to him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [kiss](#)

translationNotes:

- **Whose are these?** - "Whose sons are these?"
- **bless** - A father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children or grandchildren.
- **Now Israel's eyes ... could not see** - The word "Now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Israel. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **he kissed them** - "Israel kissed them"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:11-13

UDB:

¹¹ Jacob said to Joseph, “I did not expect to see your face again, but look at this! God has allowed me to see you, and he has allowed me to see your children, too!”

¹² Joseph took the boys from Jacob’s knees. Then he bowed down with his face to the ground. ¹³ Then Joseph took both of the boys, putting Ephraim on his right side toward Jacob’s left hand, and putting Manasseh on his left side toward Jacob’s right hand, and brought them close to Jacob.

ULB:

¹¹ Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face again, but God has even allowed me to see your children.” ¹² Joseph brought them out from between Israel’s knees, and then he bowed with his face to the earth. ¹³ Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them close to him.

translationWords:

- [bow, bow down](#)
- [right hand](#)

translationNotes:

- **to see your face again** - Here “face” stands for the whole person. AT: “to see you again” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **between Israel’s knees** - When Joseph placed his sons on Israel’s lap or knees it was a sign that Israel was adopting them. This gave the children special inheritance rights from Jacob. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **then he bowed with his face to the earth** - Joseph bowed down to show honor to his father. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel’s right hand** - Joseph places the boys so that Israel will put his right hand on Manasseh. Manasseh was the oldest brother and the right hand was the sign he would receive the greater blessing. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:14-16**UDB:**

¹⁴ But Jacob did not do what Joseph wanted him to do. Instead, he reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, even though he was the younger son. He crossed his arms and put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the older son. ¹⁵ Then he blessed Joseph and his sons, saying, "My grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac conducted their lives as God desired, and to this very day God has led me and taken care of me as a shepherd leads and cares for his sheep. ¹⁶ The angel whom he sent has kept me from being harmed in any way.

I pray that God will bless these boys.

I pray that people will think about me and my ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, because of what God does for them.

I pray that they will have many descendants who will live all over the earth."

ULB:

¹⁴ Israel reached out with his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head. He crossed his hands, for Manasseh was the firstborn. ¹⁵ Israel blessed Joseph, saying,

"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
the God who has cared for me to this day,

¹⁶ the angel who has protected me from all harm, may he bless these boys.

May my name be named in them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac.

May they grow into a multitude on the earth."

translationWords:

- Jacob, Israel
- right hand
- Ephraim
- Manasseh
- firstborn
- bless, blessed, blessing
- God
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Abraham, Abram
- Isaac

- [walk](#)
- [angel, archangel](#)
- [name](#)

translationNotes:

- **his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head** - Placing the right hand on Ephraim's head was the sign that he would receive the greater blessing. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Israel blessed Joseph** - Here "Joseph" also stands for Ephraim and Manasseh. Since Joseph is the father, he is the only one mentioned here. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked** - Serving God is spoken of as if it were walking before God. AT: "The God who my grandfather Abraham and father Isaac served" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **who has cared for me** - God has taken care of Israel like a shepherd takes care of his sheep. AT: "who has cared for me like a shepherd cares for his animals" (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **the angel** - Possible meanings are 1) this refers to the angel that God sent to protect Jacob or 2) this refers to God who appeared in angel form to protect Jacob.
- **protected me** - "delivered me"
- **May my name be named in them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac** - Here "name" stands for the person. The phrase "my name be named in them" is an idiom that means a person is remembered because of another person. This can be stated in active form. AT: "May people remember Abraham, Isaac, and me because of Ephraim and Manasseh" (See: [Metonymy and Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **May they grow into a multitude on the earth** - Here "they" refers to Ephraim and Manasseh, but it stands for their descendants. AT: "May they have many descendants who will live all over the earth" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim's head and not on Manasseh's head, he was distressed. So he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to him, "My father, that is not right! The one on whom you put your left hand is my older son. Put your right hand on his head."

ULB:

¹⁷ When Joseph saw his father place his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him. He took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father; for this is the firstborn. Put your right hand upon his head."

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [right hand](#)
- [Ephraim](#)
- [Manasseh](#)
- [firstborn](#)

translationNotes:

- **Put your right hand upon his head** - The right hand was the sign of the greater blessing which the oldest son was supposed to receive. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ But his father refused, saying, “I know that, my son; I know what I am doing. Manasseh’s descendants will also become a people group, and they will become important. But his younger brother’s descendants will become greater than his will. His descendants will become many nations.” ²⁰ So he blessed them both on that day, saying, “The people in Israel will use your names when they bless people. They will say, ‘We pray that God will help you as he helped Ephraim and Manasseh.’” In that way, Jacob said that Ephraim would become more important than Manasseh.

ULB:

¹⁹ His father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also will become a people, and he also will be great. Yet his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a multitude of nations.” ²⁰ Israel blessed them that day with these words,

”The people of Israel will pronounce blessings by your names saying,

‘May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh’.”

In this way, Israel put Ephraim before Manasseh.

translationWords:

- **people group, peoples, the people, a people**
- **descendant, descended from**
- **nation**
- **bless, blessed, blessing**

translationNotes:

- **He also will become a people, and he also will be great** - Here “He” refers to Manasseh, but it stands for his descendants. AT: “Your older son will have many descendants, and they will become a great people” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **that day with these words** - Here “words” stand for what is said. AT: “that day, saying” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **The people of Israel will pronounce blessings by your names saying** - “The people of Israel will speak your names when they are blessing others”
- **by your names saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh’** - This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. AT: “by your names. They will ask God to make others like Ephraim and like Manasseh” (See: **Quotes within Quotes** and **Direct and Indirect Quotations**)

- **like Ephraim and like Manasseh** - Israel saying Ephraim's name first is another way he indicates that Ephraim will be greater than Manasseh.
- **Israel put Ephraim before Manasseh** - Giving Ephraim the greater blessing and making him more important than Manasseh is spoken of as if Israel physically put Ephraim in front of Manasseh. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 48:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ Then Jacob said to Joseph, "I am about to die. But I know that God will help you. Some day he will take your descendants back to the land of their ancestors. ²² It is to you, who stands above your brothers that I will give the fertile hill in the area of Shechem. I captured that land from the Amor people group, fighting them with my sword and my bow and arrows."

ULB:

²¹ Israel said to Joseph, "See, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and will bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² To you, as one who is above your brothers, I give to you the mountain slope that I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow."

translationWords:

- ancestor, father, forefather
- Amorite
- sword
- bow and arrow

translationNotes:

- **will be with you ... bring you back ... your fathers** - Here "you" and "your" are plural and refer to all the people of Israel. (See: **Forms of You**)
- **will be with you** - This is an idiom that means God will help and bless the people of Israel. AT: "God will help you" or "God will bless you" (See: **Idiom**)
- **will bring you back** - Here "bring" can be translated as "take." (See: **Go and Come**)
- **land of your fathers** - "land of your ancestors"
- **To you, as one who is above your brothers, I give to you the mountain slope** - Possible meanings are 1) Joseph having more honor and authority than his brothers is spoken of as if he were physically above them. AT: "To you, who is greater than your brothers, I give the mountain slope" or 2) Jacob means he is giving more land to Joseph than he is giving to Joseph's brothers. AT: "To you, I give one more ridge than I give your brothers. I give to you the mountain slope" (See: **Metaphor**)
- **To you** - Here "you" is singular and refers to Joseph. (See: **Forms of You**)
- **the mountain slope that I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow** - Here "sword" and "bow" stands for fighting in battle. AT: "the portion of land I fought for and took from the Amorites" (See: **Metonymy**)

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 48 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 48 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 49:1-27. This is a recording of Jacob's sayings to his children.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecies

These statements made by Jacob to his sons are probably prophecies. These prophecies are concerned with the descendants of each of Jacob's sons who would become the twelve tribes of Israel. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The scepter will not depart from Judah"

This prophecy indicates Judah will be the ruling tribe of Israel. The future kings of Israel all come from the tribe of Judah. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

"I buried Leah"

Since Moses wrote the book of Genesis, this is an editorial comment he makes in the text as the narrator.

Links:

- [Genesis 49:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 49:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Jacob summoned all his sons and said to them, ² "Gather around close to me in order that I can tell you what will happen in the future. My sons, come and listen to me. I am your father, Jacob.

ULB:

49 ¹ Then Jacob called for his sons, and said:

"Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what will happen to you in the future.

² Assemble yourselves and listen, you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father.

translationWords:

- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [assembly, assemble](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - This begins Jacob's final blessings to his sons. This continues through [49:27](#). Jacob's blessings are written in poetic form. (See: [Poetry](#))
- **Assemble yourselves and listen, you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father** - Both sentences say the same thing for emphasis. AT: "Come and listen carefully to your father" (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father** - Jacob is referring to himself in the third person. It can be stated in the first person. AT: "my sons. Listen to me, your father" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:3-4**UDB:**

³ Reuben, you are my oldest son. You were born when I was young and energetic. When I became a grown man, you were my first child. You are prouder and stronger than all the rest of my sons. ⁴ But you were as unstable as ocean waves. So now you will not be my most important son, because you climbed up onto my bed and slept with my concubine. That caused me, your father, to have great shame.

ULB:

³ Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength,

outstanding in dignity, and outstanding in power.

⁴ Uncontrollable as rushing water, you will not have the preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed.

Then you defiled it; you went up to my couch.

translationWords:

- Reuben
- firstborn
- power, powers
- defile, be defiled

translationNotes:

- **my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength** - The phrases “my firstborn, my might” and “the beginning of my strength” mean the same thing. The words “might” and “strength” stand for Jacob’s ability to produce children. The words “firstborn” and “beginning” mean that Reuben is his first child. AT: “my first child after I became a man” (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **outstanding in dignity, and outstanding in power** - This can be stated as a new sentence. AT: “You are first in honor and power” or “You surpass everyone else in honor and power”
- **Uncontrollable as rushing water** - Jacob compares Reuben to water in a strong current to emphasize that he cannot control his anger and he is not stable. (See: [Simile](#))
- **you will not have the preeminence** - “you shall not be first among your brothers”
- **because you went up to your father’s bed. Then you defiled it; you went up to my couch** - Here “bed” and “couch” stand for Jacob’s concubine, Bilhah. Jacob is referring to when

Reuben slept with Bilhah (See: [35:22](#)). AT: “because you went to my bed and slept with Bilhah my concubine. You have shamed me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

- **you went up to your father’s bed ... you went up to my couch** - Both statements mean the same thing. (See: [Parallelism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ Simeon and Levi, you two brothers have both acted like criminals. You use your swords to act violently. ⁶ I do not want to be with you when you make evil plans. I am too honorable to join you in your meetings, because you killed people when you became very angry, and you hamstrung oxen just to have fun.

ULB:

⁵ Simeon and Levi are brothers. Weapons of violence are their swords.

⁶ O my soul, do not come into their council; do not join in their meetings, for my heart has too much honor for that.

For in their anger they killed men. It was for pleasure that they hamstrung oxen.

translationWords:

- Simeon
- Levite, Levi
- sword
- soul
- council
- heart
- angry, anger
- ox, oxen

translationNotes:

- **Simeon and Levi are brothers** - This does not just mean they are brothers by birth. Jacob is emphasizing that they worked together to kill the people of Shechem.
- **Weapons of violence are their swords** - “They use their swords to hurt and to kill people”
- **O my soul ... my heart** - Jacob uses the words “soul” and “heart” to refer to himself and is saying that other people, and perhaps God also, honor him so much that he does not wish to join with those who make plans to do evil. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **do not come into their council; do not join in their meetings** - These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Jacob combines them to emphasize that he does not want to participate in their wicked plans. AT: “I certainly will not join with them to make any plans” (See: [Parallelism](#))

- **they hamstrung oxen** - This refers to Simeon and Levi crippling oxen just for fun.
- **hamstrung** - This refers to cutting the sinews of an animal's leg so that it cannot walk.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:7

UDB:

⁷ God says, 'I will curse them for being very angry, for acting very cruelly when they were very furious. I will scatter their descendants throughout Israel land.'

ULB:

⁷ May their anger be cursed, for it was fierce—and their fury, for it was cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

translationWords:

- [curse, cursed](#)
- [angry, anger](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)

translationNotes:

- **May their anger be cursed, for it was fierce—and their fury, for it was cruel** - God cursing Simeon and Levi is spoken of as if God were cursing their anger and fury. This can be stated in active form. AT: "The Lord says, 'I will curse them because of their fierce anger and their cruel fury" or "I, the Lord, will curse them because of their fierce anger and their cruel fury" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))
- **May their anger be cursed** - In prophecy, the prophet will often speak the words of God as if God himself were speaking. This emphasizes how closely united the prophet and God are.
- **and their fury, for it was cruel** - The words "I will curse" are understood. AT: "and I will curse their fury, for it was cruel" (See: [Ellipsis](#))
- **I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel** - The word "I" refers to God. The word "them" refers to Simeon and Levi but they are a metonymy standing for their descendants. The words "Jacob" and "Israel" are a metonymy standing for all people of Israel. AT: "I will divide their descendants and scatter them among all the people of Israel" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Parallelism](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:8**UDB:**

⁸ Judah, your older and younger brothers will praise you. They will bow down before you, because you will thoroughly defeat your enemies.

ULB:

⁸ Judah, your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.

Your father's sons will bow down before you.

translationWords:

- [Judah](#)
- [praise](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)

translationNotes:

- **your brothers will praise you ... Your father's sons will bow down before you** - These two statements mean the same thing. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **will praise you. Your hand** - The second sentence states the reason for the first sentence. The word "for" or "because" can be added to make this clear. AT: "will praise you. For your hand" or "will praise you because your hand" (See: [Connecting Words](#))
- **Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies** - This is a way of saying "You will conquer your enemies." (See: [Idiom](#))
- **bow down** - This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:9**UDB:**

⁹ Judah is like a young lion that has returned to its den satisfied after eating the animals that it has killed. He is like a lion that lies down and stretches out after eating; no one would dare to disturb it.

ULB:

⁹ Judah is a lion's cub. My son, you have gone up from your victims.

He stooped down, he crouched like a lion, like a lioness. Who would dare to awaken him?

translationWords:

- [lion](#)

translationNotes:

- **Judah is a lion's cub** - Jacob speaks about Judah as if he were a lion's cub. Jacob is emphasizing Judah's strength. AT: "Judah is like a young lion" (UDB) (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **My son, you have gone up from your victims** - "You, my son, have come back from eating your prey"
- **like a lioness** - Jacob also compares Judah to a female lion. The lioness is the primary hunter and protector of her cubs. (See: [Simile](#))
- **Who would dare to awaken him?** - Jacob uses a question to emphasize how terrifying Judah is to other people. AT: "No one wants to wake him up." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:10**UDB:**

¹⁰ There will always be a ruler from the descendants of Judah. Each one will hold a scepter to show that he has authority as a king. He will do that until nations bring tribute to him and show that they will obey him.

ULB:

¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until Shiloh comes. The nations will obey him.

translationWords:

- [scepter](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Shiloh](#)
- [nation](#)

translationNotes:

- **The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet** - The "scepter" and the "staff" are long decorated sticks that kings carried. Here they are metonymies that stand for the power to rule. And, "Judah" stands for his descendants. AT: "The power to rule will always be with the descendants of Judah" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Parallelism](#))
- **until Shiloh comes. The nations will obey him** - Possible meanings are 1) "Shiloh" means "tribute." AT: "until the nations obey him and bring him tribute" or 2) "Shiloh" refers to the city of Shiloh. AT: "until the ruler comes to Shiloh. Then the nations will obey him." Many people consider this a prophecy about the Messiah who is a descendant of King David. David is a descendant of Judah.
- **The nations will obey him** - Here "nations" refer to the people. AT: "The people of the nations will obey him" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ The grapevines of his descendants will produce grapes very abundantly. As a result, they will not object to tying their young donkeys to the grapevines in order that they can eat the leaves of the grapevines. Wine will be very plentiful, with the result that they will wash their clothes in wine; they will wash their cloaks in wine that is as red as blood. ¹² Their eyes will be red because of drinking too much wine, but their teeth will be very white because of drinking much milk from the cows.

ULB:

¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine, and his robe in the blood of grapes.

¹² His eyes will be as dark as wine, and his teeth as white as milk.

translationWords:

- bind, bond, bound
- horse
- vine
- donkey, mule
- wine, wineskin, new wine
- robe
- grape

translationNotes:

- **Binding his donkey ... to the choice vine** - Both statements mean the same thing. It is implied that the vines are so full of grapes that the master does not mind that his donkey eats some of them. (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **his ... he** - Possible meanings for all occurrences of "his" or "he" are 1) they refer to Judah's descendants. AT: "their ... they" or 2) they refer to the ruler in [49:10](#), which may refer to the Messiah.
- **he has washed ... in the blood of grapes** - Both statements mean the same thing. It implies that there are so many grapes that they can wash their clothes in the juice. (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **he has washed** - Often in prophecy events that will happen in the future are described as something that has already happened in the past. This emphasizes that this event will certainly happen. AT: "they will wash" or "he will wash" (See: [Predictive Past](#))

- **the blood of grapes** - This speaks about the grape juice as if it were blood. This emphasizes how red the juice is. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **His eyes will be as dark as wine** - This refers to the color of a person's eyes to the red color of wine. Possible meanings are 1) dark eyes imply healthy eyes or 2) people eyes will be red from drinking too much of wine. (See: [Simile](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **his teeth as white as milk** - This compare the color of the person's teeth to the white color of milk. This implies that there will be so many healthy cows they will have much milk to drink. (See: [Simile](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:13**UDB:**

¹³ Zebulun, your descendants will live by the seashore where there will be a safe harbor for ships. Their land will extend north as far as the city of Sidon.

ULB:

¹³ Zebulun will live by the shore of the sea. He will be a harbor for ships,
and his border will extend to Sidon.

translationWords:

- [Zebulun](#)
- [Sidon, Sidonians](#)

translationNotes:

- **Zebulun will live** - This refers to the descendants of Zebulun. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **He will be a harbor** - Here “He” stands for sea towns that the people of Zebulun will inhabit or build. These cities will provide shelter for ships. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **harbor** - a part of the sea that is next to land and is a safe place for ships

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Issachar, your descendants will be like strong donkeys that are lying down between two groups of sheep. so tired that they cannot get up! ¹⁵ They will see that their resting place is good and that the land pleases them very much. But they will bend their backs to carry heavy loads and be forced to work for others.

ULB:

¹⁴ Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between the sheepfolds.

¹⁵ He sees a good resting place and the pleasant land.

He will bend his shoulder to the burden and become a servant for the task.

translationWords:

- Issachar
- donkey, mule
- burden
- servant, slave, slavery

translationNotes:

- **Issachar is a strong donkey** - Jacob speaks about Issachar and his descendants as if they are a donkey. This emphasizes that they will work very hard. AT: “The descendants of Issachar will be like a strong donkey” (See: **Metaphor**)
- **Issachar is** - Often in prophecy events that will happen in the future are described as something that is already happening. This emphasizes that the event will certainly happen. It can be stated in the future tense. AT: “Issachar will be” or “The descendants of Issachar will be”
- **Issachar ... He sees ... He will** - Here “Issachar” is a metonymy that stands for his descendants. AT: “The descendants of Issachar ... They see ... They will” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **lying down between the sheepfolds** - Possible meanings are 1) “lying down between the packs they were carrying” or 2) “lying down between two sheep pens.” Either way, Jacob speaks about Issachar’s descendants as if they are donkeys that have worked hard and are lying down to rest. (See: **Metaphor**)
- **a good resting place and the pleasant land** - “a resting place that is good and that the land is pleasant”
- **He will bend his shoulder to the burden** - The phrase “bend his shoulder to the burden” is a way of saying “work very hard to carry the load” (See: **Idiom**)
- **become a servant for the task** - “will work for others as slaves”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:16-18**UDB:**

¹⁶ Dan, although your tribe will be small, your leaders will rule their people just as the leaders of other tribes of Israel will rule their people. ¹⁷ Your descendants will be like snakes at the side of a road, like poisonous snakes lying beside a path. They will strike the heels of horses that pass by, causing the riders to fall backwards as the horses rear up on their hind legs.”

¹⁸ Then Jacob prayed, “Yahweh, I am waiting for you to rescue me from my enemies.”

ULB:

¹⁶ Dan will judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ Dan will be a snake beside the road, a poisonous snake in the path that bites the horse’s heels, so that his rider falls backward.

¹⁸ I wait for your salvation, Yahweh.

translationWords:

- Dan
- judge, judgment
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- tribe
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel
- serpent, snake, viper
- salvation
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **Dan will judge his people** - Here “Dan” stands for his descendants. AT: “The descendants of Dan will judge their people” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **his people** - Possible meanings for “his people” are 1) “the people of Dan” or 2) “the people of Israel”
- **Dan will be a snake beside the road** - Jacob speaks about Dan and his descendants as if they were snakes. Though a snake is small, it can bring down a rider off his horse. So Dan, though a small tribe, is very dangerous to its enemies. AT: “The descendants of Dan will be like a snake beside the road” (See [Metaphor](#))
- **I wait for your salvation, Yahweh** - The abstract noun “salvation” can be translated as “save.” AT: “I wait for you, Yahweh, to save me”
- **I wait** - The word “I” refers to Jacob.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ Then Jacob continued telling his sons what would happen in the future. He said, "Gad, your tribe will be attacked by a group of bandits, but your tribe will pursue and attack them.

²⁰ Asher, your descendants will eat good tasting food; they will produce food that is delicious enough for kings to eat.

²¹ Naphtali, your descendants will be like deer that run free, deer that have beautiful fawns.

ULB:

¹⁹ Gad—raiders will attack him, but he will attack them at their heels.

²⁰ Asher's food will be rich, and he will provide royal delicacies.

²¹ Naphtali is a doe let loose; he will have beautiful fawns.

translationWords:

- [Gad](#)
- [Asher](#)
- [royal](#)
- [Naphtali](#)
- [deer, doe, buck, roebuck, fawn](#)

translationNotes:

- **Gad ... Asher's ... Naphtali** - These refer to the descendants of each man. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **at their heels** - Here "heels" stands for the raiders who are running away from the descendants of Gad. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **food will be rich** - Here "rich" is a way of saying "delicious." (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Naphtali is a doe let loose** - Jacob speaks about the descendants of Naphtali as if they were a female deer that is free to run. This may emphasize that they will be swift messengers. AT: "The descendants of Naphtali will be like deer set free" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **have beautiful fawns** - A "fawn" is a baby deer. The meaning of the Hebrew word is unclear. Some versions translate it as "have beautiful words" or "speak beautiful things" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)

- Genesis 49 General Notes
- **Genesis 49 Translation Questions**

Genesis 49:22-23**UDB:**

²² Joseph, you will have many descendants. Their children will be as many as the fruit on a vine near a spring of water, whose branches extend over a wall. ²³ Their enemies will attack them fiercely, and shoot at them with bows and arrows and pursue them.

ULB:

²² Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough near a spring,
whose branches climb over the wall.

²³ The archers will attack him and shoot at him and harass him.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [fruit, fruitful](#)
- [fountain, spring](#)
- [archer](#)

translationNotes:

- **Joseph is a fruitful bough** - Here “Joseph” is a metonymy that stands for his descendants. Jacob speaks about them as if they were a tree branch that produces a lot of fruit. This emphasizes that they will greatly increase in number. (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))
- **bough** - a main branch of a tree
- **whose branches climb over the wall** - Branches that grow and extend over a wall are spoken of as if they were climbing. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:24**UDB:**

²⁴ But they will hold their bows steady and their arms will remain strong, because of the power of my mighty God, because of Yahweh, who guides and provides for me, as a shepherd guides and provides for his sheep. The people of Israel will ask Yahweh to protect them, as people take refuge on top of a high rock.

ULB:

²⁴ But his bow will remain steady, and his hands will be skillful
because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.

translationWords:

- bow and arrow
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- mighty, might
- Jacob, Israel
- name
- shepherd, to shepherd
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants.
- **his bow will remain steady** - The person holding the bow steady is spoken of as if the bow itself will remain steady. It is implied he is holding it steady as he aims at his enemy. AT: “he will hold his bow steady as he aims at his enemy” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **his bow ... his hands** - Here “his” refers to Joseph who stands for his descendants. AT: “their bow ... their hands” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **his hands will be skillful** - Here “hands” stands for the person’s arms as he is holding his bow steady. AT: “his arms will remain strong as he aims his bow” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the hands of the Mighty One** - The “hands” are expressing the power of Yahweh. AT: “the power of the Mighty One” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **because of the name of the Shepherd** - Here “name” refers to the entire person. AT: “because of the Shepherd” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the Shepherd** - Jacob speak of Yahweh as if he were a “Shepherd.” This emphasizes that Yahweh guides and protects his people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

- **the Rock** - Jacob speaks of Yahweh as if he were a “Rock” that people can climb upon to find safety from enemies. This emphasizes that Yahweh protects his people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:25**UDB:**

²⁵ God, the one whom I worship, will help your descendants. God Almighty will bless them by sending them rain from the sky and by giving them water from deep below the ground. He will give them many children and will nourish them.

ULB:

²⁵ The God of your father will help you and the Almighty God will bless you with blessings of the sky above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, and blessings of the breasts and womb.

translationWords:

- [God](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [womb](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants. (See: [49:22-23](#))
- **help you ... bless you** - Here “you” refers to Joseph who stands for his descendants. AT: “help your descendants ... bless them” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **blessings of the sky** - Here “sky” stands for the rain that helps the crops to grow. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **blessings of the deep that lies beneath** - Here “deep” stands for the water underneath the ground that supplies rivers and wells. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **blessings of the breasts and womb** - Here “breasts and womb” stand for the ability for a mother to have children and feed them milk. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:26**UDB:**

²⁶ The blessings that I want God to give you are great ones. They are greater than the blessings that come from the eternal mountains, than the ones that come from the everlasting hills. Joseph, I pray that these blessings will be given to you, because you are the leader of your brothers.

ULB:

²⁶ The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains

or the desireable things of the ancient hills.

May they be on the head of Joseph, even upon the crown of the head of the prince of his brothers.

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [everlasting, eternal, eternity](#)
- [crown, to crown](#)
- [prince, princess](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants.
- **the ancient mountains** - The meaning of the original language is not certain. Some Bible translations have “my ancestors” instead of “ancient mountains.”
- **May they be on the head of Joseph** - Here “they” refers to the blessings of his father.
- **upon the crown of the head of the prince of his brothers** - Jacob desires for these blessings to be passed on to even the most important of his descendants. AT: “on the head of the most important of Joseph’s descendants” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **prince of his brothers** - “most important of his brothers”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:27**UDB:**

²⁷ Benjamin, your descendants will be like vicious wolves. In the morning they will kill their enemies like a wolf devours its prey, and in the evening they will divide among their warriors the spoils that they seized from their enemies.”

ULB:

²⁷ Benjamin is a hungry wolf. In the morning he will devour the prey, and in the evening he will divide the plunder.”

translationWords:

- [Benjamin](#)
- [devour](#)

translationNotes:

- **Benjamin is a hungry wolf** - Here “Benjamin” is a metonymy that stands for his descendants. Jacob speaks about Benjamin’s descendants as if they were a hungry wolf. This emphasizes that they will be fierce warriors. AT: “The descendants of Benjamin will be like hungry wolves” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:28-30**UDB:**

²⁸ Those twelve sons are the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. That is what their father said to them as he blessed them, telling to each one words that were right for him.

²⁹ Then Jacob said to his sons, "I will soon die and join my ancestors who have already died. Bury my body where some of my ancestors are buried, in the cave that is in the field that was bought from Ephron, who belonged to the Heth people group. ³⁰ The field of Machpelah, was east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought it from Ephron to use as a burial place.

ULB:

²⁸ These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. Each one he blessed with an appropriate blessing. ²⁹ Then he instructed them and said to them, "I am about to go to my people. Bury me with my forefathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is near Mamre in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought for a burial place from Ephron the Hittite.

translationWords:

- twelve tribes of Israel
- bless, blessed, blessing
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- bury, buried, burial
- ancestor, father, forefather
- Hittite
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Abraham, Abram

translationNotes:

- **These are the twelve tribes of Israel** - "These" refers to the sons Jacob mentioned in 49:1-27. Each son became the leader of his own tribe.
- **when he blessed them** - Here the word "blessed" refers to the speaking of formal blessings.
- **Each one he blessed with an appropriate blessing** - "He gave each son a fitting blessing"
- **he instructed them** - "he commanded them"
- **I am about to go to my people** - This is a polite way of saying he is about to die. AT: "I am about to die" (See: [Euphemism](#) and [Idiom](#)))
- **go to my people** - Jacob is referring to where his inner man will go when he dies. He expects to join Abraham and Isaac in the afterlife. (See: [Euphemism](#) and [Idiom](#)))

- **Ephron the Hittite** - This is the name of a man. “Hittite” means “descendent of Heth.” See how you translated this in [23:8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Machpelah** - Machpelah was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [23:9](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Mamre** - This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [13:18](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 49:31-33**UDB:**

³¹ That is where they buried him and his wife Sarah. That is where they buried my father Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And that is where I buried my wife Leah. ³² That field and the cave in it were bought from the Heth people group; so that is where I want you to bury me.”

³³ When Jacob finished giving those instructions to his sons, he lay down on his bed again. Then he stopped breathing and died.

ULB:

³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. ³² The field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the people of Heth.” ³³ When Jacob finished these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and went to his people.

translationWords:

- bury, buried, burial
- Abraham, Abram
- Sarah, Sarai
- Isaac
- Rebekah
- Leah
- Jacob, Israel
- people group, peoples, the people, a people

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Jacob continues speaking to his sons.
- **in it were purchased** - The purchase can be made explicit. AT: “in it were purchased by Abraham” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **from the people of Heth** - “from the Hittites”
- **finished these instructions to his sons** - “finished instructing his sons” or “finished commanding his sons”
- **he pulled his feet into the bed** - Jacob was sitting on the bed. Now, Jacob turns and puts his feet in the bed so he can lie down.
- **breathed his last** - This is a polite way of saying a person died. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **went to his people** - After Jacob died, his inner man went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. (See: [Euphemism](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 49 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 49 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Embalming

Embalming was practiced in Egypt on very important people when they died. They remove the liquids from the body and attempted to wrap and preserve the body from decay.

Joseph's character

Joseph's character was so upright that Pharaoh's officials went with him to Canaan to bury Jacob. This was a very large funeral procession. He also learned lessons from earlier and his life and unified his family. (See: [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

Links:

- [Genesis 50:01 Notes](#)

Genesis 50:1-3

UDB:

¹ Joseph fell on his father's face and he cried over him and kissed him. ² Joseph commanded his servants who prepared the dead for burial to embalm his father's body. ³ It took forty days to embalm Jacob's body, because that is the amount of time that was always required for them to embalm a body. The people of Egypt cried for seventy days because of Jacob's death.

ULB:

50 ¹ Then Joseph was so distressed that he collapsed on the face of his father, and he wept over him, and he kissed him. ² Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ They took forty days, for that was the full time for embalming. The Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

translationWords:

- [Joseph \(OT\)](#)
- [kiss](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **that he collapsed on the face of his father** - The term “he collapsed” is an idiom for being overcome. AT: “that he fell on his father in grief” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **his servants the physicians** - “his servants who took care of dead bodies”
- **to embalm his father** - To “embalm” is a special way of preserving a dead body before it is buried. AT: “to prepare his father's body for burial” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **They took forty days** - “They took 40 days” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **seventy days** - “70 days” (See: [Numbers](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:4-6**UDB:**

⁴ When the time of mourning was finished, Joseph said to the king's officials, "If you are pleased with me, please take this message to the king: ⁵ 'When my father was about to die, he told me to solemnly promise that I would bury his body in Canaan land, in the tomb that he himself had prepared. So please let me go up to Canaan and bury my father's body. Then I will return.'"

⁶ After they gave the king the message, he replied, "Tell Joseph, 'Go up and bury your father's body, as you swore that you would do.'"

ULB:

⁴ When the days of weeping were over, Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's royal court saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ 'My father made me swear, saying, "See, I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself in the land of Canaan. There you will bury me." Now let me go up and bury my father, and then I will return.'" ⁶ Pharaoh answered, "Go and bury your father, as he made you swear."

translationWords:

- Pharaoh, king of Egypt
- royal
- favor, favorable, favoritism
- oath, swear, swear by
- bury, buried, burial
- tomb, grave, burial place
- Canaan, Canaanite

translationNotes:

- **days of weeping** - "days of mourning him" or "days of weeping for him"
- **Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's royal court** - Here "royal court" stands for the officials that make up Pharaoh's royal court. AT: "Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's officials" (See: **Metonymy**)
- **If now I have found favor in your eyes** - The phrase "in your eyes" is a metonym that stands for Jacob's thoughts or opinion. AT: "If I have found favor with you" or "If you are pleased with me" (UDB) (See: **Metonymy**)
- **found favor** - This is an idiom that means that someone is approved of by someone else. (See: **Idiom**)
- **please speak to Pharaoh, saying, 'My father made me swear, saying, "See, I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself in the land of Canaan. There you will bury me." Now let me go up and bury my father, and then I will return.'** - This has a

two level quotation and three level quotation. These can be stated as indirect quotations. AT: “please tell Pharaoh that my father made me swear that after he dies I would bury him in the tomb that he dug for himself in the land of Canaan. Please ask Pharaoh to let me go bury my father, and then I will return” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

- **See, I am about to die** - “See, I am dying”
- **let me go up** - It was common to use the phrase “go up” when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **Pharaoh answered** - It is implied that the members of the court spoke to Pharaoh, and now Pharaoh is replying to Joseph. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **as he made you swear** - “as you swore to him”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:7-9**UDB:**

⁷ So Joseph went up to Canaan to bury his father's body. All of the king's officials, all the king's advisors, and all the elders in Egypt went with him. ⁸ His family's small children and their sheep and goats and their cattle stayed in the region of Goshen. But all the rest of Joseph's family and his brothers and his father's family went with him. ⁹ Men riding in chariots and on horses also went along. It was a huge group.

ULB:

⁷ Joseph went up to bury his father. All the officials of Pharaoh went with him—the courtiers of his household, all the senior officials of the land of Egypt, ⁸ with all Joseph's household and his brothers, and his father's household. But their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ Chariots and horsemen also went with him. It was a very large group of people.

translationWords:

- household
- flock, herd
- Goshen
- chariot
- horsemen

translationNotes:

- **Joseph went up** - It was common to use the phrase “went up” when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
- **All the officials ... the courtiers ... the senior officials** - All of Pharaoh's most important leaders attended the burial procession.
- **courtiers** - This person was a royal advisor.
- **the courtiers of his household** - Here “household” refers to Pharaoh's royal court.
- **land of Egypt, with all Joseph's household and his brothers, and his father's household** - This can be translated as a new sentence: “land of Egypt. Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household also went with him” (See: [Order of Events](#))
- **Joseph's household ... father's household** - Here “household” refers to their families.
- **Chariots** - Here this stands for the men riding in the chariots. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **It was a very large group of people** - “It was a very large gathering”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:10-11

UDB:

¹⁰ They went to the east side of the Jordan River and arrived at Atad. There was a place there where people threshed the grain to separate the wheat from the chaff. There they mourned loudly for Jacob for a long time. Joseph performed mourning ceremonies for his father for seven days. ¹¹ When the Canaan people group who lived there saw them mourning like that, they said, “This is a sad mourning place for the people of Egypt!” So they named the place Abel Mizraim, which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean “mourning of the Egyptians.”

ULB:

¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad on the other side of the Jordan, they mourned with very great and grievous sorrow. There Joseph made a seven day mourning for his father. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, “This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians.” That is why the place was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

translationWords:

- thresh, threshing
- Jordan River
- mourn, mourning
- biblical time: day
- Canaan, Canaanite
- Egypt, Egyptian

translationNotes:

- **When they came** - The word “they” refers to the participants in the burial procession.
- **floor of Atad** - Possible meanings are 1) the word “Atad” means “thorn” and it may refer to a place where large amounts of thorns grew, or 2) it may be the name of the person who owns the threshing floor. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **they mourned with very great and grievous sorrow** - “they were extremely sad and they mourned very much”
- **a seven day** - “a 7 day” (See: [Numbers](#))
- **in the floor of Atad** - “in the threshing floor of Atad” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians** - “The mourning of the Egyptians is very great”
- **Abel Mizraim** - The translator can add a footnote that says: “The name Abel Mizraim means “the mourning of Egypt.”” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:12-14**UDB:**

¹² Then Jacob's sons did for him what their father had commanded. ¹³ They crossed the Jordan River and carried Jacob's body into Canaan land. They buried it in the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre town. That was the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron, who was one of the Heth people group, to use as a burial place.

¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph and his brothers and all the others who had gone up to Canaan with him for the funeral returned to Egypt.

ULB:

¹² So his sons did for Jacob just as he had instructed them. ¹³ His sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre. Abraham had bought the cave with the field for a burial place. He had bought it from Ephron the Hittite. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned into Egypt, he, along with his brothers, and all who had accompanied him to bury his father.

translationWords:

- **Canaan, Canaanite**
- **bury, buried, burial**
- **Abraham, Abram**
- **Hittite**
- **Egypt, Egyptian**

translationNotes:

- **So his sons** - "So Jacob's sons"
- **just as he had instructed them** - "just as he had directed them"
- **His sons carried him** - "His sons took his body"
- **Machpelah** - Machpela was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [23:9](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Mamre** - This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [13:18](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Ephron the Hittite** - This is the name of a man. "Hittite" means "descendent of Heth." See how you translated this in [23:8](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **Joseph returned into Egypt** - "Joseph returned to Egypt"
- **all who had accompanied him** - "all who had come with him"

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:15-17

UDB:

¹⁵ After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers became worried. They realized what might happen. They said, "What will happen if Joseph is carrying hatred for us and wants to take revenge on us, because of all the evil things we did to him many years ago?" ¹⁶ So they sent someone to tell this to Joseph for them: "Before our father died, he told us this: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, Please forgive your older brothers for the evil thing that they did to you, for their terrible sin against you, because what they did to you was very wrong.' So now we, who are servants of your father's God, ask you, please forgive us for what we did to you." Joseph cried when he received their message.

ULB:

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds on to anger against us and wants to repay us in full for all the evil we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they commanded the presence of Joseph, saying, "Your father gave instructions before he died, saying, ¹⁷ 'Tell Joseph this, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin when they did evil to you.'" Now please forgive the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

translationWords:

- forgive, forgiveness
- God

translationNotes:

- **What if Joseph holds on to anger against us** - Here anger is spoken of as if it was something physical that Joseph could hold in his hands. AT: "What if Joseph is actually still angry with us" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **wants to repay us in full for all the evil we did to him** - Avenging oneself against someone who harmed him is spoken of as if the person were paying they other person what they are owed. AT: "wants revenge for the evil thing we did to him" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Your father gave instructions before he died, saying, "Tell Joseph this, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin when they did evil to you."'** - This has a two level quotation and a three level quotation. They can be stated as indirect quotations. AT: "Your father instructed us before he died to tell you to forgive us for the evil thing we did to you" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))
- **Your father gave instructions before he died, saying** - Jacob was the father of all the brothers. Here they say "your father" to emphasize that Joseph needs to pay attention to what his father said. AT: "Before our father died he said"
- **and their sin when they did evil to you** - "for the wicked things they did to you"

- **Now** - This does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
- **please forgive the servants of the God of your father** - The brothers are referring to themselves as “the servants of the God of your father.” This can be stated in first person. AT: “please forgive us, the servants of the God of our father” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))
- **Joseph wept when they spoke to him** - “Joseph wept when he heard this message”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:18-21**UDB:**

¹⁸ Then his older brothers themselves came and threw themselves on the ground in front of Joseph, and one of them said, “Please listen: we will be your servants.” ¹⁹ But Joseph replied to them, “Do not be afraid! God is the one who punishes people; am I God?” ²⁰ As for you, yes, you wanted to do something very evil to me. But God caused something good to come from it! He wanted to save many people from dying of hunger, and that is what happened! Today they are alive! ²¹ So I say again, do not be afraid! I will make sure that you and your children have enough to eat.” In this way he reassured them as he spoke to them.

ULB:

¹⁸ His brothers also went and lay facedown before him. They said, “See, we are your servants.” ¹⁹ But Joseph answered them, “Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God?” ²⁰ As for you, you meant to harm me, but God meant it for good, to preserve the lives of many people, as you see today. ²¹ So now do not be afraid. I will provide for you and your little children.” He comforted them in this way and spoke kindly to their hearts.

translationWords:

- servant, slave, slavery
- fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh
- good, goodness
- comfort, comforter

translationNotes:

- **lay facedown before him** - They lay down with their faces toward the ground. This is a sign of humility and respect for Joseph. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))
- **Am I in the place of God?** - Joseph uses a question to comfort his brothers. AT: “I am not in the place of God” or “I am not God.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **you meant to harm me** - “you intended to do evil against me”
- **God meant it for good** - “God intended it for good”
- **So now do not be afraid** - “So do not fear me”
- **I will provide for you and your little children** - “I will always make sure you and your children have enough to eat”
- **He comforted them in this way and spoke kindly to them** - “He comforted them by speaking kindly to them”

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:22-23

UDB:

²² Joseph lived with his father's family in Egypt until he was 110 years old. ²³ He lived long enough to see Ephraim's children and grandchildren. The children of Joseph's grandson Machir, who was Manasseh's son, were born before Joseph died, and they were recognized as being his descendants.

ULB:

²² Joseph lived in Egypt, together with his father's family. He lived one hundred ten years. ²³ Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. He also saw the children of Machir son of Manasseh, who were placed on the knees of Joseph.

translationWords:

- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [biblical time: year](#)
- [Ephraim](#)
- [generation](#)
- [Manasseh](#)

translationNotes:

- **one hundred ten years** - "110 years" (See: [Numbers](#))
- **Ephraim's children to the third generation** - "Ephraim's children and grandchildren" (UDB)
- **Machir** - This is the name of Joseph's grandson. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **who were placed on the knees of Joseph** - This expression means that Joseph adopted these children of Machir as his own children. This means they would have special inheritance rights from Joseph. (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

Genesis 50:24-26

UDB:

²⁴ One day Joseph said to his older brothers, “I am about to die. But God will certainly help you. Some day he will lead your descendants up out of this land and take them to Canaan, the land that he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” ²⁵ Then Joseph said, “When God enables you to do that, you must take my body up from here to Canaan.” He made his older brothers solemnly promise to do that.

²⁶ So Joseph died in Egypt when he was 110 years old. His body was embalmed and put in a coffin there.

ULB:

²⁴ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die; but God will surely come to you and lead you up out of this land to the land which he swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” ²⁵ Then Joseph made the people of Israel swear an oath. He said, “God will surely come to you. At that time you must carry up my bones from here.” ²⁶ So Joseph died, 110 years old. They embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

translationWords:

- oath, swear, swear by
- Abraham, Abram
- Isaac
- Jacob, Israel
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel
- biblical time: year

translationNotes:

- **surely come to you** - In 50:24/26 the word “you” refers to Joseph’s brothers, but it also stands for their descendants. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **lead you up out of this land to the land** - It was common to use the word “up” when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan. AT: “bring you out of this land and take you to the land” (See: [Order of Events](#))
- **They embalmed him** - To “embalm” is a special way of preserving a dead body before it is buried. See how you translated “embalmed” in 50:1.
- **he was placed** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “they placed him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))
- **in a coffin** - “in a chest” or “in a case.” This is a box a dead person is placed in.

Links:

- [Introduction to Genesis](#)
- [Genesis 50 General Notes](#)
- [Genesis 50 Translation Questions](#)

translationQuestions

Genesis 1

Q? What did God create in the beginning?

A. God created the heavens and the earth. [1:1]

Q? What was the Spirit of God doing in the beginning?

A. The Spirit of God was moving above the surface of the waters. [1:2]

Q? How did God create light?

A. God said, "Let there be light". [1:3]

Q? What did God make on the second day?

A. God made the sky between the expanses of water. [1:7-8]

Q? What did God call the dry land and the gathered waters?

A. God called the dry land "earth," and the gathered waters he called "seas." [1:10]

Q? What living things did God make on the third day?

A. God made plants, fruit trees, and vegetation on the third day. [1:11-12]

Q? What did God make on the fourth day?

A. God made the two great lights and the stars. [1:16]

Q? What is the purpose of the lights in the sky?

A. They are to divide the day from the night, and as signs for seasons, for days and years. [1:14]

Q? What did God make on the fifth day?

A. God made the living creatures of the water, and birds. [1:21]

Q? What command did God give the sea creatures and birds?

A. Be fruitful, and multiply. [1:22]

Q? What did God make in his image?

A. God made man in his image. [1:26]

Q? Over what things was man given dominion?

A. God gave man dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. [1:26]

Q? What was different about how God made man?

A. God created man in his own image. [1:27]

Q? What command did God give man?

A. Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. [1:28]

Q? What did God give man to eat?

A. God gave them every herb yielding seed and every tree with fruit. [1:29]

Q? When God saw everything that he had made, what did he think about it?

A. God thought it was very good. [1:31]

Genesis 2

Q? What did God do on the seventh day?

A. He rested from all his work, and he blessed and sanctified the day. [2:2-3]

Q? Before Yahweh caused it to rain, how was the earth watered?

A. A mist went up from the earth. [2:6]

Q? How did Yahweh make man?

A. Yahweh formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed the breath of life into him. [2:7]

Q? Where did Yahweh first put the man?

A. In the garden in Eden. [2:8]

Q? What two trees were in the midst of the garden?

A. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. [2:9]

Q? What was the man to do in the garden?

A. He was to work and maintain the garden. [2:15]

Q? What command did Yahweh give the man about what to eat?

A. You may freely eat from every tree in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. [2:16-17]

Q? What did Yahweh say would happen if the man violated this command?

A. In the day when the man violated the command, he would surely die. [2:17]

Q? What did Yahweh say was not good?

A. He said it was not good that the man was alone. [2:18]

Q? What did Yahweh have the man do with every living creature?

A. The man gave every living creature a name. [2:19]

Q? What was not found among all the living creatures?

A. A helper for the man corresponding to him. [2:20]

Q? How did Yahweh make the woman?

A. Yahweh caused the man to sleep and took one of the man's ribs, and made the woman from the rib. [2:22]

Q? Why did the man call her "woman"?

A. Because she was taken out of the man. [2:23]

Q? How do a man and woman become one flesh?

A. The man is united to the woman as his wife. [2:24]

Q? Were the man and his wife ashamed of being naked?

A. No. [2:25]

Genesis 3

Q? What was the first question that the serpent asked the woman?

A. The serpent asked the woman, “Has God really said, ‘You must not eat from any tree of the garden’”? [3:1]

Q? When the woman said God told them they would die if they ate from the tree in the middle of the garden, what did the serpent say?

A. The serpent said, “You will surely not die”. [3:4]

Q? What did the serpent say would happen to the man and woman if they ate of the fruit?

A. The serpent said they would be like God, knowing good and evil. [3:5]

Q? What attracted the woman to the fruit of the tree?

A. She saw it was good for food, a delight to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise. [3:6]

Q? Who ate of the fruit?

A. The woman ate, and gave some to her husband who also ate. [3:6]

Q? What happened to them when they ate of the fruit?

A. When they ate, their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked. [3:7]

Q? What did the man and woman do when God came into the garden?

A. They hid themselves from God. [3:8]

Q? Why did the man hide himself from God when he came into the garden?

A. The man hid himself from God because he was naked and therefor afraid. [3:10]

Q? Who did the man say was responsible for giving him the fruit?

A. The man said the woman was responsible. [3:12]

Q? Who did the woman say was responsible for giving her the fruit?

A. The woman said that the serpent was responsible. [3:13]

Q? What kind of relationship did God say he would cause to exist between the serpent and the woman?

A. God said he would cause them to hate each other. [3:15]

Q? What curse did God give the woman regarding childbirth?

A. God greatly multiplied the woman's pain in childbirth. [3:16]

Q? What curse did God give the man regarding his work?

A. God cursed the ground so that only by painful toil would the man eat from it. [3:17]

Q? What name did the man give the woman, and why?

A. The man called the woman Eve, because she was the mother of all living things. [3:20]

Q? What did God make for Adam and Eve, and why?

A. God made them garments of skins in order to clothe them. [3:21]

Q? Why did God say that now Adam must not eat of the tree of life?

A. God said that since Adam now knew good and evil he must not eat of the tree of life, because he would then live forever. [3:22]

Q? What did God do to prevent Adam from eating from the tree of life?

A. God drove the man out of the garden and placed cherubim there to guard the way to the tree of life. [3:24]

Genesis 4

Q? What work did Cain and Abel do?

A. Cain worked the soil, and Abel was a shepherd. [4:2]

Q? What offering did Cain bring to Yahweh?

A. Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground. [4:3]

Q? What offering did Abel bring to Yahweh?

A. Abel brought some of the firstborn of his flock and some of the fat. [4:4]

Q? How did Yahweh respond to the offerings of Cain and Abel?

A. Yahweh accepted Abel's offering, but did not accept Cain's offering. [4:4-5]

Q? How did Cain react?

A. Cain was very angry, and his face looked dejected. [4:5]

Q? What did Yahweh tell Cain he needed to do in order to be accepted?

A. Yahweh told Cain to do what is right and he would be accepted. [4:7]

Q? Later, what happened with Cain and Abel in the field?

A. Cain rose up and killed Abel. [4:8]

Q? When Yahweh asked Cain where his brother was, what did Cain say?

A. Cain said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper"? [4:9]

Q? What was God's curse on Cain?

A. Cain's curse was that the earth would not yield its strength to him, and he would be a fugitive and wanderer. [4:12]

Q? What did Yahweh do to make sure no one killed Cain?

A. Yahweh put a mark on Cain. [4:15]

Q? Where did Cain go to live?

A. Cain lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. [4:16]

Q? Cain's descendant Lamech had how many wives?

A. Lamech had two wives. [4:19]

Q? What did Lamech tell his wives he had done?

A. Lamech told his wives that he had killed a man. [4:23]

Q? What was the name of another son born to Adam and Eve?

A. Another son of Adam and Eve was named Seth. [4:25]

Q? What did people begin to do in the days of Seth's son Enosh?

A. People began to call upon the name of Yahweh. [4:26]

Genesis 5

Q? Of what is chapter five of Genesis a record?

A. Chapter five of Genesis is a record of the descendants of Adam. [5:1]

Q? In whose likeness was mankind made?

A. Mankind was made in God's likeness. [5:1]

Q? What genders of mankind did God create?

A. God created mankind male and female. [5:2]

Q? How long did Adam live?

A. Adam lived 930 years. [5:5]

Q? How long did Seth live?

A. Seth lived 912 years. [5:8]

Q? How long did Kenan live?

A. Kenan lived 910 years. [5:14]

Q? How long did Jared live?

A. Jared lived 962 years. [5:20]

Q? What was Enoch's relationship with God, and what happened to him?

A. Enoch walked with God, and God took him. [5:24]

Q? What did Lamech say about his son Noah?

A. Lamech said that Noah would give mankind rest from the work and the toil caused by the ground that Yahweh had cursed. [5:29]

Q? Who were the sons of Noah?

A. The sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. [5:32]

Genesis 6

Q? When mankind multiplied on the earth, what did the sons of God do?

A. The sons of God took for themselves wives from the daughters of mankind. [6:2]

Q? What did God now say about the length of life for mankind?

A. God said that mankind would live 120 years. [6:3]

Q? Who were the mighty men of old, the men of renown?

A. The mighty men of old were giants born from the marriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men. [6:4]

Q? What did Yahweh see in the hearts of mankind in those days?

A. Yahweh saw that the wickedness of mankind was great, and that their every thought was evil. [6:5]

Q? What did Yahweh decide to do with mankind?

A. Yahweh decided to wipe away mankind from the earth. [6:7]

Q? But who found favor with Yahweh?

A. Noah found favor with Yahweh. [6:8]

Q? What kind of person was Noah?

A. Noah was a righteous man, blameless, and a man who walked with God. [6:9]

Q? What did God tell Noah to do before God destroyed mankind?

A. God told Noah to build a boat. [6:14]

Q? How did God say he was going to destroy all flesh that has the breath of life in it?

A. God said that he was going to bring the flood of waters upon the earth. [6:17]

Q? But with whom did God establish his covenant?

A. God established his covenant with Noah. [6:18]

Q? Who did God tell Noah to bring on the boat?

A. God told Noah to bring his wife, his three sons, and his sons' wives. [6:18]

Q? What animals were to be brought on the boat to be kept alive?

A. Two of every kind of living creature, male and female, were to be brought on the boat. [6:19]

Q? How did Noah respond to God's commands?

A. Noah did all that God commanded him. [6:22]

Genesis 7

Q? Seven males and females of which kinds of animals were to go on the boat?

A. Seven males and females of every clean animal and the birds were to go on the boat. [7:2]

Q? How long did God say the rain would continue on the earth?

A. God said that the rain would continue for forty days and forty nights. [7:4]

Q? How old was Noah when the flood came upon the earth?

A. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. [7:6]

Q? How did Noah bring the animals into the boat?

A. The animals came to Noah and went into the boat. [7:9]

Q? From which two sources did the waters of the flood come?

A. The waters came from deep underground, and from the sky. [7:11]

Q? Once all the people and animals were in the boat, who closed the door?

A. Yahweh shut the door after them. [7:16]

Q? How high did the water on the earth get?

A. The water rose fifteen cubits above the tops of the mountains. [7:20]

Q? Because of the flood, what died upon the earth?

A. All creatures that moved upon the earth, and all mankind, died. [7:21]

Q? Who were the only persons left alive on the earth?

A. Only Noah and those with him in the ark were left alive. [7:23]

Genesis 8

Q? How did God make the waters recede?

A. God made a wind blow, the fountains of the deep were closed, and the rain stopped. [8:1-2]

Q? Where did the ark come to rest on the ground?

A. The ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat. [8:4]

Q? What happened the first time Noah sent out a dove from the ark?

A. The first time, the dove found no place to rest her foot, and she returned to Noah in the ark. [8:9]

Q? What happened the second time Noah sent out a dove from the ark?

A. The second time, the dove returned with a freshly plucked olive leaf. [8:11]

Q? What happened the third time Noah sent out a dove from the ark?

A. The third time, the dove did not return to Noah. [8:12]

Q? What did Noah see when he removed the covering of the ark and looked out?

A. Noah saw that the surface of the ground was dry. [8:13]

Q? What did God want all the creatures on the ark to go and do as they left the ark?

A. God wanted all the living creatures to be fruitful and multiply on the earth. [8:17]

Q? What did Noah do when he left the ark?

A. Noah built an altar to Yahweh and offering burnt offerings on the altar. [8:20]

Q? What two promises did God make to mankind at this time?

A. God promised to not again curse the ground, and to not again destroy every living thing. [8:21]

Q? What did God say was man's inclination from childhood?

A. God said that man's inclination from childhood was evil. [8:21]

Genesis 9

Q? What did God tell Noah and his sons to do after they left the ark?

A. God told Noah and his sons to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth. [9:1]

Q? What did God give Noah and his sons now as food?

A. God gave Noah and his sons both the green plants and every moving thing that lived as food. [9:3]

Q? How did God command that meat not be eaten?

A. God commanded that meat not be eaten with the blood in it. [9:4]

Q? What did God say was in the blood?

A. God said that the life was in the blood. [9:4]

Q? What did God declare was the penalty for shedding a man's blood?

A. God declared that the one who shed a man's blood must have his blood shed. [9:5-6]

Q? In whose image did God make man?

A. God made man in God's image. [9:6]

Q? What covenant promise did God make with everything that lives on the earth?

A. God made a covenant promise that never again will all flesh be destroyed by a flood. [09:9-11,15]

Q? What sign did God give of the covenant that he made with the earth?

A. God placed the rainbow in the clouds as the sign of the covenant he made with the earth. [09:13,16-17]

Q? What were the names of the three sons of Noah?

A. The names of the three sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. [9:18]

Q? What happened to Noah after he planted a vineyard?

A. After he planted a vineyard, Noah drank some of the wine and became drunk. [9:20-21]

Q? How did Shem and Japheth cover the nakedness of their father?

A. Shem and Japheth walked backwards with a garment, while turned the other way, in order to cover the nakedness of their father. [9:23]

Q? What was the curse Noah put on Ham?

A. Noah cursed Ham and said, "Cursed be Canaan. May he be a servant to his brothers' servants." [9:25]

Q? Who did Noah bless?

A. Noah blessed both Shem and Japheth. [9:26-27]

Genesis 10

Q? After the flood, the descendants of Noah eventually spread out on the earth in clans, and when they spread out, each clan had its own what?

A. When the clans eventually spread out, each clan had its own language. [10:5,20,31]

Q? For what was Nimrod, descendant of Ham, known?

A. Nimrod was known as a mighty hunter before Yahweh. [10:9]

Q? What was the first of Nimrod's primary cities in the land of Shinar?

A. The first of Nimrod's primary cities was Babel. [10:10]

Q? In addition to the land of Shinar, what other area did Nimrod develop with cities?

A. Nimrod also built cities in Assyria. [10:11]

Q? Canaan was a descendant of which son of Noah?

A. Canaan was a descendant of Ham. [10:15]

Q? What happened in the days of Peleg, descendant of Shem?

A. In the days of Peleg, the earth was divided. [10:25]

Q? From where did the nations come that spread over the earth after the flood?

A. The nations came from the clans of the sons of Noah. [10:32]

Genesis 11

Q? Immediately after the flood, how many languages were there on the whole earth?

A. Immediately after the flood, there was one language on the whole earth. [11:1]

Q? What did the people decide to do instead of spreading across the whole earth as God had commanded?

A. Instead of spreading across the whole earth as God had commanded, the people decided to build a city and a tower. [11:4]

Q? What did the people want to make for themselves?

A. The people wanted to make a name for themselves. [11:4]

Q? Where did the people build their city and tower?

A. The people built their city and tower in the land of Shinar. [11:2]

Q? What did Yahweh come down and do to the people?

A. Yahweh came down and confused the people's languages. [11:7]

Q? Why did God do this?

A. God confused their languages so they would not understand each other. [11:7]

Q? What did God cause the people then to do?

A. God caused the people to scatter across the face of all the earth, as he had commanded. [11:8]

Q? What was the name of the city the people tried to build?

A. The name of the city was Babel. [11:9]

Q? The descendants of which son of Noah are given in this chapter?

A. The descendants of Shem, son of Noah, are given in this chapter. [11:10]

Q? Who was the father of Abram?

A. The father of Abram was Terah. [11:26]

Q? Terah's son Haran had a son with what name?

A. Terah's son Haran had a son named Lot. [11:27]

Q? Where did Terah live?

A. Terah lived in Ur of the Chaldeans. [11:28]

Q? What was the name of Abram's wife?

A. Abram's wife's name was Sarai. [11:29]

Q? What problem did Abram's wife have?

A. Abram's wife's Sarai was barren and had no children. [11:30]

Q? To where did Terah move with Abram, Sarai, and Lot?

A. Terah moved to the land of Canaan with Abram, Sarai, and Lot. [11:31]

Genesis 12

Q? While Abram was living in Haran, what did Yahweh tell Abram to do?

A. Yahweh told Abram to leave his father's household and go to the land that he would show Abram. [12:1]

Q? What promise did Yahweh make to Abram?

A. Yahweh promised that he would bless Abram, make him a great nation, and bless all the families of the earth through him. [12:2-3]

Q? Who traveled with Abram?

A. Abram traveled with Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son. [12:5]

Q? To which land did Abram travel?

A. Abram traveled to the land of Canaan. [12:5]

Q? When Yahweh appeared to Abram, what promise did he make to Abram?

A. Yahweh promised that Abram's descendant's would live in Canaan. [12:7]

Q? How did Abram worship Yahweh?

A. Abram built an altar to Yahweh and called upon Yahweh's name. [12:8]

Q? Leaving Canaan, to where did Abram travel?

A. Leaving Canaan, Abram traveled to Egypt. [12:10]

Q? What was Abram concerned about as he entered Egypt?

A. Abram was concerned the Egyptians would kill him and take his wife Sarai because she was beautiful. [12:12]

Q? What did Abram ask Sarai to tell the Egyptians about herself?

A. Abram asked Sarai to tell the Egyptians that she was Abram's sister. [12:13]

Q? What happened to Sarai when they entered Egypt?

A. Pharaoh took Sarai into his household. [12:15]

Q? What happened to Pharaoh at this time?

A. Yahweh afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues. [12:17]

Q? What question did Pharaoh ask Abram?

A. Pharaoh asked Abram why he had told him that Sarai was his sister instead of his wife. [12:18-19]

Q? What did Pharaoh do with Abram and Sarai?

A. Pharaoh sent Abram and Sarai away. [12:20]

Genesis 13

Q? To where did Abram travel after leaving Egypt?

A. Abram traveled to the Negev. [13:1]

Q? What did Abram carry with him?

A. Abram carried with him many animals, and much silver and gold. [13:2]

Q? Why was there a dispute between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen?

A. There was a dispute because the land could not support Abram and Lot living close together with all their possessions. [13:6-7]

Q? What offer did Abram make to Lot?

A. Abram offered that Lot choose where to live, and then Abram would find his place to live separated from Lot. [13:9]

Q? Where did Lot choose to live and why?

A. Lot chose to move east and to live in the plain of the Jordan because it was well watered. [13:10-11]

Q? Where did Abram then live?

A. Abram lived in the land of Canaan. [13:12]

Q? What kind of people lived in Sodom?

A. The people of Sodom were wicked sinners against Yahweh. [13:13]

Q? At this time, what did Yahweh say he would give to Abram?

A. Yahweh promised that all the land Abram could see from where he was standing would be given to him. [13:14-15]

Q? How many descendants did Yahweh say Abram would have?

A. Yahweh told Abram he would have more descendants than he could count, “abundant as the dust of the earth.” [13:16]

Q? Near what city did Abram then move?

A. Abram moved near the city of Hebron. [13:18]

Genesis 14

Q? What happened at Sodom as a result of the battle of the kings in the valley of Siddim?

A. All the goods of Sodom were taken away, and Lot and all his possessions were also taken. [14:11-12]

Q? What did Abram do when he was told Lot had been taken away?

A. Abram gathered his 318 trained men to pursue them. [14:14]

Q? Near what large city did Abram fight the kings, and what was the result of the battle?

A. Abram fought the kings north of Damascus, and he brought back the possessions, Lot, and the other people. [14:15-16]

Q? Which two kings met Abram when he returned?

A. The king of Sodom and Melchizedek, the king of Salem, met Abram when he returned. [14:17-18]

Q? What was Melchizedek's relationship to God?

A. Melchizedek was priest of God Most High. [14:18]

Q? What did Melchizedek bring with him when he met Abram?

A. Melchizedek brought bread and wine with him when he met Abram. [14:18]

Q? What did Melchizedek say to Abram?

A. Melchizedek blessed Abram, and blessed God Most High. [14:19-20]

Q? What did Abram do after Melchizedek spoke to him?

A. Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything. [14:20]

Q? What offer did the king of Sodom make to Abram?

A. The king of Sodom offered to let Abram keep all the goods, if Abram gave the people to the king. [14:21]

Q? How did Abram respond to the king of Sodom's offer?

A. Abram said that he did not want any of the possessions, except what the young men had eaten and the share for the men that went with him. [14:23-24]

Q? Why did Abram not want any of the possessions?

A. Abram had lifted up his hand to Yahweh, God Most High, and did not want the king of Sodom to be able to say that he had made Abram rich. [14:22-23]

Genesis 15

Q? When Yahweh appeared to Abram, what encouragement did Yahweh give Abram?

A. Yahweh told Abram not to fear, and that he was Abram's shield and very great reward. [15:1]

Q? About what was Abram worried?

A. Abram was worried because he was still childless, and his steward was his heir. [15:2-3]

Q? Who did Yahweh say would be Abram's heir?

A. Yahweh said that one coming from Abram's own body would be his heir. [15:4]

Q? How many descendants did Yahweh say Abram would have?

A. Yahweh said that Abram would have descendants as numerous as the stars. [15:5]

Q? How did Abram respond to Yahweh's promise, and what did Yahweh then do?

A. Abram believed Yahweh, and Yahweh counted it to Abram as righteousness. [15:6]

Q? What question did Abram ask Yahweh about the land?

A. Abram asked Yahweh, "How will I know that I will inherit it?" [15:8]

Q? What did Abram then do with the animals he was told to bring?

A. Abram cut the animals in two and placed each half opposite the other. [15:10]

Q? What happened to Abram when the sun was going down?

A. When the sun was going down Abram fell sound asleep and a deep and terrifying darkness overwhelmed him. [15:12]

Q? For how long did Yahweh say Abram's descendants would be enslaved and oppressed?

A. Yahweh told Abram his descendants would be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. [15:13]

Q? What did Yahweh say would happen to the nation that enslaved Abram's descendants?

A. Yahweh said that he would judge that nation. [15:14]

Q? How did Yahweh say Abram's life would end?

A. Yahweh said that Abram would die in peace at a good old age. [15:15]

Q? What would reach its limit before Abram's descendants returned to the land promised them?

A. The sin of the Amorites would reach its limit before Abram's descendants returned. [15:16]

Q? That night, what happened amongst the pieces of the animals Abram had prepared?

A. A smoking fire pot and flaming torch passed between the pieces of the animals. [15:17]

Q? What covenant did Yahweh make with Abram that day?

A. Yahweh made a covenant with Abram that he would give this land to Abram's descendants. [15:18-21]

Genesis 16

Q? What idea did Sarai have for giving Abram a descendant?

A. Sarai told Abram to sleep with her servant, Hagar, in order to have children by her. [16:1-2]

Q? What happened between Hagar and Sarai when Hagar conceived a child with Abram?

A. After Hagar conceived, Hagar looked with contempt on Sarai. [16:4]

Q? What complaint did Sarai bring to Abram, and how did Abram respond?

A. Sarai complained that it was Abram's fault that Hagar despised her, and Abram told Sarai to do what she thought best with Hagar. [16:5-6]

Q? How did Sarai treat Hagar after Hagar conceived, and what did Hagar do?

A. Sarai treated Hagar harshly, and Hagar fled. [16:6]

Q? In the wilderness, what did the angel of Yahweh tell Hagar to do?

A. The angel of Yahweh told Hagar to return to Sarai and submit to her authority. [16:9]

Q? What promise did the angel of Yahweh make to Hagar?

A. The angel of Yahweh promised Hagar that her descendants would be too numerous to count. [16:10]

Q? Why was Hagar told to name her son Ishmael?

A. Hagar was told to name her son Ishmael because Yahweh had heard her affliction. [16:11]

Q? How will Ishmael treat other people?

A. Ishmael will be hostile against every man, and will live apart from all his brothers. [16:12]

Q? What name did Hagar give Yahweh?

A. Hagar gave Yahweh the name, "The God who sees me". [16:13]

Q? How old was Abram when Ishmael was born?

A. Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born. [16:16]

Genesis 17

Q? How old was Abram when Yahweh appeared again to him to confirm his covenant with Abram?

A. Abram was ninety-nine years old when Yahweh again appeared to Abram. [17:1]

Q? What command did Yahweh give Abram concerning Abram's way of life?

A. Yahweh commanded Abram to walk before him blamelessly. [17:1]

Q? To what did Yahweh change Abram's name, and what does the name mean?

A. Yahweh changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude of nations". [17:5]

Q? What did Yahweh give to Abraham's descendants as part of the covenant?

A. Yahweh gave Abraham's descendants all the land of Canaan as part of the covenant. [17:8]

Q? What did Yahweh say would be the relationship between Abraham's descendants and Yahweh?

A. Yahweh said that he would be God to Abraham's descendants. [17:8]

Q? What did Yahweh command be done as a sign of the covenant between Abraham and Yahweh?

A. Yahweh commanded that every male be circumcised as a sign of the covenant between Abraham and Yahweh. [17:10-11]

Q? At what age was a baby to be circumcised?

A. A baby was to be circumcised after eight days. [17:12]

Q? What was to be done with foreigners who joined a household that was in covenant with Yahweh?

A. Foreigners who joined a household in covenant with Yahweh were also to be circumcised. [17:12-13]

Q? What happened to any male who was not circumcised?

A. Any male who was not circumcised was cut off from his people because he had broken the covenant. [17:14]

Q? To what did Yahweh change Sarai's name?

A. Yahweh changed Sarai's name to Sarah. [17:15]

Q? What did Yahweh promise would come by Sarah?

A. Yahweh promised that Abraham's son would come by Sarah. [17:16]

Q? How did Abraham respond to Yahweh's promise concerning Sarah?

A. Abraham laughed and asked how a child could be born to a man and woman who were so old. [17:17]

Q? What did God say Abraham must name the son that would come by Sarah?

A. God said that Abraham must name the son Isaac. [17:19]

Q? What did God say he would establish with Isaac?

A. God said that he would establish his covenant with Isaac. [17:19,21]

Q? What promise did God make concerning Ishmael?

A. God promised to bless Ishmael, to make him fruitful, and to make him a great nation. [17:20]

Q? After God left Abraham, what did Abraham do on that same day?

A. On that same day, Abraham circumcised all the males of his household. [17:24-27]

Q? How old was Ishmael when he was circumcised?

A. Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised. [17:25]

Genesis 18

Q? As Abraham was sitting at his tent door, what did he see when he looked up?

A. Abraham saw three men standing across from him. [18:2]

Q? What did Abraham offer the men?

A. Abraham offered the men some water to wash, and some food. [18:4-5]

Q? What prediction did the one visitor give concerning Sarah?

A. The one visitor said that when he returned, Sarah would have a son. [18:10]

Q? Where was Sarah when the visitor gave his prediction?

A. Sarah was in the tent. [18:9]

Q? How did Sarah respond to the visitor's prediction?

A. Sarah laughed to herself when she heard the visitor's prediction. [18:12]

Q? What did Yahweh, the visitor, say about Sarah's response?

A. Yahweh asked why Sarah laughed, and said "Is anything too hard for Yahweh"? [18:14]

Q? When the men left Abraham's home, toward where did they go?

A. The men left Abraham's home and went toward Sodom. [18:16]

Q? What question did Yahweh ask as they walked?

A. Yahweh said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do"? [18:17]

Q? What did Yahweh say Abraham must do so that Yahweh might fulfill the promises given to Abraham?

A. Yahweh said that Abraham must instruct his children and his household to do righteousness and justice. [18:19]

Q? Why were the men going toward Sodom?

A. The men were going toward Sodom because the cries against Sodom and Gomorrah were great, and they wanted to see if the cities were as wicked as the outcry suggested. [18:20-21]

Q? As Abraham stood with Yahweh, what question did he ask Yahweh?

A. Abraham asked, “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked”? [18:23]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were fifty righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:26]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were forty-five righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:28]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were forty righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:29]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were thirty righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:30]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were twenty righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:31]

Q? What did Yahweh say he would do if there were ten righteous within the city?

A. Yahweh said he would spare the whole place for their sake. [18:32]

Genesis 19

Q? When Lot saw the two angels coming into Sodom, what did he offer them?

A. Lot offered that they stay at his home for the night, and then leave in the morning. [19:2]

Q? What was the angels' response to Lot?

A. The angels said that they would spend the night in the town square. [19:2]

Q? At Lot's urging, where did the angels finally decide to spend the night?

A. Finally, the angels went with Lot to his home for the night. [19:3]

Q? What did the men of the city who surrounded Lot's house want Lot to do?

A. The men wanted Lot to bring out the two men visiting him, so they could sleep with them. [19:5]

Q? What did Lot offer the men of the city instead?

A. Lot offered the men of the city his two daughters instead of the two visitors. [19:8]

Q? How did the men respond to Lot's offer?

A. The men told Lot to stand back and almost broke down the door. [19:9]

Q? What did the angels then do?

A. The angels pulled Lot back into the house and struck the men outside with blindness. [19:11]

Q? What did the angels say they had been sent to do by Yahweh?

A. The angels said they had been sent to destroy the city. [19:13]

Q? How did Lot's sons-in-law respond when Lot told them to hurry and leave Sodom because it was about to be destroyed?

A. Lot's sons-in-law thought Lot was joking. [19:14]

Q? When morning dawned, what did the angels tell Lot to do?

A. The angels told Lot to take his wife and daughters and get out of the city. [19:15]

Q? Why, despite Lot's lingering, did the angels bring Lot and his family by their hands out of the city?

A. The angels set them outside the city because Yahweh was merciful to them. [19:16]

Q? What instructions did the angels give Lot when they were outside the city?

A. The angels told Lot and his family to flee for their lives and to not look back. [19:17]

Q? Where did the angel allow Lot and his family to flee?

A. Lot and his family were allowed to flee to a small city called Zoar. [19:22]

Q? What did Yahweh do when Lot reached Zoar?

A. Yahweh rained down sulfur and fire from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. [19:24]

Q? What did Lot's wife do and what happened to her?

A. Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. [19:26]

Q? What did Abraham see early in the morning as he looked down at all the land of the plain?

A. Abraham saw smoke rising from the land like the smoke of a furnace. [19:28]

Q? To where did Lot then move and why?

A. Lot then moved to the mountains because he was afraid to live in Zoar. [19:30]

Q? What plan did Lot's daughters make involving their father?

A. Lot's daughters planned to make their father drunk, then lie with him so that they could have children. [19:31-32]

Q? Which two people groups came from the daughters of Lot?

A. The Moabite and Ammonite people groups came from the daughters of Lot. [19:37-38]

Genesis 20

Q? What did Abraham say about Sarah while he was living at Gerar?

A. Abraham said that Sarah was his sister. [20:1-2]

Q? What did God say to Abimelech after he took Sarah?

A. God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him that he was a dead man because he had taken a man's wife. [20:3]

Q? What did Abimelech say to God he had been told by Abraham and Sarah?

A. Abimelech said to God that Abraham had told him Sarah was his sister, and Sarah had told him Abraham was his brother. [20:5]

Q? What did God tell Abimelech to do, and what did God say would happen if he did not do it?

A. God told Abimelech to return Sarah to Abraham; otherwise, he and all his people would die. [20:7]

Q? How did Abimelech's men respond when they heard what God had told Abimelech?

A. Abimelech's men were very afraid when they heard what God had told him. [20:8]

Q? Why did Abraham say he had told Abimelech that Sarah was his sister?

A. Abraham said that he was afraid Abimelech would kill him because of Sarah. [20:11]

Q? In what way was Sarah actually Abraham's sister?

A. Sarah was the daughter of Abraham's father, but not of his mother. [20:12]

Q? What animals and people did Abimelech give Abraham?

A. Abimelech gave Abraham sheep and oxen, male and female slaves. [20:16]

Q? What reason did Abimelech give Sarah as to why he gave her brother a thousand pieces of silver?

A. Abimelech told Sarah he had given a thousand pieces of silver to her brother to cover any offense against Sarah in the eyes of all that were with Sarah, and before everyone. [20:16]

Q? What happened when Abraham prayed to God for Abimelech and his people?

A. God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female slaves so they were able to have children. [20:17]

Genesis 21

Q? What did Yahweh do for Sarah?

A. Yahweh visited Sarah and she bore a son to Abraham at the promised time. [21:2]

Q? When Isaac was eight days old, what did Abraham do?

A. When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him. [21:4]

Q? What did Sarah say God had made her do?

A. Sarah said that God had made her laugh. [21:6]

Q? On the day Isaac was weaned, what did Sarah see?

A. Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking. [21:9]

Q? What did Sarah tell Abraham to do with Hagar and her son, and why?

A. Sarah told Abraham to drive out Hagar and her son, because Hagar's son would not be heir with Isaac. [21:10]

Q? What was Abraham's reaction to Sarah's demand?

A. Abraham was grieved by Sarah's demand. [21:11]

Q? What did God tell Abraham to do?

A. God told Abraham to listen to Sarah. [21:12]

Q? Where did Hagar and her son go after Abraham sent them out?

A. Hagar and her son went into the wilderness. [21:14]

Q? What did God tell Hagar he would do for her son?

A. God said he would make the son of Hagar into a great nation. [21:18]

Q? How did Hagar and her son survive?

A. God opened Hagar's eyes and she saw a well of water. [21:19]

Q? What happened to Hagar's son as he grew up?

A. Hagar's son became an archer and his mother got a wife for him from Egypt. [21:20-21]

Q? What did Abimelech want Abraham to swear to do for him?

A. Abimelech wanted Abraham to swear that he would not deal falsely with Abimelech, or with his children, or with his descendants. Abimelech asked Abraham to show to him the same covenant faithfulness that Abimelech had shown to Abraham. [21:23]

Q? What did Abraham complain about to Abimelech?

A. Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized from him. [21:25]

Q? Why did Abraham send seven female lambs to Abimelech?

A. Abraham sent seven female lambs to Abimelech as a witness that he had dug the disputed well. [21:28-30]

Q? Into what land did Abimelech return?

A. Abimelech returned into the land of the Philistines. [21:32]

Q? What did Abraham do at the tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba?

A. Abraham worshiped Yahweh, the eternal God. [21:33]

Q? Where did Abraham live for many days?

A. Abraham lived in the land of the Philistines for many days. [21:34]

Genesis 22

Q? What test did God give Abraham?

A. God told Abraham to go to the land of Moriah and offer Isaac as a burnt offering. [22:1-2]

Q? How did Abraham respond to God's command?

A. Abraham rose early in the morning and set out on his journey to the place God had told him about. [22:3]

Q? What did Abraham tell his two young men that he and Isaac were going to do?

A. Abraham told his two young men that he and Isaac were going to worship and then would return. [22:5]

Q? What question did Isaac ask Abraham as they were walking together?

A. Isaac asked Abraham, "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering"? [22:7]

Q? How did Abraham answer Isaac's question?

A. Abraham said that God would himself provide the lamb for the burnt offering. [22:8]

Q? When they reached the place, what did Abraham prepare as the burnt offering and how did he do it?

A. Abraham prepared Isaac as the burnt offering by binding him and laying him on the altar. [22:9]

Q? When Abraham took the knife in his hand, what did the angel of Yahweh tell Abraham?

A. The angel of Yahweh told Abraham to not harm Isaac. [22:12]

Q? What did the angel say he now knew about Abraham?

A. The angel said that he now knew that Abraham feared God. [22:12]

Q? How did God then provide the burnt offering for Abraham?

A. There was a ram caught in the bushes behind Abraham, which Abraham used as the burnt offering. [22:13]

Q? What did Abraham call the place of the burnt offering?

A. Abraham called the place, "Yahweh will provide". [22:14]

Q? What reason did the angel of Yahweh give for blessing Abraham?

A. The angel of Yahweh said he would bless Abraham because Abraham had not withheld his only son. [22:16-17]

Q? Through who and why were all nations of the earth to be blessed?

A. Through Abraham's offspring all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, because Abraham had obeyed the angel of Yahweh's voice. [22:18]

Genesis 23

Q? What did Abraham first do when Sarah died?

A. When Sarah died, Abraham first mourned for her and wept for her. [23:2]

Q? What request did Abraham make to the sons of Heth?

A. Abraham asked for a property to use as a burying-place. [23:3-4]

Q? How did the sons of Heth respond to Abraham's request?

A. The sons of Heth offered the choicest of their tombs to Abraham. [23:5-6]

Q? When Abraham asked for Ephron the Hittite's cave as a tomb, how did Ephron respond?

A. Ephron offered to give Abraham the cave and the field next to it. [23:10-11]

Q? How did Abraham respond to Ephron's offer?

A. Abraham offered to pay for the field and the cave. [23:12-13]

Q? How did Ephron respond to Abraham's offer?

A. Ephron asked for four hundred shekels of silver for the field and the cave. [23:14-15]

Q? How did the conversation between Abraham and Ephron end?

A. Abraham paid four hundred shekels of silver to Ephron for the piece of land. [23:14-16]

Q? What was included in the purchase of the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah?

A. The field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field and all around its border were included in Abraham's purchase of the field of Ephron. [23:17-18]

Q? What did Abraham then do with the cave?

A. Abraham then buried Sarah in the cave. [23:19]

Genesis 24

Q? What did Abraham make his oldest servant swear to do?

A. Abraham made his oldest servant swear that he would get a wife for Isaac from Abraham's relatives. [24:2-4]

Q? What did Abraham insist that the servant not do with Isaac?

A. Abraham insisted that the servant not take Isaac back to the land from which Abraham came. [24:5-6]

Q? What did Abraham's servant ask God to do in order to show him which woman God had chosen for Isaac?

A. The servant asked that the woman whom he asked to lower her pitcher to get a drink would do so and offer to water his camels also. [24:12-14]

Q? What relation was Rebekah to Abraham?

A. Rebekah was the granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother. [24:15]

Q? What did Rebekah do when Abraham's servant asked for a drink of water?

A. Rebekah gave the servant a drink. [24:17-18]

Q? What did Rebekah say after she had finished giving the servant a drink?

A. After Rebekah finished giving the servant a drink she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." [24:19]

Q? What did the servant do when he heard that Rebekah was related to Abraham and that he could spend the night with her family?

A. The servant worshipped Yahweh and blessed him. [24:26-27]

Q? Who was Rebekah's brother?

A. Laban was Rebekah's brother.

Q? What did Laban do when he met Abraham's servant?

A. Laban invited Abraham's servant to stay at his house. [24:31]

Q? What did Abraham's servant insist on doing before he ate?

A. Abraham's servant insisted on saying why he had come before he ate. [24:33]

Q? How had Abraham said that Yahweh would prosper the servant's way?

A. Abraham had said that Yahweh would send his angel with the servant to prosper his way. [24:40]

Q? What had the servant given Rebekah when he heard she was related to Abraham?

A. Abraham's servant had given Rebekah a gold ring for her nose and bracelets for her arms. [24:47]

Q? How did Laban and Bethuel answer Abraham's servant when he asked them what they wanted to do regarding Rebekah?

A. Laban and Bethuel answered that the servant should take Rebekah and go, so that Rebekah could be the wife of Abraham's son. [24:50-51]

Q? What did Abraham's servant do when he heard the answer from Laban and Bethuel?

A. The servant bowed down to Yahweh and gave gifts to Rebekah and to her brother and mother. [24:52-53]

Q? When they arose the next morning, what did Rebekah's brother and mother want the servant to do?

A. When they arose the next morning, they wanted Abraham's servant to stay with them for at least ten more days. [24:54-55]

Q? When Abraham's servant said that he wanted to go immediately, what did Rebekah say that she wanted to do?

A. Rebekah said that she wanted to go with the servant. [24:56-58]

Q? What blessing did Rebekah's family give her as she left with Abraham's servant?

A. Rebekah's family blessed her that she might be the mother of thousands and ten thousands, and that her descendants might possess the gate of those who hate them. [24:60]

Q? What was Isaac doing when Rebekah arrived at his home?

A. Isaac was out in the field meditating. [24:63]

Q? What did Rebekah do when she saw Isaac?

A. When she saw Isaac, Rebekah jumped down from the camel and covered herself with her veil. [24:64-65]

Q? What did Isaac do after Abraham's servant recounted all the things that he had done?

A. Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah's tent and took Rebekah as his wife. [24:67]

Genesis 25

Q? What did Abraham do after his wife Sarah died?

A. Abraham took another wife named Keturah. [25:1]

Q? How did Abraham distribute his wealth?

A. Abraham gave gifts to the sons of his concubines, and gave all that he owned to Isaac. [25:5-6]

Q? How many years did Abraham live?

A. Abraham lived one hundred seventy-five years. [25:7]

Q? Who buried Abraham?

A. Both Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham. [25:9]

Q? How did the twelve sons of Ishmael live with each other?

A. The twelve sons of Ishmael lived with each other in hostility. [25:18]

Q? What did Isaac do because Rebekah was childless?

A. Isaac prayed to Yahweh for his wife, and Yahweh answered his prayer, and Rebekah conceived. [25:21]

Q? What did Yahweh say concerning the two children struggling within Rebekah's womb?

A. Yahweh said that there were two nations in her womb, one people stronger than the other, and that the older would serve the younger. [25:23]

Q? Who was born first, and what did he look like?

A. Esau was born first, and he was red all over like a hairy garment. [25:25]

Q? Who was born second, and what was he doing as he was born?

A. Jacob was born second, and he was grasping Esau's heel as he was born. [25:26]

Q? What kind of man was Esau?

A. Esau was a skillful hunter and a man of the field. [25:27]

Q? What kind of man was Jacob?

A. Jacob was a quiet man who spent his time in the tents. [25:27]

Q? Who did Isaac love, and who did Rebekah love?

A. Isaac loved Esau, and Rebekah loved Jacob. [27:28]

Q? What was another name for Esau?

A. Edom was another name for Esau. [25:30]

Q? For what did Jacob ask in return for the red stew that Esau wanted to eat because he was starving?

A. Jacob asked for Esau's birthright in return for the red stew. [25:31]

Q? What was Esau's response to Jacob's offer?

A. Esau swore an oath and sold his birthright to Jacob. [25:33]

Q? How was Esau treating his birthright when he responded in this way to Jacob's offer?

A. Esau was despising his birthright when he responded to Jacob's offer in this way. [25:34]

Genesis 26

Q? Why did Isaac move to the city of Gerar where Abimelech was the king of the Philistines?

A. Isaac moved to Gerar because there was a famine in the land. [26:1]

Q? What had Yahweh told Isaac before Isaac moved to Gerar?

A. Yahweh had told Isaac not to move to Egypt, and to stay in the land about which he would tell Isaac. [26:2]

Q? What did Yahweh tell Isaac about the oath Yahweh had sworn to his father Abraham?

A. Yahweh told Isaac that he would fulfill the oath which Yahweh had sworn to Abraham. [26:3]

Q? Why did Yahweh say he was going to do this?

A. Yahweh said he was going to do this because Abraham had obeyed his voice and kept his instructions, commandments, statutes, and laws. [26:5]

Q? What did Isaac say to the men of Gerar about Rebekah, his wife?

A. Isaac told the men of Gerar that Rebekah was his sister. [26:7]

Q? According to Abimelech, what could have brought guilt upon the people because of Isaac's lie?

A. Because of Isaac's lie, someone could have had sexual relations with Rebekah and brought guilt upon the people. [26:9-10]

Q? What command did Abimelech give regarding Rebekah?

A. Abimelech commanded that anyone who touched Rebekah would be put to death. [26:11]

Q? What reason did Abimelech give for asking Isaac to move away from the Philistines?

A. Abimelech asked Isaac to move away from the Philistines because he said, "...for you are mightier than we." [26:16]

Q? Why did Isaac have to dig out the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham?

A. Isaac had to dig out the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham because the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham's death. [26:18]

Q? What did Isaac name the well over which the herdsmen of Gerar did not quarrel with him?

A. Isaac named the well, over which the herdsmen of Gerar did not quarrel with him, Rehoboth. [26:22]

Q? What did Yahweh reaffirm to Isaac when he appeared to Isaac at Beersheba?

A. Yahweh reaffirmed that he would bless Isaac and multiply his descendants. [26:23-24]

Q? What covenant did Abimelech want to make with Isaac, and why?

A. Abimelech wanted to make a covenant that neither side would harm the other, because he saw that Yahweh was with Isaac. [26:28-29]

Q? How did Isaac respond to Abimelech's request for a covenant between them?

A. Isaac made a feast, and they swore an oath with each other. [26:30-31]

Q? From what people group were the two wives of Esau?

A. The two wives of Esau were from the Hittites. [26:34]

Q? How was the relationship between Esau's wives and Isaac and Rebekah?

A. Esau's wives brought sorrow to Isaac and Rebekah. [26:35]

Genesis 27

Q? As Isaac grew old, what was he no longer able to do?

A. As Isaac grew old, he was no longer able to see. [27:1]

Q? What did Isaac ask Esau to do, and why?

A. Isaac asked Esau to go hunt and make the sort of food that he loved, so that he could eat it and bless Esau. [27:3-4]

Q? What was Rebekah's plan for providing the food for Isaac, and why?

A. Rebekah told Jacob to go get two goats and she would make the food that Isaac loved, so that Jacob could take it to Isaac and receive the blessing. [27:8-10]

Q? About what was Jacob concerned in bringing the food to Isaac?

A. Jacob was concerned that Esau was a hairy man and he was a smooth man, and that Isaac would touch him and find out that Jacob was a deceiver and curse him. [27:11-12]

Q? How did Rebekah solve the problem of Esau being a hairy man, and Jacob a smooth man?

A. Rebekah put Esau's clothes on Jacob and put goatskins upon his hands and neck. [27:15-16]

Q? When Isaac asked, how did Jacob say he had found the game so quickly?

A. Jacob said that Yahweh, Isaac's God, had brought the game to him. [27:20]

Q? Because he was not sure, how did Isaac try to determine who was giving him the food?

A. Isaac touched Jacob on the hands and felt the hairy goatskins. [27:22-23]

Q? What did Jacob say when Isaac asked, “Are you really my son Esau”?

A. Jacob said, “I am”. [27:24]

Q? What finally convinced Isaac that the person bringing the food was Esau?

A. When Jacob came near Isaac to kiss him, Isaac smelled Esau’s clothes. [27:26-27]

Q? Who did Isaac say would bow down to Jacob?

A. Isaac said nations would bow down to Jacob and that Jacob’s mother’s sons would bow down to him. [27:29]

Q? What did Esau do soon after Jacob left Isaac’s tent?

A. Esau came in from hunting, prepared the food, and brought it to Isaac. [27:30-31]

Q? What did Isaac say when Esau asked for Isaac’s blessing?

A. Isaac said that Jacob had deceitfully taken away Esau’s blessing. [27:34-35]

Q? In what two ways did Esau say Jacob had cheated him?

A. Esau said that Jacob had cheated him from his birthright and from his blessing. [27:36]

Q? What was the “blessing” that Isaac gave Esau?

A. Isaac said that Esau would live away from the fatness of the earth, that he would serve his brother, but would eventually rebel against him and shake off Jacob’s yoke. [27:39-40]

Q? What did Esau decide to do after Isaac's death?

A. Esau decided to kill Jacob after Isaac's death. [27:41]

Q? What did Rebekah do after hearing Esau's plans?

A. Rebekah sent Jacob to Laban, her brother, in Haran. [27:43]

Genesis 28

Q? What command did Isaac give Jacob before he left?

A. Isaac commanded Jacob not to take a Canaanite wife. [28:1]

Q? Where did Isaac tell Jacob to get a wife?

A. Isaac told Jacob to get a wife from the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother. [28:2]

Q? Whose blessing did Isaac ask God to give Jacob?

A. Isaac asked God to give Jacob the blessing of Abraham. [28:4]

Q? From where did Esau get one of his wives when he saw that the women of Canaan did not please Isaac?

A. Esau took a wife from the daughters of Ishmael, Abraham's son. [28:8-9]

Q? What did Jacob see in his dream while on the way to Haran?

A. Jacob saw a ladder from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending on it, and Yahweh standing above it. [28:12-13]

Q? What did Yahweh say about the land Jacob was lying on?

A. Yahweh said that the land Jacob was lying on would be given to him and his descendants. [28:13]

Q? Whose blessing did Yahweh give to Jacob?

A. Yahweh gave Jacob the blessing of Abraham. [28:13]

Q? What did Jacob say about the place where he had the dream?

A. Jacob said the place was the house of God and the gate of heaven. [28:17]

Q? What name did Jacob give the place where he had the dream?

A. Jacob named the place Beth-el. [28:19]

Q? What did Jacob say Yahweh must do in order for Yahweh to be his God?

A. Jacob said that Yahweh must be with him and protect him on his journey so that he returned safely to his father's house. [28:20-21]

Q? What did Jacob promise to give Yahweh if Yahweh did these things for him?

A. Jacob promised to give back to Yahweh a tenth of everything Yahweh gave Jacob. [28:22]

Genesis 29

Q? From where were the men that Jacob talked to?

A. The men were from Haran. [29:4]

Q? Who also came to the well with a flock of sheep?

A. Rachel, daughter of Laban, also came to the well with a flock of sheep. [29:6]

Q? What did Jacob do for Laban's sheep?

A. Jacob rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the sheep. [29:10]

Q? What did Jacob tell Rachel, and then what did she do?

A. Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative, and then Rachel ran and told her father. [29:12]

Q? How did Laban react when he heard about Jacob's arrival?

A. Laban ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, kissed him, and brought him to his house. [29:13]

Q? Describe the two daughters of Laban.

A. Leah was the older daughter and she had tender eyes, while Rachel was the younger and was beautiful in form and appearance. [29:16-17]

Q? What arrangement did Laban and Jacob make concerning Jacob's labor?

A. They agreed that Jacob would serve Laban seven years in return for Rachel. [29:18]

Q? Why did the seven years of labor only seem like a few days to Jacob?

A. The seven years of labor seemed only like a few days because of the love Jacob had for Rachel. [29:20]

Q? How did Laban trick Jacob?

A. Laban gave Leah to Jacob, instead of Rachel, the night of the wedding. [29:23-25]

Q? Who did Laban give to Leah, to be her servant?

A. Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah, to be her servant. [29:24]

Q? Why did Laban say he had tricked Jacob?

A. Laban said it was not their custom to give the younger daughter in marriage before the first-born. [29:26]

Q? What arrangement did Laban and Jacob then make concerning Jacob's labor?

A. They agreed that Jacob would serve Laban seven more years in return for Rachel. [29:27]

Q? Who did Laban give to Rachel, to be her servant?

A. Laban gave Bilhah to his daughter Rachel, to be her servant. [29:29]

Q? What did Yahweh do when he saw that Jacob did not love Leah?

A. Yahweh caused Leah to become pregnant, but Rachel was childless. [29:31]

Q? What did Leah hope would happen if she bore sons for Jacob?

A. Leah hoped that Jacob would love her if she bore sons for him. [29:32]

Q? What was the name of Leah's first son?

A. The name of Leah's first son was Reuben. [29:32]

Q? What did Leah say after she bore Judah?

A. After she bore Judah Leah said, "This time I will praise Yahweh." [29:35]

Genesis 30

Q? According to Jacob, why did Rachel have no children?

A. According to Jacob, God had kept Rachel from having children. [30:2]

Q? What did Rachel do in order to have children?

A. Rachel gave Jacob Bilhah her servant so she could have children on Rachel's behalf. [30:3]

Q? Why did Rachel say that she had prevailed against her sister Leah?

A. Rachel said that she had prevailed because Bilhah her servant bore two sons for Jacob. [30:7-8]

Q? What did Leah do when she saw that she had stopped bearing children?

A. Leah gave Jacob Zilpah her servant so she could have children on Leah's behalf. [30:9]

Q? What caused Leah to say, "This is fortunate."?

A. Leah said, "This is fortunate." because Zilpah her servant bore Jacob a son. [30:10-11]

Q? What did Rachel offer Leah in exchange for her son's mandrakes?

A. In exchange for Reuben's mandrakes, Rachel offered to let Leah sleep with Jacob that night [30:14-15]

Q? How many sons did Leah bear for Jacob?

A. Leah bore six sons for Jacob. [30:20]

Q? What caused Rachel to say that her shame had been taken away?

A. When Rachel bore a son for Jacob, she said that her shame had been taken away. [30:23]

Q? What request did Jacob make to Laban after Joseph was born?

A. Jacob requested that Laban let Jacob go with his family back to his own home and country. [30:25-26]

Q? Why did Laban not want to let Jacob go away?

A. Laban had divined that Yahweh had blessed him for Jacob's sake. [30:27]

Q? What wages did Jacob receive for his work for Laban?

A. Jacob took the speckled, spotted, and black sheep, and the speckled and spotted goats from Laban's flock that he tended. [30:32]

Q? How did Laban cheat Jacob concerning Jacob's wages?

A. Laban first removed the animals that Jacob would have taken, before he gave the flock to Jacob to tend. [30:35-36]

Q? What kind of sticks did Jacob peel white streaks into?

A. Jacob peeled white streaks into branches of fresh poplar, almond, and plane trees. [30:37]

Q? What did Jacob do with the peeled sticks?

A. Jacob put the sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks, in front of the watering troughs where they came to drink. [30:38]

Q? What happened when the flocks bred in front of the sticks?

A. When the flocks bred in front of the sticks they produced striped, speckled, and spotted young. [30:39]

Q? What was the result of Jacob's breeding of the animals?

A. The result was that Laban's flock was feebler, and Jacob's flock was stronger. [30:42]

Genesis 31

Q? From where did Laban and his sons believe Jacob had gotten all his wealth?

A. Laban and his sons believed that Jacob had gotten all his wealth from Laban's possessions. [31:1-2]

Q? What instructions did Yahweh give Jacob?

A. Yahweh instructed Jacob to return to the land of his fathers and to his relatives. [31:3]

Q? How had God taken away the cattle of Laban and given them to Jacob?

A. God had caused the animals to bear speckled, and striped young which were Jacob's wages. [31:8-9]

Q? What attitude did Rachel and Leah have toward their father Laban?

A. Rachel and Leah said that Laban treated them as foreigners and had devoured their money. [31:14-15]

Q? What did Rachel do before leaving with Jacob?

A. Rachel stole her father's household gods. [31:19]

Q? How did Jacob deceive Laban at this time?

A. Jacob deceived Laban by not telling Laban that he was leaving. [31:20]

Q? What did Laban do when he was told that Jacob had fled?

A. Laban took his relatives with him and pursued Jacob, overtaking him after seven days. [31:22-23]

Q? What did God tell Laban in a dream?

A. God told Laban to speak neither good or bad to Jacob. [31:24]

Q? Why did Jacob say that he had fled from Laban secretly?

A. Jacob said that he fled secretly because he was afraid that Laban would take his daughters from him by force. [31:31]

Q? What did Jacob say when Laban accused him of stealing his household gods?

A. Jacob said that whoever stole Laban's household gods would not continue to live. [31:32]

Q? Why did Laban not find his household gods among Jacob's possessions?

A. Laban did not find his household gods because Rachel sat on them and then said that she could not stand up since she was having her period. [31:34-35]

Q? How long had Jacob worked for Laban, and how many times had Laban changed his wages?

A. Jacob had worked for Laban twenty years, and Laban had changed his wages ten times. [31:41]

Q? How did Laban show that he still thought of Jacob's possessions as his own?

A. Laban said that all that he saw of Jacob's possessions was his. [31:43]

Q? How did Jacob and Laban mark the place of their covenant?

A. Jacob and Laban marked the place of their covenant by making a pile of stones there. [31:46]

Q? What covenant did Jacob and Laban make?

A. Jacob and Laban each agreed to not pass beyond the pile of stones to do the other harm. [31:52]

Q? Who was declared as witness between Jacob and Laban to ensure the covenant would be kept?

A. God was declared as witness between Jacob and Laban to ensure the covenant would be kept. [31:49-50]

Q? What were the pile and the pillar for?

A. The pile and pillar were both witnesses to the covenant which said neither Laban nor Jacob would pass the pile or pillar to do one another harm. [31:51-52]

Q? What did Jacob do to show that he agreed to the covenant?

A. To show that he agreed with Laban about the covenant Jacob swore by God, who his father Isaac feared. [31:53]

Q? What did Laban do the next morning?

A. Laban rose, kissed his grandsons and daughters, blessed them, and returned home. [31:55]

Genesis 32

Q? To whom did Jacob send a message on his way toward Canaan?

A. Jacob sent a message to his brother Esau on his way toward Canaan. [32:3]

Q? For what purpose did Jacob send this message?

A. Jacob desired to find favor in Esau's sight. [32:5]

Q? What was Jacob's reaction when he heard Esau was coming with four hundred men, and what did he do?

A. Jacob was afraid, so he divided his people into two groups so that if Esau attacked one group, the other could escape. [32:7-8]

Q? What was Jacob's request to Yahweh?

A. Jacob asked Yahweh to deliver him from the hand of Esau. [32:11]

Q? Of what promise did Jacob remind Yahweh?

A. Jacob reminded Yahweh that he had promised to prosper Jacob, and to make his descendants like the sand of the sea. [32:12]

Q? What did Jacob think he could accomplish by sending gifts to his brother Esau?

A. Jacob thought that perhaps he could appease Esau with the gifts that he sent to Esau so that later, when Jacob saw him, Esau would receive him. [32:20]

Q? How did Jacob end up being alone that night?

A. He took his wives, servant women, and children across the ford of the Jabbok. [32:22]

Q? What did Jacob do that night until daybreak?

A. Jacob wrestled with a man until daybreak. [32:24]

Q? What did the man do when he could not defeat Jacob?

A. The man struck Jacob's hip and dislocated it. [32:25]

Q? What did Jacob demand before he would let the man go?

A. Jacob demanded that the man bless him. [32:26]

Q? What did the man say Jacob would there after be called?

A. The man said that Jacob's name would now be Israel. [32:28]

Q? Who did Jacob say he had seen face to face that night?

A. Jacob said he had seen God face to face that night. [32:30]

Q? What physical problem did Jacob continue to have after that night?

A. Jacob limped because of his hip after that night. [32:32]

Genesis 33

Q? As Esau was coming to Jacob, in what order did Jacob put his wives behind him?

A. Jacob put his female servants first, then Leah, and then Rachel. [33:2-3]

Q? What did Jacob do as he came near his brother?

A. Jacob bowed toward the ground seven times as he came near his brother. [33:3]

Q? What did Esau do when he came to his brother?

A. Esau ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him. [33:4]

Q? What did Esau tell Jacob to do with the gifts he had sent ahead to Esau?

A. Esau told Jacob to keep them for himself, since he had enough. [33:9]

Q? What two reasons did Jacob give Esau to accept his gifts?

A. Jacob said that because God had dealt graciously with him, and because he had enough, Esau should accept his gifts. [33:11]

Q? Why did Jacob say he wanted Esau to go ahead, while he traveled more slowly?

A. Jacob said he wanted Esau to go ahead because the flocks would die if they were driven too fast. [33:12-14]

Q? Where did Jacob say he was going to bring his family and his flocks?

A. Jacob said he was going to bring his family and flocks to Esau in Seir. [33:14]

Q? To where did Jacob travel, where he built himself a house?

A. Jacob traveled to Succoth, where he built himself a house. [33:17]

Q? To where did Jacob travel, where he bought a piece of ground?

A. Jacob traveled to Shechem, where he bought a piece of ground. [33:18-19]

Genesis 34

Q? What did Shechem, the son of Hamor, do when he saw Dinah, Leah's daughter?

A. Shechem grabbed Dinah, assaulted her, and forced himself on her. [34:2]

Q? What did Jacob do at first when he heard about what happened to Dinah?

A. Jacob held his peace until his sons came in from the field. [34:5]

Q? What was the reaction of Jacob's sons when they heard what Shechem had done to Dinah?

A. Jacob's sons were very angry. [34:7]

Q? What did Hamor, the father of Shechem, want Jacob to do?

A. Hamor wanted Jacob to give Dinah to Shechem as his wife, and to allow Jacob's family to intermarry with Hamor's family. [34:8-9]

Q? What did Shechem say he was willing to do to have Dinah as his wife?

A. Shechem said he would pay as great a bride price as Jacob would name. [34:12]

Q? In what way did the sons of Jacob answer Shechem, and why?

A. The sons of Jacob answered Shechem deceitfully, because Shechem had defiled Dinah. [34:13]

Q? What requirement did the sons of Jacob make to Hamor before they would agree to intermarry with Hamor's family?

A. The sons of Jacob required that all the males in Hamor's family be circumcised. [34:15]

Q? When speaking to the men of their city, what did Hamor and Shechem say would be theirs if they intermarried with Jacob's family?

A. They said that all of Jacob's livestock, property, and animals would be theirs if they intermarried with Jacob's family. [34:23]

Q? How did the men of Hamor's city respond when asked if they were willing to be circumcised?

A. The men of Hamor's city listened to Hamor and Shechem and every male was circumcised. [34:24]

Q? What did Simeon and Levi do on the third day after the males from Hamor's family had been circumcised?

A. Simeon and Levi killed all the males in Hamor's city. [34:25]

Q? What then did all of the sons of Jacob do?

A. All of the sons of Jacob looted the city, took all the wealth, and captured the children and wives. [34:27-29]

Q? How did Jacob respond when he learned about what Simeon and Levi had done?

A. Jacob said that Simeon and Levi had brought trouble on him because the inhabitants of the land might now destroy him and his household. [34:30]

Q? Why did Simeon and Levi say they had done it?

A. Simeon and Levi said they had done it because Shechem had treated their sister Dinah like a prostitute. [34:31]

Genesis 35

Q? What did God tell Jacob to go and do?

A. God told Jacob to go to Bethel and to build an altar to God. [35:1]

Q? What did Jacob then tell the people of his household to do?

A. Jacob told them to put away their foreign gods, to purify themselves, and to change their clothes. [35:2]

Q? As they traveled, why did the people of the cities around Jacob and his household not pursue them?

A. The people of the cities around them did not pursue them because they were afraid of God. [35:5]

Q? Why did Jacob call the place they came to “Elbethel”?

A. Jacob called it “Elbethel” because it was the place God had revealed himself to Jacob when Jacob was fleeing from Esau. [35:7]

Q? What new name did God give Jacob?

A. God gave Jacob the new name Israel. [35:10]

Q? What promise did God reaffirm to Jacob?

A. God reaffirmed the promise that Jacob would become a company of nations with kings among his descendants, and that the land God had promised to Abraham and Isaac would be given to him and his descendants. [35:12]

Q? What happened to Rachel during her labor with Benjamin?

A. Rachel died during her labor with Benjamin. [35:18-19]

Q? Israel heard about what thing that Reuben had done?

A. Israel heard that Reuben had slept with Bilhah, Israel's concubine. [35:22]

Q? How many sons did Jacob have?

A. Jacob had twelve sons. [35:22]

Q? Which sons of Jacob were born from Rachel?

A. Joseph and Benjamin were born from Rachel. [35:24]

Q? How many years did Isaac live?

A. Isaac lived one hundred eighty years. [35:28]

Q? Who buried Isaac?

A. Esau and Jacob buried Isaac. [35:29]

Genesis 36

Q? By what other name are the descendants of Esau called?

A. The descendants of Esau are also called Edom. [36:1]

Q? From where did Esau get his wives?

A. Esau took his wives from the Canaanites. [36:2]

Q? Why did Esau move away from his brother Jacob?

A. Esau moved away from his brother Jacob because the land could not support both of them as their possessions were too many. [36:6-7]

Q? Where did Esau settle?

A. Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. [36:8]

Q? What was the name of the son born by Timna, a concubine of Esau's firstborn son Eliphaz?

A. The name of the son born by Timna was Amalek. [36:12,15-16]

Q? Who was the father of the inhabitants of the land in which Edom lived?

A. Seir the Horite was the father of the inhabitants of the land in which Edom lived. [36:20]

Q? What did the people of Edom have before Israel had them?

A. The people of Edom had kings before any king reigned over the Israelites. [36:31]

Q? Who was the father of the Edomites?

A. Esau was the father of the Edomites. [36:43]

Genesis 37

Q? Where did Jacob settle to live?

A. Jacob lived in the land of Canaan. [37:1]

Q? What did Joseph bring to his father Jacob while guarding the flock with his brothers?

A. Joseph brought to his father an unfavorable report about his brothers. [37:2]

Q? How did Israel show that he loved Joseph more than his other sons?

A. Israel made Joseph a luxurious tunic. [37:3]

Q? What did Joseph's brothers think about Joseph?

A. Joseph's brothers hated him and would not speak to him cordially. [37:4]

Q? What did Joseph see in his first dream?

A. Joseph saw his sheaf stand upright while his brothers' sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. [37:7]

Q? What did Joseph's brothers think about Joseph after he told them about his first dream?

A. Joseph's brothers hated him even more. [37:8]

Q? What did Joseph see in his second dream?

A. Joseph saw the sun, moon, and eleven stars bow down to him. [37:9]

Q? In Joseph's second dream, what did the sun, moon, and stars represent?

A. The sun, moon, and stars represented Joseph's father, mother, and brothers. [37:10]

Q? What did Jacob send Joseph out of the valley of Hebron to do?

A. Jacob sent Joseph out of the valley of Hebron to see if it was well with his brothers, and to bring Jacob word. [37:14]

Q? What did Joseph's brothers plan to do when they saw Joseph coming?

A. Joseph's brothers planned to kill Joseph and cast him into one of the pits. [37:20]

Q? What suggestion did Reuben make to his brothers, and why?

A. Reuben suggested that the brothers only throw Joseph into a pit, so that he could rescue Joseph later. [37:22]

Q? Who did Joseph's brothers sell Joseph to and for how much?

A. Joseph's brothers sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.[37:28]

Q? To where was Joseph taken?

A. Joseph was taken to Egypt. [37:28]

Q? How did Joseph's brothers make it appear that Joseph was dead?

A. Joseph's brothers killed a goat and dipped Joseph's coat in the blood, then gave the coat to Jacob. [37:31-32]

Q? What did Jacob do after he concluded Joseph was dead?

A. Jacob tore his garments, wore sackcloth, and mourned his son for many days. [37:34]

Q? To whom was Joseph sold in Egypt?

A. Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, in Egypt. [37:36]

Genesis 38

Q? From whom did Judah take a wife?

A. Judah took a wife from a Canaanite man. [38:2]

Q? What did Yahweh do with Judah's first son Er, and why?

A. Yahweh killed Er because he was wicked. [38:7]

Q? How did Judah's second son Onan not fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to raise up a child for Er?

A. Onan would spill his semen on the ground when he made love to Tamar. [38:9]

Q? What did Yahweh do with Judah's second son Onan, and why?

A. Yahweh killed Onan because what he did was evil. [38:10]

Q? What promise did Judah then make to Tamar?

A. Judah promised Tamar his third son Shelah as a husband when Shelah grew up. [38:11]

Q? After a long time, why did Judah need to be comforted?

A. Judah was comforted because his wife died. [38:12]

Q? What did Tamar do when she heard that Judah was going to Timnah?

A. Tamar took off her clothing of widowhood, put on a veil and wrapped herself, and sat by the road to Timnah. [38:14]

Q? Why did Tamar do this?

A. Tamar did this because Judah's third son Shelah had grown up, but she had not been given to him as a wife. [38:14]

Q? What did Tamar obtain as a pledge for payment before Judah made love to her?

A. Judah gave Tamar his seal, cord, and staff as a pledge of payment. [38:18]

Q? When Judah tried to retrieve his pledge by paying the prostitute with a young goat, what did he learn?

A. Judah learned that there was no temple prostitute in that area. [38:21]

Q? What did Judah want to do when he learned that Tamar was pregnant?

A. Judah wanted to burn Tamar because she had become pregnant as a prostitute. [38:24]

Q? What did Tamar do when she was brought out to Judah?

A. She said that she was pregnant by the man who owned the seal, cord, and staff she had. [38:25]

Q? How did Judah respond when he saw his seal, cord, and staff?

A. Judah said that Tamar was more right than he was, because he had not given Tamar to Shelah as a wife. [38:26]

Q? How many children did Tamar bear?

A. Tamar had twin sons. [38:27]

Q? What did the midwife do when one of Tamar's twins put his hand out from Tamar's womb?

A. When one of Tamar's twins put his hand out from Tamar's womb The midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his hand and said, "This one came out first." [38:28]

Q? What were the names of the two brothers that Tamar birthed?

A. The names of the two brothers that Tamar birthed were Perez and Zerah. [38:29-30]

Genesis 39

Q? Who bought Joseph in Egypt?

A. Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, bought Joseph in Egypt. [39:1]

Q? Why was Joseph prosperous in Egypt?

A. Joseph was prosperous because Yahweh was with him. [39:3-4]

Q? What did Potiphar put under Joseph's care?

A. Potiphar put everything he had under Joseph's care. [39:6]

Q? What did Potiphar's wife ask Joseph to do?

A. Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to make love to her. [39:7]

Q? How did Joseph respond to Potiphar's wife's request?

A. Joseph refused and said he could not commit this great wickedness and sin against God. [39:8-9]

Q? What did Joseph do when Potiphar's wife caught him by his clothes?

A. Joseph left his clothing in her hand and fled outside. [39:12]

Q? What accusation did Potiphar's wife make against Joseph?

A. She accused him of trying to make love to her against her will. [39:14-15]

Q? What did Potiphar do when he heard the accusation against Joseph?

A. Potiphar became very angry and put Joseph in prison. [39:19-20]

Q? At this time, what did Yahweh show to Joseph?

A. Yahweh showed covenant faithfulness to Joseph at this time. [39:21]

Q? What did the prison warden put under Joseph's care?

A. The prison warden put all the prisoners under Joseph's care. [39:22]

Q? What was the result of everything Joseph did, and why?

A. Everything Joseph did, Yahweh prospered. [39:23]

Genesis 40

Q? Why did the king of Egypt put his cupbearer and his baker in prison?

A. He put them in prison because they offended him. [40:1]

Q? What happened to the cupbearer and the baker on the same night?

A. The cupbearer and the baker each dreamed a dream the same night. [40:5]

Q? Why were the cupbearer and baker both sad the next morning?

A. They were both sad because no one could interpret their dreams. [40:7-8]

Q? Who did Joseph say could give the interpretation of the dreams?

A. Joseph said that God could give the interpretation of the dreams. [40:8]

Q? What did Joseph say was the interpretation of the cupbearer's dream?

A. Joseph said that the dream meant that within three days Pharaoh would restore the cupbearer to his office. [40:12-13]

Q? What request did Joseph make to the cupbearer after giving the interpretation of his dream?

A. Joseph requested that the cupbearer remember him, mention him to Pharaoh, and bring him out of the prison. [40:14]

Q? What did Joseph say was the interpretation of the baker's dream?

A. Joseph said that the dream meant that within three days Pharaoh would hang the baker on a tree. [40:18-19]

Q? What special event occurred three days later?

A. Pharaoh's birthday was three days later. [40:20]

Q? What did Pharaoh do with the cupbearer and the baker on that day?

A. Pharaoh restored the cupbearer, but he hanged the baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. [40:21-22]

Q? Did the cupbearer remember Joseph's request to him?

A. No, the cupbearer did not remember to help Joseph, but forgot about him. [40:23]

Genesis 41

Q? In Pharaoh's first dream, what did the seven thin cows do to the seven fat cows?

A. The seven thin cows ate the seven fat cows. [41:4]

Q? In Pharaoh's second dream, what did the seven thin ears of grain do to the seven full ears?

A. The seven thin ears swallowed up the seven full ears. [41:7]

Q? How did the magicians and wise men of Pharaoh interpret his dreams?

A. The magicians and wise men of Pharaoh could not interpret Pharaoh's dreams. [41:8]

Q? What did the chief cupbearer tell Pharaoh about Joseph?

A. The chief cupbearer told Pharaoh that a young Hebrew man had correctly interpreted his dream and the dream of another fellow when they were in custody. [41:12-13]

Q? Who did Joseph say would interpret Pharaoh's dream?

A. Joseph said that God would answer Pharaoh's dream with favor. [41:16]

Q? What did Joseph say God was declaring to Pharaoh?

A. Joseph said that God was declaring to Pharaoh what God was about to do. [41:25]

Q? What did the seven good cows and the seven good heads in the dreams represent?

A. The seven good cows and heads represented seven years of abundance. [41:26]

Q? What did the seven thin cows and the seven thin heads in the dreams represent?

A. The seven thin cows and heads represented seven years of famine. [41:27]

Q? According to Joseph, why was Pharaoh given two dreams?

A. Pharaoh was given two dreams because the matter had been established by God, and God would soon do it. [41:32]

Q? What fraction of the crops of Egypt did Joseph advise Pharaoh to take in the seven abundant years

A. Joseph advised Pharaoh appoint a man to take a fifth of the crops in the seven abundant years. [41:34]

Q? What did Pharaoh say was in Joseph?

A. Pharaoh said that the Spirit of God was in Joseph. [41:38]

Q? What position of authority did Pharaoh give Joseph?

A. Pharaoh gave Joseph authority over Pharaoh's house and over all the land of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. [41:40-41]

Q? How much grain did Joseph store up in the seven years of abundance?

A. Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea, an amount beyond counting. [41:48-49]

Q? What were the names of Joseph's two sons born before the famine?

A. Joseph's sons were named Manasseh and Ephraim. [41:50-52]

Q? How widespread was the seven years of famine?

A. The seven years of famine was in all lands. [41:54]

Q? What did Joseph do when the people of Egypt cried to Pharaoh for food?

A. Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold food to the Egyptians. [41:55-56]

Q? Who came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph?

A. All the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph. [41:57]

Genesis 42

Q? Who did Jacob send down to Egypt to buy grain?

A. Joseph's ten brothers, without Benjamin, went down to Egypt to buy grain. [42:1-4]

Q? What did Joseph's brothers do when they came to Joseph to buy grain?

A. Joseph's brothers bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. [42:6]

Q? What did Joseph do when he recognized his brothers?

A. Joseph disguised himself and spoke harshly with his brothers. [42:7]

Q? What accusation did Joseph make against his brothers?

A. Joseph accused his brothers of being spies. [42:9]

Q? Where did Joseph's brothers say their youngest brother was?

A. Joseph's brothers said their youngest brother was with his father in the land of Canaan. [42:13]

Q? Where did Joseph's brothers say their other missing brother was?

A. Joseph's brothers said their other missing brother was no longer alive. [42:13]

Q? What test did Joseph give his brothers to demonstrate they were not spies?

A. Joseph said the brothers would not leave Egypt, unless their youngest brother came to Egypt. [42:15]

Q? Where did Joseph put the brothers and for how long?

A. Joseph put the brothers in custody for three days. [42:17]

Q? What did Joseph tell the brothers to do in order to live?

A. Joseph told them to let one of the brothers be confined in prison, while the others carried grain to Canaan and brought back the youngest brother. [42:18-20]

Q? Why did Joseph's brothers believe this trouble had come upon them?

A. They believed that the blood of Joseph was being required of them for what they had done to Joseph. [42:21-22]

Q? What did Joseph do when he heard his brothers talk about what they had done to him?

A. When Joseph heard his brothers talking about what they had done to him, Joseph turned from them and wept. [42:24]

Q? What did Joseph have put back in each brother's sack?

A. Joseph had each brother's money put back in his sack. [42:25]

Q? How did the brothers react when they learned that one brother's sack had his money in it?

A. Their hearts sank and they spoke trembling to one another. [42:28]

Q? Who did the brothers blame for their current problems?

A. The brothers blamed God, asking why God had done this to them. [42:28]

Q? What did the brothers and Jacob learn when they emptied all the sacks?

A. They learned that every man's money was in his sack. [42:35]

Q? What was Jacob afraid would happen because of their situation?

A. Jacob was afraid that Simeon and Benjamin would be taken away from him. [42:36]

Q? What oath did Reuben make to Jacob?

A. Reuben swore to bring Benjamin back to Jacob from Egypt; otherwise, Reuben's two sons could be killed. [42:37]

Q? Did Jacob allow Reuben to take Benjamin to Egypt?

A. No, Jacob did not allow Reuben to take Benjamin to Egypt. [42:38]

Q? What did Jacob say would happen to him if Benjamin died?

A. Jacob said he would go down with sorrow to Sheol if Benjamin died. [42:38]

Genesis 43

Q? Why did Israel tell his sons to go again and buy some food in Egypt?

A. The famine was severe and they had eaten the grain they had brought from Egypt on the first journey. [43:1-2]

Q? What did Judah say they must have in order to go down to Egypt again?

A. Judah said they must have their brother Benjamin in order to go down to Egypt. [43:3-5]

Q? What oath did Judah make to Israel his father?

A. Judah said that if he did not bring Benjamin back, he would bear the blame forever. [43:9]

Q? What did Israel tell the brothers to take with them to Egypt?

A. Israel told the brothers to take some of the best products of the land, and to take double the money. [43:11-12]

Q? For what did Israel ask God regarding the journey?

A. Israel asked God to give the brothers mercy in Egypt, so that all the brothers would be released. [43:14]

Q? How did the brothers respond when they were brought to Joseph's house, and why?

A. The brothers were afraid they would be arrested and taken as slaves because of the money left in their bags on the first journey. [43:18]

Q? What did the brothers tell the steward of Joseph's house?

A. The brothers told the steward they had brought back the money left in their sacks, and money to buy food. [43:21-22]

Q? From where did the steward say the money left in their sacks had come?

A. The steward said the money left in their sacks had come from their God. [43:23]

Q? What did the brothers do when Joseph came home?

A. The brothers brought the gifts into the house, and bowed down before Joseph to the ground. [43:26]

Q? About whom did Joseph ask the brothers?

A. Joseph asked the brothers about the welfare of their father. [43:27]

Q? Why did Joseph hurry to go out of the room, and what did he do after he left?

A. Joseph hurried out of the room because he was deeply moved about Benjamin, and he went to his room and wept. [43:30]

Q? Why did the Egyptians and the Hebrews eat separately?

A. It was detestable to the Egyptians to eat with the Hebrews. [43:32]

Q? How were the brothers arranged at the table?

A. The brothers were arranged at the table according to their birthright and age. [43:33]

Q? What was unusual about the portions of food the brothers received?

A. Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of his brothers. [43:34]

Genesis 44

Q? What did Joseph tell his steward to do with the brothers' sacks before they left?

A. Joseph told his steward to fill the brothers' sacks with food, to put their money in the sacks, and to put his silver cup in the youngest's sack. [44:1-2]

Q? Basically what did Joseph tell the steward say to the brothers when he overtook them outside the city?

A. Joseph told the steward to ask them why they had returned evil for good and accused them of stealing Joseph's cup. [44:4-5]

Q? What did the brothers swear they would do if any one of them had stolen Joseph's cup?

A. The brothers said the one found with the cup would die, and the others would become slaves. [44:9]

Q? What punishment did the steward say he would require if the cup was stolen?

A. The steward said that the one with whom the cup was found would be his slave, and the others would be innocent. [44:10]

Q? What did the steward find, and how did the brothers react?

A. The steward found the cup in Benjamin's sack, and the brothers tore their clothes. [44:12-13]

Q? What did the brothers do when they came back to Joseph in his house?

A. The brothers bowed before Joseph to the ground. [44:14]

Q? Who did Judah say had found out the iniquity of the brothers?

A. Judah said that God had found out their iniquity. [44:16]

Q? What did Judah say all the brothers would now become?

A. Judah said all the brothers would now become Joseph's slaves. [44:16]

Q? What punishment did Joseph say he would require of the brothers?

A. Joseph said that the man in whose hand the cup was found would be his slave, and the rest could go in peace. [44:17]

Q? What reasons did Judah give for why his father loved the youngest brother?

A. Judah said that the youngest brother was the child of his father's old age, and the only child left of his mother. [44:20]

Q? What did the brothers worry would happen to their father if the youngest left him?

A. The brothers worried their father would die if the youngest left him. [44:22]

Q? Why did Judah say the brothers were forced to bring Benjamin with them to Egypt?

A. Judah said they were forced to bring Benjamin because Joseph had said that unless the youngest brother comes, they would not see Joseph's face. [44:23,26]

Q? What did Israel think had happened to Joseph?

A. Israel thought that surely Joseph had been torn in pieces. [44:28]

Q? What did Israel say would happen to him if Benjamin were taken from him?

A. Israel said that the brothers would bring his gray hair with sorrow to Sheol. [44:29]

Q? What did Judah say would happen to his father if they returned without Benjamin?

A. Judah said that his father would die. [44:31]

Q? What guarantee for Benjamin did Judah say he had become?

A. Judah said that if he did not return Benjamin to his father, he would bear the guilt forever. [44:32]

Q? What did Judah ask Joseph to do so that Benjamin could return to his father?

A. Judah asked Joseph to make him Joseph's slave, so that Benjamin could return to his father. [44:33]

Genesis 45

Q? What did Joseph do as he made himself known to his brothers, which the Egyptians heard?

A. Joseph wept loudly as he made himself known to his brothers. [45:1-2]

Q? How did the brothers react when Joseph revealed himself to them?

A. The brothers could not answer Joseph for they were shocked. [45:3]

Q? According to Joseph, why did God send Joseph to Egypt?

A. God sent Joseph to Egypt to preserve life, and to preserve his family as a remnant in the earth. [45:7]

Q? What had God made Joseph in the land of Egypt?

A. God had made Joseph father to Pharaoh, lord of all Pharaoh's house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. [45:8]

Q? How did Joseph plan to take care of his family?

A. Joseph told his family to come and live in the land of Goshen where he would provide for them. [45:9-11]

Q? What did Joseph tell his brothers to hurry and do?

A. Joseph told his brothers to hurry and bring his father to Egypt. [45:13]

Q? How did Pharaoh react when he heard that Joseph's brothers had come to Egypt?

A. Pharaoh was very pleased, and he told Joseph to tell his brothers to bring their father and their households to live in the good of the land of Egypt. [45:16-18]

Q? Who received extra gifts and provisions for the trip?

A. Benjamin received three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing, and Israel received twenty loaded donkeys. [45:21-23]

Q? How did Israel react when he heard that Joseph was alive and ruler over all the land of Egypt?

A. Israel's heart was astonished, for he did not believe the brothers when they told him. [45:26]

Q? What did Israel say he wanted to do before he died?

A. Israel said he wanted to see Joseph before he died. [45:28]

Genesis 46

Q? What did Israel do in Beersheba?

A. Israel offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. [46:1]

Q? What promises did God make to Israel in Beersheba?

A. God promised to make Israel a great nation, to go with Israel to Egypt, to bring Israel up again from Egypt, and to have Joseph close his eyes. [46:3-4]

Q? Who went to Egypt with Israel?

A. Israel and all his descendants with him went to Egypt. [46:5-7]

Q? Which two sons of Judah died in the land of Canaan?

A. Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. [46:12]

Q? How many persons of the house of Jacob came to Egypt?

A. Seventy persons of the house of Jacob came to Egypt. [46:27]

Q? What did Joseph do to meet his father?

A. Joseph went up with his chariot and met his father Israel in Goshen. [46:29]

Q? What did Joseph do when he saw his father?

A. Joseph hugged his father's neck and wept a long time. [46:29]

Q? What did Joseph tell the brothers to say to Pharaoh concerning their occupation?

A. The brothers were to tell Pharaoh that they were keepers of cattle from their youth. [46:34]

Genesis 47

Q? What did the five brothers of Joseph tell Pharaoh their occupation was?

A. The five brothers told Pharaoh their occupation was shepherding. [47:3]

Q? What kind of residents did the brothers say they were in the land of Egypt?

A. The brothers said they were temporary residents in the land of Egypt. [47:4]

Q? What did Pharaoh tell Joseph to do with Joseph's family?

A. Pharaoh told Joseph to settle Joseph's family in the best region, the land of Goshen. [47:6]

Q? How long had Jacob lived when he met Pharaoh?

A. Jacob had lived one hundred and thirty years. [47:9]

Q? How long did Jacob say his life was compared to his ancestors?

A. Jacob said his life was not as long as his ancestors' lives. [47:9]

Q? What did Jacob do for Pharaoh when he met him and when he went out from his presence?

A. Jacob blessed Pharaoh when he met him and when he went out from his presence. [47:7,10]

Q? What was Joseph able to do by selling grain?

A. Joseph was able to gather up all the money in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan. [47:14]

Q? What was Joseph then able to do by exchanging food with the Egyptians?

A. Joseph was able to exchange food for all the livestock of the Egyptians. [47:16-17]

Q? After the money and livestock were all given to Pharaoh in exchange for food what did the people of Egypt offer Pharaoh in exchange for more food?

A. The people of Egypt offered their land and themselves as servants of Pharaoh in exchange for more food. [47:18-19]

Q? What part of the whole harvest did Joseph require to be given to Pharaoh?

A. Joseph required one fifth of the harvest to be given to Pharaoh. [47:24]

Q? In what ways did the people of Israel prosper in the land of Egypt?

A. The people of Israel gained possessions in the land of Egypt, and they were fruitful and multiplied rapidly. [47:27]

Q? At what age did Jacob die?

A. Jacob died at the age of one hundred forty-seven. [47:28]

Q? What did Israel ask Joseph to swear he would do?

A. Israel asked Joseph to swear he would bury Israel in his forefathers' burial place. [47:30]

Genesis 48

Q? What message did Joseph hear about his father, and what did he then do?

A. Joseph heard that his father was sick, so he took with him his two sons. [48:1]

Q? What promises from God did Jacob recall to Joseph?

A. Jacob recalled that God promised him he would be fruitful and multiply, he would be made an assembly of nations, and the land of Canaan would be an everlasting possession of his descendants. [48:4]

Q? How did Jacob say he would consider the two sons of Joseph in the inheritance?

A. Jacob said he would consider the two sons of Joseph as his own. [48:5-6]

Q? Why did Israel not recognize Joseph's two sons?

A. Israel did not recognize Joseph's two sons because his eyes were failing because of his age. [48:8-10]

Q? Who was the first-born of Joseph's sons?

A. Manasseh was the first-born of Joseph's sons. [48:14]

Q? Upon whom did Israel put his right hand, and upon whom his left hand?

A. Israel put his right hand on Ephraim, and his left hand on Manasseh. [48:14]

Q? Why did Joseph try to exchange the position of Israel's hands?

A. Joseph expected Israel's right hand to be on Manasseh because he was the first-born. [48:17-18]

Q? Why did Israel refuse to exchange the position of his hands on the two sons of Joseph?

A. Israel refused because the younger brother would be greater than the first-born. [48:19]

Q? What blessing did Israel say the people of Israel would pronounce?

A. Israel said the people of Israel would pronounce the blessing, “May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh”. [48:20]

Q? What did Israel say would happen to Joseph?

A. Israel said that Joseph would be brought back to the land of his fathers. [48:21]

Genesis 49

Q? For what reason did Jacob gather his sons together?

A. Jacob gathered his sons together to tell them what would happen to them and their descendants in the future. [49:1]

Q? What positive attributes did Reuben have?

A. Reuben was outstanding in dignity and power. [49:3]

Q? Why would Reuben not have the pre-eminence even though he was the firstborn?

A. Reuben would not have the pre-eminence because he defiled his father's bed. [49:4]

Q? What did Jacob curse about Simeon and Levi?

A. Jacob cursed the fierce and cruel anger of Simeon and Levi. [49:7]

Q? What did Jacob say his other sons would do before Judah?

A. Jacob said his others sons would bow down before Judah. [49:8]

Q? What promises about the future were made to Judah?

A. Judah was promised that the sceptre would not depart from him until Shiloh came, and that the nations would obey him. [49:10]

Q? Where did Jacob say the descendants of Zebulun would live?

A. Jacob said the descendants of Zebulun would live by the shore of the sea. [49:13]

Q? What animal did Jacob say Dan would be like?

A. Jacob said Dan would be like a poisonous snake. [49:17]

Q? For what did Jacob say Asher would be known?

A. Jacob said Asher would be known for providing royal delicacies. [49:20]

Q? What kind of plant did Jacob say Joseph would be like?

A. Jacob said Joseph would be like a fruitful bough whose branches climb over a wall. [49:22]

Q? Who did Jacob say would keep Joseph's bow steady and his hands skillful?

A. Jacob said the hands of the mighty one of Jacob, the Rock of Israel would keep Joseph's bow steady and his hands skillful. [49:24]

Q? Who was already buried in the place where Jacob wished to be buried?

A. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were already buried there. [49:31]

Q? What did Jacob do after he gave his blessings and instructions to his sons?

A. Jacob breathed his last and went to his people. [49:33]

Genesis 50

Q? What did Joseph do with Israel's body after Israel died?

A. Joseph had Israel's body embalmed. [50:2-3]

Q? What request did Joseph make to Pharaoh about the burial of his father, and why did he make this request?

A. Joseph requested to be able to go to the land of Canaan to bury his father, as his father had made him swear. [50:4-6]

Q? Who went with Joseph to bury Israel?

A. All the officials of Pharaoh, the courtiers of his household, the senior officials of Egypt, Joseph's household, Joseph's brothers, his father's household, and chariots and horsemen all went with Joseph. [50:7-9]

Q? What did the Canaanites say when they saw Joseph and those with him?

A. The Canaanites said that this was a very sad occasion for the Egyptians. [50:11]

Q? Where did Joseph and his brothers go after burying their father?

A. Joseph and his brothers returned into Egypt. [50:14]

Q? About what were Joseph's brothers worried after Israel died?

A. Joseph's brothers were worried that Joseph would repay them for all the evil the brothers had done to Joseph. [50:15]

Q? What did the brothers ask Joseph to do regarding the wrongs they had committed against Joseph?

A. The brothers asked Joseph to forgive them for the wrongs they had committed against Joseph. [50:17]

Q? What did Joseph's brothers do when they came to Joseph?

A. When they came to Joseph, Joseph's brothers fell down before him. [50:18]

Q? What good did Joseph say God had worked through the evil deeds of his brothers?

A. Joseph said God had worked the good of preserving the lives of many people. [50:20]

Q? How long did Joseph live?

A. Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. [50:22]

Q? What did Joseph say was about to happen to him?

A. Joseph said that he was about to die. [50:24]

Q? What promise did Joseph say God would fulfill for Israel's descendants?

A. Joseph said God would come to the people and lead them up to the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [50:24]

Q? What did Joseph make the people of Israel swear they would do?

A. Joseph made them swear they would carry Joseph's bones from Egypt when they left Egypt. [50:25]

Q? What happened to Joseph's body after he died?

A. Joseph's body was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt. [50:26]

translationWords

twelve tribes of Israel

Definition:

The term, “twelve tribes of Israel” refers to the twelve sons of Jacob and their descendants.

- Jacob was Abraham’s grandson. God later changed Jacob’s name to Israel.
- These are the names of the tribes: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin.
- The descendants of Levi did not inherit any land in Canaan because they were a tribe of priests who were set apart to serve God and his people.
- Joseph received a double inheritance of land, which was passed on to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.
- There are several places in the Bible where the list of the twelve tribes are slightly different. Sometimes Levi, Joseph, or Dan is left out of the list and sometimes Joseph’s two sons Ephraim and Manasseh are included in the list.

(See also: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [tribe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Abel

Facts:

Abel was Adam and Eve's second son. He was Cain's younger brother.

- Abel was a shepherd.
- Abel sacrificed some of his animals as an offering to God.
- God was pleased with Abel and his offerings.
- Adam and Eve's firstborn son Cain murdered Abel.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Adam](#), [Cain](#), [Eve](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [shepherd](#), [to shepherd](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Abimelech

Facts:

Abimelech was a Philistine king over the region of Gerar during the time when Abraham and Isaac were living in the land of Canaan.

- Abraham deceived King Abimelech by telling him that Sarah was his sister rather than his wife.
- Abraham and Abimelech made an agreement regarding ownership of wells at Beersheba.
- Many years later, Isaac also deceived Abimelech and the other men of Gerar by saying that Rebekah was his sister, not his wife.
- King Abimelech rebuked Abraham and then Isaac for lying to him.
- Another man by the name of Abimelech was a son of Gideon and a brother of Jotham. Some translations may use a slightly different spelling of his name to make it clear that he is a different person from King Abimelech.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Beersheba](#), [Gerar](#), , [Gideon](#), [Jotham](#), [Philistines](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

abomination, abominable

Definition:

The term “abomination” is used to refer to something that causes disgust or extreme dislike.

- The Egyptians considered the Hebrew people to be an “abomination.” This means that the Egyptians disliked the Hebrews and didn’t want to associate with them or be near them.
- Some of the things that the Bible calls “an abomination to Yahweh” include: lying, pride, sacrificing humans, worship of idols, murder, and sexual sins such as adultery and homosexual acts.
- In teaching his disciples about the end times, Jesus referred to a prophecy by the prophet Daniel about an “abomination of desolation” that would be set up as a rebellion against God, defiling his place of worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “abomination” could also be translated by, “something God hates” or “something disgusting” or “disgusting practice” or “very evil action.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the phrase, “is an abomination to” could include: “is greatly hated by” or “is disgusting to” or “is totally unacceptable to” or “causes deep disgust.”
- The phrase “abomination of desolation” could be translated as, “defiling object that causes people to be greatly harmed” or “disgusting thing that causes great sorrow.”

(See also: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [Daniel](#), [desecrate](#), [desolate](#), [desolation](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Abraham, Abram

Facts:

Abram was a Chaldean man from the city of Ur who was chosen by God to be the forefather of the Israelites. God changed his name to “Abraham.”

- The name “Abram” means “exalted father”
- “Abraham” means, “father of many.”
- God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants, who would become a great nation.
- Abraham believed God and obeyed him. God led Abraham to move from Chaldea to the land of Canaan.
- While living in the land of Canaan, when they were very old, Abraham and his wife Sarah had a son, Isaac.

(Translation suggestions: [Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [chaldea](#), [Sarah](#), [Sarai](#), [Isaac](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[04-06]** When **Abram** arrived in Canaan, God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance.”
- **[05-04]** Then God changed **Abram’s** name to **Abraham**, which means “father of many.”
- **[05-05]** About a year later, when **Abraham** was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s son.
- **[05-06]** When Isaac was a young man, God tested **Abraham’s** faith by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **[06-01]** When **Abraham** was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, **Abraham** sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **[06-04]** After a long time, **Abraham** died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the covenant were passed on to Isaac.
- **[21-02]** God promised **Abraham** that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing.

Adam

Facts:

Adam was the first person whom God created. He and his wife Eve were made in the image of God.

- God formed Adam from dirt and breathed life into him.
- Adam's name sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "red dirt" or "ground."
- The name "Adam" is the same as the Old Testament word for "mankind" or "human being."
- All people are descendants of Adam and Eve.
- Adam and Eve disobeyed God. This separated them from God and caused sin and death to come into the world.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [Eve](#), [image of God](#), [image](#), [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[01-09]** Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image to be like us."
- **[01-10]** This man's name was **Adam**. God planted a garden where **Adam** could live, and put him there to care for it.
- **[01-12]** Then God said, "It is not good for man to be alone." But none of the animals could be **Adam's** helper.
- **[02-11]** And God clothed **Adam** and Eve with animal skins.
- **[02-12]** So God sent **Adam** and Eve away from the beautiful garden.
- **[49-08]** When **Adam** and Eve sinned, it affected all of their descendants.
- **[50-16]** Because **Adam** and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God cursed it and decided to destroy it.
-

afflict, affliction

Definition:

The term “afflict” means to cause someone distress or suffering. An “affliction” is the disease, emotional grief, or other disaster that results from this.

- God afflicted his people with sickness or other hardships in order to cause them to repent of their sins and turn back to him.
- God caused afflictions or plagues to come on the people of Egypt because their king refused to obey God.
- To “be afflicted with” means to be suffering some kind of distress, such as a disease, persecution, or emotional grief.

Translation Suggestions:

- To afflict someone could be translated as “cause someone to experience troubles” or “cause someone to suffer” or “cause suffering to come.”
- In certain contexts “afflict” could be translated as “happen to” or “come to” or “bring suffering.”
- A phrase like, “afflict someone with leprosy” could be translated as, “cause someone to be sick with leprosy.”
- When a disease or disaster is sent to “afflict” people or animals, this could be translated as “cause suffering to.”
- Depending on the context, the term “affliction” could be translated as “calamity” or “sickness” or “suffering” or “great distress.” physical
- The phrase “afflicted with” could also be translated as, “suffering from” or “sick with.”

(See: [leprosy](#), [leper](#), [leprous](#), [plague](#), [suffer](#), [suffering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Ai

Facts:

In Old Testament times, Ai was the name of a Canaanite town located just south of Bethel and about 8 km northwest of Jericho.

- After defeating Jericho, Joshua led the Israelites on an attack of Ai. But they were easily defeated because God was not pleased with them.
- An Israelite named Achan had stolen plunder from Jericho and God ordered that he and his family be killed. Then God helped the Israelites defeat the people of Ai.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethel](#), [Jericho](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Almighty

Facts:

The term “Almighty” literally means “all-powerful”; in the Bible, it always refers to God.

- The titles “the Almighty” or “the Almighty One” refer to God and reveal that he has complete power and authority over everything.
- This term is also used to describe God in the titles, “Almighty God” or “God Almighty” or “Lord Almighty” or “Lord God Almighty.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “All-powerful” or “Completely Powerful One” or “God, who is completely powerful.”
- Ways to translate the phrase “Lord God Almighty” could include, “God, the Powerful Ruler” or “Powerful Sovereign God” or “Mighty God who is Master over everything.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [God](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [power](#), [powers](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

altar

Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living nearby the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: [altar of incense](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [grain offering](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-14]** After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- **[05-08]** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- **[13-09]** A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- **[16-06]** He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

marvel, wonder, amazed, astonished

Definition:

All these terms refer to being very surprised because of something extraordinary that happened.

- Some of these words are translations of Greek expressions that mean “struck with amazement” or “standing outside of (oneself).” These expressions express how very surprised or shocked the person was feeling. Other languages might also have expressions to express this.
- Usually the event that caused the wonder and amazement was a miracle, something only God could do.
- The meaning of these terms can also include feelings of confusion because what happened was totally unexpected.
- Other ways to translate these words could be, “extremely surprised” or “very shocked.”
- Related words include: “marvelous” (amazing, wonderful), “amazement,” and “astonishment.”
- In general, these terms are positive and express that the people were happy about what had happened.

(See also: [miracle](#), [sign](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Ammon, Ammonites, Ammonitess

Facts:

The “people of Ammon” or the “Ammonites” were a people group in Canaan. They were descended from Ben-ammi, who was the son of Lot by his younger daughter.

- The term “Ammonitess” refers specifically to a female Ammonite. This could also be translated as, “Ammonite woman.”
- The Ammonites lived east of the Jordan River and were enemies of the Israelites.
- At one point, the Ammonites hired a prophet named Balaam to curse Israel, but God did not allow it.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Balaam](#), [curse](#), [cursed](#), [Jordan River](#), [Lot](#) other)

Bible References:

Waiting

Amorite

Facts:

The Amorites were a powerful group of people who were descended from Noah's grandson Canaan.

- Their name means "high one" which may refer to the mountainous regions where they lived or to the fact that they were known to be very tall in height.
- The Amorites lived in regions on both sides of the Jordan River. The city of Ai was inhabited by Amorites.
- God refers to the "sin of the Amorites" which included their worship of false gods and the sinful practices that were included in that.
- Joshua led the Israelites in destroying the Amorites, as God had commanded them to do.

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [15-07] Sometime later, the kings of another people group in Canaan, the **Amorites**, heard that the Gibeonites had made a peace treaty with the Israelites, so they combined their armies into one large army and attacked Gibeon.
- [15-08] In the early morning they surprised the **Amorite** armies and attacked them.
- [15-09] God fought for Israel that day. He caused the **Amorites** to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the **Amorites**.
- [15-10] God also caused the sun to stay in one place in the sky so that Israel would have enough time to completely defeat the **Amorites**.

angel, archangel

Definition:

An angel is a powerful spirit being whom God created. Angels exist to serve God by doing whatever he tells them to do. The term “archangel” refers to the angel who rules or leads all the other angels.

- The word “angel” literally means “messenger.”
- The term “archangel” literally means “chief messenger.” The only angel referred to in the Bible as an “archangel” is Michael.
- In the Bible, angels gave messages to people from God. These messages included instructions about what God wanted the people to do.
- Angels also told people about events that were going to happen in the future or events that had already happened.
- Angels have God’s authority as his representatives and sometimes in the Bible they spoke as if God himself was speaking.
- Other ways that angels serve God is by protecting and strengthening people.
- A special phrase, “angel of Yahweh” has more than one possible meaning: 1) It may mean “angel who represents Yahweh” or “messenger who serves Yahweh.” 2) It may refer to Yahweh himself, who looked like an angel as he talked to a person. Either one of these meanings would explain the angel’s use of “I” as if Yahweh himself was talking.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “angel” could include, “messenger from God” or “God’s heavenly servant” or “God’s spirit messenger.”
- The term “archangel” could be translated as “chief angel” or “head ruling angel” or “leader of the angels.”
- Also consider how these terms are translated in a national language or another local language.
- The phrase “angel of Yahweh” should be translated using the words for “angel” and “Yahweh.” This will allow for different interpretations of that phrase. Possible translations could include, “angel from Yahweh” or “angel sent by Yahweh” or “Yahweh who looked like an angel.”

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [chief](#), [head](#), [messenger](#), [Michael](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02-12] God placed large, powerful **angels** at the entrance to the garden to keep anyone from eating the fruit of the tree of life.
- [22-03] The **angel** responded to Zechariah, “I was sent by God to bring you this good news.”
- [23-06] Suddenly, a shining **angel** appeared to them (the shepherds), and they were terrified. The **angel** said, “Do not be afraid, because I have some good news for you.”
- [23-07] Suddenly, the skies were filled with **angels** praising God...
- [25-08] Then **angels** came and took care of Jesus.
- [38-12] Jesus was very troubled and his sweat was like drops of blood. God sent an **angel** to strengthen him.
- [38-15] “I could ask the Father for an army of **angels** to defend me.”

angry, anger

Definition:

To “be angry” or to “have anger” means to be very displeased, irritated and upset about something or against someone.

- When people get angry, it often is sinful and selfish, but sometimes it is righteous anger against injustice or oppression.
- God’s anger (also called “wrath”) expresses his strong displeasure regarding sin.
- The phrase, “provoke to anger” means “cause to be angry.”

(See also: [wrath](#), [fury](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

anoint, anointed

Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell. The term is also used figuratively to refer to the Holy Spirit choosing and empowering someone.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle, were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship. One time Jesus commented that in doing this she was preparing him for his future burial.
- After Jesus died, his friends prepared his body for burial by anointing it with oils and spices.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour oil on” or “put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring perfumed oil on.”
- To “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil.” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated.”
- In some contexts the term “anoint” could be translated as “appoint.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [consecrate](#), [high priest](#), [King of the Jews](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophecy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

appoint, appointed

Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in, “appointed to eternal life.” This means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include, “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as, “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as, “be chosen.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Aram, Aramean, Aramaic

Definition:

“Aram” is the name of two men in the Old Testament. It was also the name of a region northeast of Canaan, where modern-day Syria is located.

- The people living in Aram became known as “Arameans” and spoke “Aramaic.” Jesus and other Jews of his time also spoke Aramaic.
- One of Shem’s sons was named Aram. Another man named Aram was a cousin of Rebekah. It is probable that the region of Aram was named after one of these two men.
- Aram later became known by the Greek name, “Syria.”
- The term “Paddan Aram” means “plain of Aram” and was located in the northern part of Aram.
- Some of Abraham’s relatives lived in the city of Haran, which was located in “Paddan Aram.”
- In the Old Testament, sometimes the terms “Aram” and “Paddan Aram” refer to the same region.
- The term “Aram Naharaim” may mean “Aram of Two Rivers.” This region was located in the northern part of Mesopotamia and was to the east of “Paddan Aram.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Mesopotamia](#), [Aram Naharaim](#), [Paddan Aram](#), [Rebekah](#), [Shem](#), [Syria](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Ararat

Facts:

In the Bible, “Ararat” is the name given to a land, a kingdom, and a mountain range.

- The “land of Ararat” was probably located in what is now the northeastern part of the country of Turkey.
- Ararat is most well-known as the name of the mountains that Noah’s ark came to rest on after the waters of the great flood began to recede.
- In modern times, a mountain called “Mount Ararat” is often thought to be the location of the “mountains of Ararat” in the Bible.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [ark](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

archer

Definition:

The term “archer” refers to a man who is skilled at using a bow and arrow as a weapon.

- In the Bible, an archer is usually a soldier who uses a bow and arrow to fight in an army.
- Archers were an important part of the Assyrian military force.
- Some languages might have a term for this such as, “bow-man.”

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

ark

Definition:

The term, “ark” literally refers to a rectangular wooden box that is made to hold or protect something. An ark can be large or small in size, depending on what it is being used for.

- In the English Bible, the word “ark” is first used to refer to the very large, rectangular wooden boat that Noah built to escape the worldwide flood. The ark had a flat bottom, a roof, and walls.
- Ways to translate this term could include, “very large boat” or “barge” or “cargo ship” or “large, box-shaped boat.”
- The Hebrew word that is used to refer to this huge boat is the same word used for the basket or box that held baby Moses when his mother put him in the Nile River to hide him. It is usually translated as “basket.”
- In the phrase “ark of the covenant,” a different Hebrew word is used for “ark.” This could be translated as “box” or “chest” or “container.”
- When choosing a term to translate “ark,” it is important in each context to consider what size it is and what it is being used for.

(See also: [ark of the covenant](#), [ark of the covenant decrees](#), [ark of Yahweh](#), [basket](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Asher

Facts:

Asher was the eighth son of Jacob. His descendants formed one of the twelve tribes of Israel which was also called “Asher.”

- Asher’s mother was Zilpah, the servant of Leah.
- His name means “happy” or, “blessed.”
- Asher was also the name of the territory assigned to the tribe of Asher when the Israelites entered the promised land.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [israel](#), [twelvetribeisrael](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

assembly, assemble

Definition:

The term “assembly” usually refers to a group of people who come together to discuss problems, give advice, and make decisions.

- An assembly can be a group that is organized in an official and somewhat permanent way, or it can be a group of people who come together temporarily for a specific purpose or occasion.
- In the Old Testament there was a special kind of assembly called a “sacred assembly” where the people of Israel would gather to worship Yahweh.
- Sometimes the term “assembly” referred to the Israelites in general, as a group.
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers is sometimes also referred to as an “assembly.” This could be translated as “army.”
- In the New Testament, an assembly of 70 Jewish leaders in major cities such as Jerusalem would meet to judge legal matters and to settle disputes between people. This assembly was known as the “Sanhedrin” or the “Council.”

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “assembly” could also be translated as “special gathering” or “congregation” or “council” or “army” or “large group.”
- When the term “assembly” refers generally to the Israelites as a whole, it could also be translated as “community” or “people of Israel.”
- The phrase, “all the assembly” could be translated as “all the people” or “the whole group of Israelites” or “everyone.” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

(See also: [council](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire

Facts:

Assyria was a powerful nation during the time the Israelites were living in the land of Canaan. The Assyrian Empire was a group of nations ruled by an Assyrian king.

- The nation of Assyria was located in a region that is now the northern part of Iraq.
- The Assyrians fought against Israel at different times in their history.
- In the year 722 BC, the Assyrians completely conquered the kingdom of Israel and forced many of the Israelites to move to Assyria.
- The remaining Israelites intermarried with foreigners that the Assyrians had brought into Israel from Samaria. The descendants of those people who intermarried were later called the Samaritans.

(See also: [Samaria](#), [Samaritan](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[20-02]** So God punished both kingdoms by allowing their enemies to destroy them. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the **Assyrian Empire**, a powerful, cruel nation. The **Assyrians** killed many people in the kingdom of Israel, took away everything of value, and burned much of the country.
- **[20-03]** The **Assyrians** gathered all the leaders, the rich people, and the people with skills and took them to **Assyria**.
- **[20-04]** Then the **Assyrians** brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been.

authority

Definition:

The term “authority” refers to the power of influence and control that someone has over someone else.

- Kings and other governing rulers have authority over the people they are ruling.
- The word “authorities” refers to people, governments, or organizations that have authority over others.
- Masters have authority over their servants or slaves. Parents have authority over their children.
- Governments have the authority or right to make laws that govern their citizens.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “authority” can also be translated as “control” or “right” or “qualifications.”
- Sometimes “authority” is used with the meaning of “power.”
- When “authorities” is used to refer to people or organizations who rule people, it could also be translated as “leaders” or “rulers” or “powers.”
- The phrase “by his own authority” could also be translated as, “with his own right to lead” or “based on his own qualifications.”
- The expression, “under authority” could be translated as, “responsible to obey” or “having to obey others’ commands.”

(See also: [citizen](#), [command](#), [to command](#), [commandment](#), [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

avenge, revenge, vengeance

Definition:

To “avenge” or “take revenge” or “execute vengeance” is to punish someone in order to pay him back for the harm he did. The act of avenging or taking revenge is “vengeance.”

- Usually “avenge” implies an intent to see justice done or to right a wrong,
- When referring to people, the expression “take revenge” or “get revenge” usually involves wanting to get back at the person who did the harm.
- When God “takes vengeance” or “executes vengeance,” he is acting in righteousness because he is punishing sin and rebellion.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression, “to avenge” someone could also be translated as “to right a wrong” or “to get justice for.”
- When referring to human beings, to “take revenge” could be translated as “pay back” or “hurt in order to punish” or “get back at.”
- Depending on the context, “vengeance” could be translated as “punishment” or “punishment of sin” or “payment for wrongs done.” If a word meaning “retaliation” is used, this would apply to human beings only.
- When God says, “take my vengeance,” this could be translated by, “punish them for wrongs done against me” or “cause bad things to happen because they have sinned against me.”
- When referring to God’s vengeance, make sure it is clear that God is right in his punishment of sin.

(See also: [punish](#), [punishment](#), [just](#), [justice](#), [justly](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Babel

Facts:

Babel was a chief city in a region called Shinar in the southern part of Mesopotamia. Shinar was later called Babylonia.

- The city of Babel was founded by Ham's great grandson, Nimrod, who ruled the region of Shinar.
- The people of Shinar became proud and decided to build a tower high enough to reach heaven. This later became known as the "Tower of Babel."
- Because the people building the tower refused to spread out as God had commanded, he confused their languages so that they could not understand one another. This forced them to move away to live in many different places across the earth.
- The root meaning of the word for "Babel" is "confusion," named for when God confused the people's language.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Ham](#), [Mesopotamia](#), [Aram Naharaim](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

barren**Definition:**

To be “barren” means to not be fertile or fruitful.

- Soil or land that is barren is not able to produce any plants.
- A woman who is barren is one who is physically unable to conceive or bear a child.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “barren” is used to refer to land, it could be translated as “not fertile” or “unfruitful” or “without plants.”
- When it is referring to a barren woman, it could be translated as “childless” or “not able to bear children” or “unable to conceive a child.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Beersheba

Facts:

In Old Testament times, Beersheba was a city located about 45 miles southwest of Jerusalem in a desert area that is now called the Negev.

- The desert surrounding Beersheba was the wilderness area where Hagar and Ishmael wandered after Abraham sent them away from his tents.
- The name of this city means “well of the oath.” It was given this name when Abraham swore an oath to not punish King Abimelech’s men for seizing control of one of Abraham’s wells.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abimelech](#), [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Hagar](#), [Ishmael](#), [Jerusalem](#), [oath](#), [swear](#), [swear by](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

believe, believe in, belief

Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as, “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”

(See also: [faith](#), [believer](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [03-04] Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- [04-08] Abram **believed** God’s promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God’s promise.
- [11-02] God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- [11-06] But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- [37-05] Jesus replied, “I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?”

Benjamin

Facts:

Benjamin was the youngest son born to Jacob and his wife Rachel. His name means, “son of my right hand.”

- He and his older brother Joseph were the only children of Rachel, who died after Benjamin was born.
- The descendants of Benjamin became one of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- King Saul was from the Israelite tribe of Benjamin.
- The apostle Paul was also from the tribe of Benjamin.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [Paul](#), [Saul](#), [Rachel](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Bethel

Facts:

Bethel was a city located just north of Jerusalem in the land of Canaan. It was formerly called “Luz.”

- After receiving God’s promises for the first time, Abram (Abraham) built an altar to God near Bethel. The actual name of the city was not yet Bethel at that time, but it was usually referred to as “Bethel” which was better known.
- When fleeing from his brother Esau, Jacob stayed overnight near this city and slept outdoors on the ground there. While he was sleeping, he had a dream showing angels going up and down a ladder to heaven.
- This city did not have the name “Bethel” until after Jacob named it that. To make this clear, some translations may translate it as “Luz (later called Bethel)” in the passages about Abraham, as well as when Jacob first arrives there (before he changed the name).
- Bethel is mentioned often in the Old Testament and was a place where many important events happened.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [altar Jacob](#), [Israel Jerusalem](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Bethlehem, Ephrathah

Facts:

Bethlehem was a small city in the land of Israel, near the city of Jerusalem. It was also known as “Ephrathah,” which was probably its original name.

- Bethlehem has been called the “city of David,” since King David was born there.
- The prophet Micah said that the Messiah would come from “Bethlehem Ephrathah.”
- Fulfilling that prophecy, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, many years later.
- The name “Bethlehem” means “house of bread” or “house of food.”

(See also: [Caleb](#), [David](#), [Micah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [17-02] David was a shepherd from the town of **Bethlehem**.
- [21-09] The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a virgin. The prophet Micah said that he would be born in the town of **Bethlehem**.
- [23-04] Joseph and Mary had to make a long journey from where they lived in Nazareth to **Bethlehem** because their ancestor was David whose hometown was **Bethlehem**.
- [23-06] ”The Messiah, the Master, has been born in **Bethlehem!**”

Bethuel

Facts:

Bethuel was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor.

- Bethuel was the father of Rebekah and Laban.
- There was also a town called Bethuel, which may have been located in southern Judah, not far from the town of Beersheba.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Beersheba](#), [Laban](#), [Nahor](#), [Rebekah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

biblical time: day

Definition:

The term “day” literally refers to a period of time lasting 24 hours beginning at sundown. It is also used figuratively.

- For the Israelites and the Jews, a day began at sunset of one day and ended at sunset of the next day.
- Sometimes the term “day” is used figuratively to refer to a longer period of time, such as the “day of Yahweh” or “last days.”
- Some languages will use a different expression to translate these figurative uses or will translate “day” nonfiguratively.
- Other translations of “day” could include, “time” or “season” or “occasion” or “event,” depending on the context.

(See also: [day of the Lord](#), [day of Yahweh](#), [judgment day](#), [last day](#), [last days](#), [latter days](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

biblical time: month

Definition:

The term “month” refers to a period of time lasting about four weeks. The number of days in each month varies depending on whether a lunar or solar calendar is used.

- In the lunar calendar, the length of each month is based on the amount of time it takes for the moon to go around the earth, about 29 days. In this system there are 12 or 13 months in a year. Despite the year being 12 or 13 months, the first month is always called the same name even though it may be a different season.
- The “new moon,” or beginning phase of the moon with its sliver of light, marks the beginning of each month in the lunar calendar.
- All the names of months referred to in the Bible are those of the lunar calendar since this was the system used by the Israelites. Modern Jews still use this calendar for religious purposes.
- The modern-day solar calendar is based on how long it takes the earth to go around the sun (about 365 days). In this system, the year is always divided up into 12 months, with the length of each month ranging from 28 to 31 days.

Bible References:

Waiting

biblical time: year**Definition:**

When used literally, the term “year” in the Bible refers to a period of time lasting 354 days. This is according to the lunar calendar system which is based on the time it takes for the moon to go around the earth.

- A year in the modern-day solar calendar lasts 365 days divided into 12 months, based on the amount of time it takes for the earth to travel around the sun.
- In both calendar systems a year has 12 months. But an extra 13th month is sometimes added to the year in the lunar calendar to make up for the fact that a lunar year is 11 days less than a solar year. This helps keep the two calendars more in line with each other.
- In the Bible, the term “year” is also used in a figurative sense to refer to a general time when a special event takes place. Examples of this include, “the year of Yahweh” or “in the year of drought” or “the favorable year of the Lord.” In these contexts, “year” could be translated as “time” or “season” or “time period.”

(See also: [biblical time: month](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

birthright

Definition:

The term “birthright” in the Bible refers to the honor, family name, and physical wealth that was normally given to the firstborn son in a family.

- The birthright of the firstborn son included a double portion of the father’s inheritance.
- A king’s firstborn son was normally given the birthright to rule after his father died.
- Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob. Because of this, Jacob inherited the blessing of the firstborn instead of Esau.
- The birthright also included the honor of having the family descendants traced through the firstborn son’s line.

Translation Suggestions:

- Possible ways to translate “birthright” could include, “rights and wealth of the firstborn son” or “family honor” or “privilege and inheritance of the firstborn.”

(See also: [firstborn](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

blameless**Definition:**

The term “blameless” literally means “without blame.” It is used to refer to a person who obeys God wholeheartedly, but it does not mean that the person is sinless.

- Abraham and Noah were considered blameless before God.
- A person who has a reputation for being “blameless” behaves in a way that honors God.
- According to one verse, a person who is blameless is “one who fears God and turns away from evil.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as, “with no fault to his character” or “completely obedient to God” or “avoiding sin” or “keeping away from evil.”

Bible References:

Waiting

bless, blessed, blessing

Definition:

To “bless” someone or something means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

- Blessing someone also means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.
- When people ‘bless’ God or express a desire that God be blessed, this means they are praising him.
- The term “bless” is sometimes used for consecrating food before it is eaten, or for thanking and praising God for the food.

from comment below: It is important to not define, focus on, or be confined by applications of the root word of “bless” that suggest primarily the flourishing or abundance of material things or physical wellness. Consider the extensive teachings in Scripture on God’s love, mercy and grace that is not only ancient, but current. Consider care, protection, and presence of God’s Spirit. And for us to bless God, we can offer thankfulness, appreciation, and understanding as we learn of and follow (obey) him.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “bless” could also be translated as, “to provide abundantly for” or “to be very kind and favorable toward.”
- “God has brought great blessing to” could be translated as, “God has given many good things to” or “God has provided abundantly for” or “God has caused many good things to happen to”.
- “He is blessed” could be translated as “he will greatly benefit” or “he will experience good things” or “God will cause him to flourish.”
- “Blessed is the person who” could be translated as “How good it is for the person who.”
- Expressions like, “blessed be the Lord” could be translated as, “May the Lord be praised” or “Praise the Lord” or “I praise the Lord.”
- In the context of blessing food, this could be translated as, “thanked God for the food” or “praised God for giving them food” or “consecrated the food by praising God for it.”

(See also: [praise](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[01-07]** God saw that it was good and he **blessed** them.
- **[01-15]** God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He **blessed** them and told them, “Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.”
- **[01-16]** So God rested from all he had been doing. He **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **[04-04]** “I will make your name great. I will **bless** those who **bless** you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be **blessed** because of you.”
- **[04-07]** Melchizedek **blessed** Abram and said, “May God Most High who owns heaven and earth **bless** Abram.”
- **[07-03]** Isaac wanted to give his **blessing** to Esau.
- **[08-05]** Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

blood

Definition:

The term “blood” refers to the red liquid that comes out of a person’s skin when there is an injury or wound. Blood brings life-giving nutrients to a person’s entire body.

- Blood symbolizes life and when it is shed or poured out, it symbolizes the loss of life, or death.
- When people made sacrifices to God, they killed an animal and poured its blood on the altar. This symbolized the sacrifice of the animal’s life to pay for people’s sins.
- Through his death on the cross, Jesus’ blood symbolically cleanses people from their sins and pays for the punishment they deserve for those sins.
- The expression “flesh and blood” refers to human beings.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to people who are biologically related.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term should be translated with the term that is used for blood in the target language
- The expression “flesh and blood” could be translated as “people” or “human beings.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “my own flesh and blood” could be translated as “my own family” or “my own relatives” or “my own people.”
- If there is an expression in the target language that is used with this meaning, that expression could be used to translate “flesh and blood.”

(See: [flesh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-03]** Before Joseph’s brothers returned home, they tore Joseph’s robe and dipped it in goat’s **blood**.
- **[10-03]** God turned the Nile River into **blood**, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.
- **[11-05]** All the houses of the Israelites had **blood** around the doors, so God passed over those houses and everyone inside was safe. They were saved because of the lamb’s **blood**.
- **[13-09]** The **blood** of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person’s sin and made that person clean in God’s sight.
- **[38-05]** Then Jesus took a cup and said, “Drink this. It is my **blood** of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins.
- **[48-10]** When anyone believes in Jesus, the **blood** of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s punishment passes over him.

bloodshed

Definition:

The term “bloodshed” refers to the death of human beings due to murder, war, or some other violent act.

- This term literally means “shedding of blood,” which refers to when blood comes out of a person’s body from an open wound.
- The term “bloodshed” is often used to refer to widespread killing of people.
- It is also used as a general reference to the sin of murder.

Translation Suggestions:

- “the bloodshed” could be translated as, “the killing of people” or “the many people who were killed.”
- “through bloodshed” could also be translated as, “by killing people.”
- “innocent bloodshed” could be translated as “killing innocent people.”
- “bloodshed follows bloodshed” could be translated as, “they keep killing people” or “the killing of people goes on and on” or “they have killed many people and continue to do that” or “people keep killing other people.”
- Another figurative use, “bloodshed will pursue you” could be translated as, “your people will continue to experience bloodshed” or “your people will keep being killed” or “your people will continue to be at war with other nations and people will keep dying.”

(See also: [blood slaughter](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

blot out, wipe out**Definition:**

The terms “blot out” and “wipe out” are expressions that mean to completely remove or destroy something or someone.

- These expressions can be used in a positive sense, as when God “blots out” sins by forgiving them and choosing not to remember them.
- It is also often used in a negative sense, as when God “blots out” or “wipes out” a people group, destroying them because of their sin.
- The Bible talks about a person’s name being “blotted out” or “wiped out” of God’s book of life, which means that the person will not receive eternal life.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, these expressions could be translated as “get rid of” or “remove” or “completely destroy” or “completely remove.”
- When referring to blotting someone’s name out of the Book of Life, this could be translated as, “removed from” or “erased.”

Bible References:

Waiting

bind, bond, bound

Definition:

The term “bind” means to tie something or fasten it securely. Something that is tied or joined together is called a “bond.” The term “bound” is the past tense of this term.

- To be “bound” means to have something tied or wrapped around something else.
- In a figurative sense, a person can be “bound” to a vow, which means he is “required to fulfill” what he promised to do.
- The term “bonds” refers to anything that binds, confines, or imprisons someone. It usually refers to physical chains, fetters or ropes that keep a person from being free to move.
- In Bible times, bonds such as ropes or chains were used to attach prisoners to the wall or floor of a stone prison.
- The term “bind” can also be used to talk about wrapping cloth around a wound to help it heal.
- A dead person would be “bound” with cloth in preparation for burial.
- The term “bond” is used figuratively to refer to something, such as sin, that controls or enslaves someone.
- A bond can also be a close relationship between people in which they support each other emotionally, spiritually and physically. This applies to the bond of marriage.
- For example, a husband and wife are “bound” or tied to each other. It is a bond that God does not want broken.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “bind” could also be translated as “tie” or “tie up” or “wrap (around).”
- Figuratively, it could be translated as, “to restrain” or “to prevent” or “to keep from (something).”
- A special use of “bind” in Matthew 16 and 18 means “forbid” or “not permit.”
- The term “bonds” could be translated as “chains” or “ropes” or “shackles.”
- Figuratively the term “bond” could be translated as “knot” or “connection” or “close relationship.”
- The phrase, “bond of peace” means, “being in harmony, which brings people in closer relationship to each other” or “the tying together that peace brings.”
- To “bind up” could be translated as, “wrap around” or “put a bandage on.”
- To “bind” oneself with a vow could be translated as, “promise to fulfill a vow” or “commit to fulfill a vow.”
- Depending on the context, the term “bound” could also be translate as, “tied” or “tied up” or “chained” or “obligated (to fulfill)” or “required to do.”

(See also: [fulfill](#), [peace](#), [peaceful](#), [prison](#), [prisoner](#), [imprison](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

bow, bow down

Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To “bow down” means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include “bow the knee” (meaning to kneel) and “bow the head” (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is “bowed down” has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “bend forward” or “bend the head” or “kneel.”
- The term “bow down” could be translated as “kneel down” or “prostrate oneself.”
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: [humble](#), [humility](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

bow and arrow**Definition:**

This is a type of weapon that consists of shooting arrows from a stringed bow. In Bible times it was used for fighting against enemies and for killing animals for food.

- The bow is made out of wood, bone, metal, or other hard material, such as a deer's antler. It has a curved shape and is strung tightly with a string, cord, or vine.
- An arrow is a thin shaft with a sharp, pointed head on one end. In ancient times, the arrows could be made of a variety of materials such as wood, bone, stone, or metal.
- Bows and arrows are commonly used by hunters and warriors.
- The term "arrow" is also sometimes used figuratively in the Bible to refer to enemy attacks or divine judgment.

Bible References:

Waiting

bread

Definition:

Bread is a food made from flour mixed with water and oil to form a dough. The dough is then shaped into a loaf and baked.

- When the term “loaf” occurs by itself, it means, “loaf of bread.”
- Bread dough is usually made with something that makes it rise, such as yeast.
- Bread can also be made without yeast so that it does not rise. In the Bible this is called “unleavened bread” and was used for the Jews’ passover meal.
- Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, this term is also used in the Bible to refer to food in general. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- The term “bread of the presence” referred to twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and were only for the priests to eat. This could be translated as “bread showing that God lived among them.”
- The figurative term, “bread from heaven” referred to the special white food called “manna” that God provided for the Israelites when they were wandering through the desert.
- Jesus also called himself the “bread that came down from heaven” and the “bread of life.”
- When Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover meal together before his death, he compared the unleavened Passover bread to his body which would be wounded and killed on a cross.
- Many times the term “bread” can be translated more generally as “food.”

(See also: [Passover](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#), [unleavened bread](#), [Festival of Unleavened Bread](#), [yeast](#), [leaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

breathe, breath

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “breathe” and “breath” are often used figuratively to refer to giving life or having life.

- The Bible teaches that God “breathed into” Adam the breath of life. It was at that point that Adam became a living soul.
- When Jesus breathed on the disciples and told them to “receive the Spirit,” he was probably literally breathing out air onto them to symbolize the Holy Spirit coming to them.
- Sometimes the terms “breathing” and “breathing out” are used to refer to speaking.
- The figurative expression “breath of God” or “breath of Yahweh” often refers to God’s wrath being poured out on rebellious or godless nations. It communicates his power.

Translation Suggestions

- The expression “breathed his last” is a figurative way of saying “he died.” It could also be translated as, “he took his last breath” or “he stopped breathing and died” or “he breathed in air one last time.”
- Describing the Scriptures as “God-breathed” means that God spoke or inspired the words of the Scriptures which human authors then wrote down. It is probably best, if possible, to translate “God-breathed” somewhat literally since it is difficult to communicate the exact meaning of this.
- If a literal translation of “God-breathed” is not acceptable, other ways to translate this could include, “inspired by God” or “authored by God” or “spoken by God.” It could also be said that “God breathed out the words of Scripture.”
- The expressions “put breath in” or “breathe life into” or “gives breath to” could be translated as, “cause to breathe” or “make alive again” or “enable them to live and breathe” or “give life to.”
- If possible, it is best to translate “breath of God” with the literal word that is used for “breath” in the language. If God cannot be said to have “breath,” this could be translated as, “God’s power” or “God’s speech.”
- The expression “catch my breath” or “get my breath” could be translated as, “relax in order to breathe more slowly” or “stop running in order to breathe normally.”
- The expression “is only a breath” means “lasts a very short time.”
- Similarly the expression “man is a single breath” means “people live a very short time” or “the lives of human beings are very short, like a single breath” or “compared to God, the life of a person seems as short as the time it takes to breathe in one breath of air.”

(See also: [Adam](#), [Paul](#), [Saul](#), [word of God](#), [word of Yahweh](#), [word of the Lord](#), [scripture](#), [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

bronze**Definition:**

The term “bronze” refers to a kind of metal that is made from melting together the metals, copper and tin. It has a dark brown color, slightly red.

- Bronze resists water corrosion and is a good conductor of heat.
- In ancient times, bronze was used for making tools, weapons, artwork, altars, cooking pots, and soldiers’ armor, among other things.
- Many building materials for the tabernacle and temple were made of bronze.
- Idols of false gods were also often made of bronze metal.
- Bronze objects were made by first melting the bronze metal into a liquid and then pouring it into molds. This process was called “casting.”

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [armor](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

brother

Definition:

The term “brother” usually refers to a male person who shares at least one biological parent with another person.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives, such as members of the same tribe, clan, or people group.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often used “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women, since all believers in Christ are members of one spiritual family, with God as their heavenly Father.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include, “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as, “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be, “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: [apostle](#), [the twelve](#), [the eleven](#), [God the Father](#), [Heavenly Father](#), [sister](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

burden

Definition:

A burden is a heavy load. It literally refers to a physical load such as a work animal would carry. The term “burden” also has several figurative meanings:

- A burden can refer to a difficult duty or important responsibility that a person has to do. He is said to be “bearing” or “carrying” a “heavy burden.”
- A cruel leader may put difficult burdens on the people he is ruling, for example by forcing them to pay large amounts of taxes.
- A person who does not want to be a burden to someone does not want to cause that other person any trouble.
- The guilt of a person’s sin is a burden to him.
- The “burden of the Lord” is a figurative way of referring to a “message from God” that a prophet must deliver to God’s people.
- The term “burden” can be translated by “responsibility” or “duty” or “heavy load” or “message,” depending on the context.

Bible References:

Waiting

burnt offering, offering by fire

Definition:

A “burnt offering” was a type of sacrifice to God that was burnt up by fire on an altar. It was offered to make atonement for the sins of the people. This was also called an “offering by fire.”

- Animals used for this offering were usually sheep or goats, but oxen and birds were also used.
- Except for the skin, the entire animal was burned up in this offering. The skin or hide was given to the priest.
- God commanded the Jewish people to offer burnt offerings two times every day.

(See also: [altar](#), [atonement](#), [atone](#), [ox](#), [oxen](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

bury, buried, burial**Definition:**

The term “bury” usually refers to putting a dead body into a hole or other burial place. The term “burial” is the act of burying something or can be used to describe a place used to bury something.

- Often people bury a dead body by placing it into a deep hole in the ground and then covering it with dirt.
- Sometimes the dead body is placed in a box-like structure, such as a coffin before burying it.
- In Bible times, dead people were often buried in a cave or similar place. After Jesus died, his body was wrapped in cloths and placed in a stone tomb that was sealed with a large boulder.
- The terms “burial place” or “burial room” or “burial chamber” or “burial cave” are all ways to refer to a place where a dead body is buried.
- Other things can also be buried, such as when Achan buried silver and other things that he had stolen from Jericho.
- The phrase “buried his face” usually means, “covered his face with his hands.”
- Sometimes the word “hide” can mean “bury” as when Achan hid things in the ground that he had stolen from Jericho. This meant he buried them in the ground.

(See also: [Jericho](#), [tomb](#), [grave](#), [burial place](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Cain

Facts:

Cain and his younger brother Abel were the first sons of Adam and Eve mentioned in the Bible.

- Cain was a farmer who produced food crops while Abel was a sheep herder.
- Cain killed his brother Abel in a fit of jealousy, because God had accepted Abel's sacrifice, but had not accepted Cain's sacrifice.
- As punishment, God sent him away from Eden and told him that the land would no longer yield crops for him.
- God put a mark on Cain's forehead as a sign that God would protect him from being killed by other people as he wandered.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abel](#), [Adam](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

call, calling, called, call out

Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out” literally means to say something loudly to someone who is not nearby. There are also several figurative meanings.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout or speak loudly to someone far away. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- The term “called” is used in the Bible to mean that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- This term is also used in the context of calling someone a name. For example, “He is called John,” means, “He is named John” or “His name is John.”
- To be “called by the name of” means that someone is given the name of someone else. God says that he has called his people by his name.
- A different expression, “I have called you by name” means that God knows a person’s name personally and has specifically chosen him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as, “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- “You must call his name” can also be translated as, “you must name him.”
- “His name is called” could also be translated as, “his name is” or “he is named.”
- To “call out” could be translated as, “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”
- The expression “you are called by my name” could be translated as, “I have given you my name, showing that you belong to me.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as, “I know your name and have chosen you.”

(See: [pray](#), [prayer](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

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camel

Definition:

A camel is a large, four legged animal with one or two humps on its back. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

- In Bible times, the camel was the largest animal found in Israel and the surrounding regions.
- The camel was used mainly for carrying people and burdens.
- Some people groups also used camels for food, but not the Israelites because God had said that camels were unclean and were not to be eaten.
- Camels were valuable because they could move swiftly in the sand and could live without food and water for several weeks at a time.

(See also: [burden](#), [unclean](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Canaan, Canaanite

Facts:

Canaan was the son of Ham, who was one of Noah's sons. The Canaanites were the descendants of Canaan.

- The term "Canaan" or the "land of Canaan" also referred to an area of land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. It extended south to the border of Egypt and north to the border of Syria.
- This land was inhabited by the Canaanites, as well as several other people groups.
- God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Ham](#), [Promised Land](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[04-05]** He (Abram) took his wife, Sarai, together with all his servants and everything he owned and went to the land God showed him, the land of **Canaan**.
- **[04-06]** When Abram arrived in **Canaan** God said, "Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance."
- **[04-09]** "I give the land of **Canaan** to your descendants."
- **[05-03]** "I will give you and your descendants the land of **Canaan** as their possession and I will be their God forever."
- **[07-08]** After twenty years away from his home in **Canaan**, Jacob returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.

cast out, drive out, throw out

Definition:

To “cast out” or “drive out” someone or something means to force that person or thing to go away.

- The term “cast” means the same thing as “throw.” To cast a net means to throw the net into the water.
- In a figurative sense, “cast out” or “cast away” someone can mean to reject that person and send him away.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include, “force out” or “send away” or “get rid of.”
- To “cast out demons” could be translated as “cause the demons to leave” or “drive the evil spirits out” or “expel the demons” or “command the demon to come out.”

(See also: [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [demon-possessed](#), [lots](#), [casting lots](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Chaldea, Chaldean

Facts:

Chaldea was a region in the southern part of Mesopotamia or Babylonia. The people who lived in this region were called Chaldeans.

- The city of Ur, where Abraham was from, was located in Chaldea. It is often referred to as “Ur of the Chaldeans.”
- King Nebuchadnezzar was one of several Chaldeans who became kings over Babylonia.
- After many years, around 600 BC, the term “Chaldean” came to mean “Babylonian.”
- In the book of Daniel, the term “Chaldean” also refers to a special class of men who were highly educated and studied the stars.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Babylon](#), [Shinar](#), [Ur](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

chariot

Definition:

In ancient times, chariots were lightweight, two-wheeled carts that were pulled by horses.

- People would sit or stand in chariots, using them for war or travel.
- In war, an army that had chariots had a great advantage of speed and mobility over an army that did not have chariots.
- The ancient Egyptians and Romans were well-known for their use of horses and chariots.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Rome](#), [Roman](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[12-10]** So they followed the Israelites onto the path through the sea, but God caused the Egyptians to panic and caused their **chariots** to get stuck.
- Rome, Romaning in his **chariot**.

cherubim, cherub

Definition:

The term “cherub,” and its plural form “cherubim,” refer to a special type of heavenly being that God created. The Bible describes cherubim as having wings and flames.

- The cherubim display the glory and power of God and seem to be guardians of sacred things.
- After Adam and Eve sinned, God placed cherubim with flaming swords at the east side of the Garden of Eden so that people could no longer get to the tree of life.
- God commanded the Israelites to carve two cherubim facing each other, with their wings touching, over the atonement lid of the ark of the covenant.
- He also told them to weave pictures of the cherubim into the curtains of the tabernacle.
- In some passages, these creatures are also described as having four faces: of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle.
- Cherubim are sometimes thought of as being angels, but the Bible does not clearly state that.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “cherubim” could be translated as “creatures with wings” or “guardians with wings” or “winged spiritual guardians” or “holy, winged guardians.”
- A “cherub” should be translated as the singular of cherubim, as in, “creature with wings” or “winged spiritual guardian,” for example.
- Make sure that the translation of this term is different from the translation of “angel.”
- Also consider how this term is translated or written in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [angel](#), other)

Bible References:

Waiting

children, child

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “child” is often used to generally refer to someone who is young in age, including an infant. The term “children” is the plural form and also has several figurative uses.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person’s descendants.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
 - children of the light
 - children of obedience
 - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to people who are like spiritual children. For example, “children of God” refers to people who belong to God through faith in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person’s great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as, “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God’s spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as, “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as, “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: [descendant](#), [promise](#), [son](#), spirit, spiritual, believer, beloved other)

Bible References:

Waiting

circumcise, circumcision

Definition:

The term “circumcise” means to cut off the foreskin of a man or male child. A circumcision ceremony may be performed in connection with this.

- God commanded Abraham to circumcise every male among his family and servants as a sign of God’s covenant with them.
- God also commanded Abraham’s descendants to continue to do this for every baby boy born into their households.
- The phrase, “circumcision of the heart” refers figuratively to the “cutting away” or removal of sin from a person.
- In a spiritual sense, “the circumcised” refers to people whom God has purified from sin through the blood of Jesus and who are his people.
- The term “uncircumcised” refers to those who have not been circumcised physically. It can also refer figuratively to those who have not been circumcised spiritually, who do not have a relationship with God.

Translation Suggestions:

- If the culture of the target language performs circumcisions on males, the word used to refer to this should be used for this term.
- Other ways to translate this term would be, “cut around” or “cut in a circle” or “cut off the foreskin.”
- In cultures where circumcision is not known, it may be necessary to explain it in a footnote or glossary.
- Make sure the term used to translate this does not refer to females. It may be necessary to translate this with a word or phrase that includes the meaning of “male.”

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [uncircumcised](#), [uncircumcision](#), [covenant](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [05-03]”You must **circumcise** every male in your family.”
- [05-05] That day Abraham **circumcised** all the males in his household.

clan

Definition:

The term “clan” refers to a group of extended family members who come from a common ancestor.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites were counted according to their clans, or family groups.
- Clans were normally named after their most well-known ancestor.
- Individual people were sometimes referred to by the name of their clan. An example of this is when Moses’ father-in-law Jethro is sometimes called by his clan name, Reuel.
- Clan could be translated as “family group” or “extended family” or “relatives.”

(See also: [family](#), [Jethro](#), [Reuel](#), [tribe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

clean, cleanse

Definition:

The term “clean” literally means to not have any dirt or stain. In the Bible, it is often used figuratively to mean, “pure,” “holy,” or “free from sin.”

- “Cleanse” is the process of making something “clean.” It could also be translated as “wash” or “purify.”
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites which animals he had specified as ritually “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” Only the clean animals were permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice. In this context, the term “clean” means that the animal was acceptable to God for use as a sacrifice.
- A person who had certain skin diseases would be unclean until the skin was healed enough to no longer be contagious. Instructions for cleansing the skin had to be obeyed in order for that person to be declared “clean” again.
- Sometimes “clean” is used figuratively to refer to moral purity.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with the common word for “clean” or “pure” (in the sense of being not dirty).
- Other ways to translate this could include, “ritually clean” or “acceptable to God.”
- “Cleanse” could be translated by “wash” or “purify.”
- Make sure that the words used for “clean” and “cleanse” can also be understood in a figurative sense.

(See also: [holy](#), [holiness](#), [unclean](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

comfort, comforter

Definition:

The terms “comfort” and “comforter” refer to helping someone who is suffering physical or emotional pain.

- A person who comforts someone is called a “comforter.”
- In the Old Testament, the term “comfort” is used to describe how God is kind and loving to his people and helps them when they are suffering.
- In the New Testament, it says that God will comfort his people through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive the comfort are then enabled to give the same comfort to others who are suffering.
- The expression “comforter of Israel” referred to the Messiah who would come to rescue his people.
- Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” who helps believers in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “comfort” could also be translated as, “ease the pain of” or “help (someone) overcome grief” or “encourage” or “console.”
- A phrase such as “our comfort” could be translated as “our encouragement” or “our consoling of (someone)” or “our help in times of grieving.”
- The term “comforter” could be translated as “person who comforts” or “someone who helps ease pain” or “person who encourages.”
- When the Holy Spirit is called “the Comforter” this could also be translated as “the Encourager” or “the Helper” or “the One who helps and guides.”
- The phrase “comforter of Israel” could be translated as, “the Messiah, who comforts Israel.”
- An expression like, “they have no comforter” could also be translated as, “No one has comforted them” or “There is no one to encourage or help them.”

(See also: [encourage](#), [encouragement](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

command, to command, commandment

Definition:

The term “to command” means to order someone to do something. A “command” or “commandment” is what the person was ordered to do.

- Although these terms have basically the same meaning, “commandment” often refers to certain commands of God which are more formal and permanent, such as the “Ten Commandments.”
- A command can be positive (“Honor your parents”) or negative (“Do not steal”).
- To “take command” means to “take control” or “take charge” of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions

- It is best to translate this term differently from the term, “law.” Also compare with the definitions of “decree” and “statute.”
- Some translators may prefer to translate “command” and “commandment” with the same word in their language.
- Others may prefer to use a special word for commandment that refers to lasting, formal commands that God has made.

(See [decree](#), [statute](#), [statutes](#), [law](#), [principle](#), [Ten Commandments](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

conceive, conception

Definition:

The terms “conceive” and “conception” usually refer to becoming pregnant with a child. It can also be used for animals that become pregnant.

- The phrase “conceive a child” could be translated as, “become pregnant” or some other term that is an acceptable way of referring to this.
- The related term “conception” could be translated as, “beginning of a pregnancy” or “moment of becoming pregnant.”
- These terms can also refer to creating something or thinking of something, such as an idea, a plan, or a task. Ways to translate this could include, “think of” or “plan” or “create,” depending on the context.
- Sometimes this term can be used figuratively as in, “when sin is conceived” which means “when sin is first thought of” or “at the very start of a sin” or “when a sin first begins.”

(See also: [create](#), [creation](#), [Creator](#), [womb](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

concubine**Definition:**

A concubine is a woman who is a secondary wife for a man who already has a wife. Usually a concubine is not legally married to the man.

- In the Old Testament, concubines were often female slaves.
- A concubine could be acquired by purchase, through military conquest, or in payment of a debt.
- For a king, having many concubines was a sign of power.often
- The New Testament teaches that the practice of having a concubine is against God's will.

Bible References:

Waiting

consume

Definition:

The term “consume” literally means to use up something. It has several figurative meanings.

- In the Bible, the word “consume” often refers to destroying things or people.
- A fire is said to consume things, which means it destroys them by burning them up.
- God is described as a “consuming fire,” which is a description of his anger against sin. His anger results in terrible punishment for sinners who do not repent.
- To consume food means to eat or drink something.
- The phrase, “consume the land” could be translated as “destroy the land.”

Translation Suggestions

- In the context of consuming the land or people, this term could be translated as “destroy.”
- When fire is referred to, “consume” could be translated as “burn up.”
- The burning bush that Moses saw “was not consumed” which could be translated as, “did not get burned up” or “did not burn up.”
- When referring to eating, “consume” could be translated as “eat” or “devour.”
- If someone’s strength is “consumed,” it means his strength is “used up” or “gone.”
- The expression, “God is a consuming fire” could be translated as, “God is like a fire that burns things up” or “God is angry against sin and will destroy sinners like a fire.”

(See: [devour](#), [wrath](#), [fury](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

corrupt, corruption

Definition:

The terms “corrupt” and “corruption” refer to a state of affairs in which people have become ruined, immoral, or dishonest.

- The term “corrupt” literally means to be “bent” or “broken” morally.
- A person who is corrupt has turned away from truth and is doing things that are dishonest or immoral.
- To corrupt someone means to influence that person to do dishonest and immoral things.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to corrupt” could be translated as “to influence to do evil” or “to cause to be immoral.”
- A corrupt person could be described as a person “who has become immoral” or “who practices evil.”
- This term could also be translated as “bad” or “immoral” or “evil.”
- The term corruption could be translated as “the practice of evil” or “evil” or “immorality.”

(See also: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

council

Definition:

A council is a group of people who meet to discuss, give advice, and make decisions about important matters.

- A council is usually organized in an official and somewhat permanent way for a specific purpose, such as making decisions about legal matters.
- The “Jewish Council” in Jerusalem, also known as the “Sanhedrin,” had 70 members, which included Jewish leaders such as chief priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees who met regularly to decide matters of Jewish law. It was this council of religious leaders who put Jesus on trial and decided that he should be killed.
- There were also smaller Jewish councils in other cities.
- The apostle Paul was brought before a Roman council when he was arrested for teaching the gospel.
- Depending on the context, the word “council” could also be translated as “legal assembly” or “political assembly.”
- To be “in council” means to be in a special meeting to decide something.
- Note that this is a different word than “counsel,” which means, “wise advice.”

(See also: [assembly](#), [assemble](#), [counsel](#), [counselor](#), [advice](#), [advisor](#), [Pharisee](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [Sadducee](#), [scribe](#), [expert in the Jewish law](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

covenant

Definition:

A covenant is a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

- This agreement can be between individuals, between groups of people, or between God and people.
- When people make a covenant with each other, they promise that they will do something, and they must do it.
- Examples of human covenants include marriage covenants, business agreements, and treaties between countries.
- Throughout the Bible, God made several different covenants with his people.
- In some of the covenants, God promised to fulfill his part without conditions. For example when God established his covenant with mankind, promising to never destroy the earth again with a worldwide flood, this promise had no conditions for people to fulfill.
- In other covenants, God promised to fulfill his part only if the people obeyed him and fulfilled their part of the covenant.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “binding agreement” or “formal commitment” or “pledge” or “contract.”
- Some languages may have different words for covenant depending on whether one party or both parties have made a promise they must keep. If the covenant is one-sided, it could be translated as “promise” or “pledge.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not sound like people proposed the covenant. In all cases of covenants between God and people, it was God who initiated the covenant.

(See also: , [New Covenant](#), [promise](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[04-09]** Then God made a **covenant** with Abram. A **covenant** is an agreement between two parties.
- **[05-04]** “I will make Ishmael a great nation, too, but my **covenant** will be with Isaac.”
- **[06-04]** After a long time, Abraham died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the **covenant** were passed on to Isaac.

- [07-10] The **covenant** promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to Jacob.”
- [13-02] God said to Moses and the people of Israel, ”If you will obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.”
- [13-04] Then God gave them the **covenant** and said, “I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods.”
- [15-13] Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the **covenant** that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai.

covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love

Definition:

This term is used to describe God's commitment to fulfill the promises that he made to his people.

- God made promises to the Israelites in formal agreements called "covenants."
- The "covenant faithfulness" or "covenant loyalty" of Yahweh refers to the fact that he keeps his promises to his people.
- God faithfulness to keep his covenant promises is an expression of his grace toward his people.
- The term "loyalty" is another word that refers to being committed and dependable to do and say what has been promised and what will benefit someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- The way this term is translated will also depend on how the terms "covenant" and "faithfulness" are translated.
- Other ways to translate this term could include, "faithful love" or "loyal, committed love" or "loving dependability."

(See also: [covenant](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [grace](#), [gracious](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [people of God](#), [my people](#), [promise](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

cow, calf, bull, cattle

Definition:

The term , “cattle” refers to a kind of large, four-legged farm animal that eats grass and is primarily raised for its meat and milk.

- The female of this kind of animal is called a “cow”, the male is a “bull,” and their offspring is a “calf.”
- Sometimes the term “cow” is used in a general way to refer to all kinds of cattle.
- In some cultures, cattle are traded in exchange for goods. Sometimes they are used as gifts given to the parents of a young woman a man desires to marry.
- In the Bible, the Jewish people used cattle for sacrifices, especially a certain type called the red heifer.
- A “heifer” is a cow that has not yet had a baby.
- An “ox” is a special type of bull that is used for agricultural work, like pulling a plow.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [heifer](#), [ox](#), [oxen](#), [yoke](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

create, creation, Creator

Definition:

The term “create” means to make something, or to cause something to be. Whatever is created is called a “creation.” God is called the “Creator” because he caused everything in the entire universe to come into existence.

- When this term is used to refer to God creating the world, it means he made it out of nothing.
- When human beings “create” something, it means they made it out of things that already existed.
- Sometimes “create” is used in a figurative way to describe something abstract, such as creating peace or creating a pure heart in someone.
- The term “creation” can refer to the very beginning of the world when God first created everything. It can also be used to refer generally to everything that God created. Sometimes the word “creation” refers more specifically to just the people in the world.

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages may have to directly say that God created the world “out of nothing” to make sure this meaning is clear.
- The phrase, “since the creation of the world” means, “since the time when God created the world.”
- A similar phrase, “at the beginning of creation” could be translated as, “when God created the world at the beginning of time” or “when the world was first created.”
- To preach the good news “to all creation” means to preach the good news “to all people everywhere on earth.”
- The phrase, “Let all creation rejoice” means, “Let everything that God created rejoice.”
- Depending on the context, “create” could be translated as, “make” or “cause to be” or “make out of nothing.”
- The term “the Creator” could be translated as, “the One who created everything” or “God, who made the whole world.”
- Phrases like “your Creator” could be translated as, “God, who created you.”

(See: [God](#), [good news](#), [gospel](#), [world](#))

Bible References:

se, “since the creation of the world” means, “since the time when God created the world was created.

Waiting

creature**Definition:**

The term “creature” refers to all the living beings that God created, both humans and animals.

- The prophet Ezekiel described seeing “living creatures” in his vision of the glory of God. He did not know what they were, so he gave them this very general label.
- Note that the term “creation” has a different meaning since it includes everything God created, both living and nonliving things (such as land, water, and stars). The term “creature” only includes living things.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “creature” could be translated as, “being” or “living being” or “created being.”
- The plural, “creatures” could be translated as “all living things” or “people and animals” or “animals” or “human beings.”

(See also: [create](#), [creation](#), [Creator](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

crown, to crown**Definition:**

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term “to crown” means to put a crown on someone’s head; figuratively it means, “to honor.”

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king’s power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus’ head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, “to crown” means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Pauls calls fellow believers his “joy and crown.” In this expression, “crown” is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, “crown” could be translated as “prize” or “honor” or “reward.”
- The figurative use of “to crown” could be translated as “to honor” or “to decorate.”
- If a person is “crowned” this could be translated as “a crown was put on his head.”
- The expression, “he was crowned with glory and honor” could be translated as, “glory and honor were bestowed on him” or “he was given glory and honor” or “he was endowed with glory and honor.”

(See also: [glory](#), [glorious](#), [king](#), [olive](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

curse, cursed

Definition:

The term “curse” means to cause negative things to happen to the person or thing that is being cursed.

- A curse can be a statement that harm will happen to someone or something.
- To curse someone can also be an expression of desire that bad things will happen to them.
- It can also refer to the punishment or other negative things that someone causes to happen to someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “cause bad things to happen to” or “declare that something bad will happen to” or “swear to cause evil things to happen to.”
- In the context of God sending curses on his disobedient people, it could be translated as, “punish by allowing bad things to happen.”
- The term “cursed” when used to describe people could be translated as, “(this person) will experience much trouble.”
- The phrase “cursed be” could be translated as, “May (this person) experience great difficulties.”
- The phrase, “Cursed is the ground” could be translated as, “The soil will not be very fertile.”
- “Cursed be the day I was born” could also be translated as, “I am so miserable it would have been better not to be born.”
- However, if the target language has the phrase “cursed be” and it has the same meaning, then it is good to keep the same phrase.

(See also: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02-09] God said to the snake, “You are **cursed!**”
- [02-11] “Now the ground is **cursed**, and you will need to work hard to grow food.”
- [04-04] “I will bless those who bless you and **curse** those who **curse** you.”
- [39-07] Then Peter vowed, saying, “May God **curse** me if I know this man!”
- [50-16] Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God **cursed** it and decided to destroy it.

Cush

Facts:

Cush was the oldest son of Noah's son Ham. He was also the ancestor of Nimrod. Two of his brothers were named Egypt and Canaan.

- In Old Testament times, "Cush" was the name of a large region of land south of Israel. It is probable that the land was named after Ham's son Cush.
- The ancient region of Cush covered an area of land that may have at different times included parts of the modern-day countries of Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, and possibly, Saudi Arabia.
- Another man named Cush is mentioned in the Psalms. He was a Benjamite.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Arabia](#), [Arabian](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Ethiopian](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

cut off**Definition:**

The expression “be cut off” is an expression that means to be excluded, banished or isolated from the main group. It can also refer to being killed as an act of divine judgment for sin.

- In the Old Testament, disobeying God’s commands resulted in being cut off, or separated, from God’s people and from his presence.
- God also said he would “cut off” or destroy the non-Israelite nations, because they did not worship or obey him and were enemies of Israel.
- The expression “cut off” is also used to refer to God causing a river to stop flowing.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression “be cut off” could be translated as “be banished” or “be sent away” or “be separated from” or “be killed” or “be destroyed.”
- Depending on the context, “to cut off” could be translated as, “to destroy” or “to send away” or “to separate from” or “to destroy.”
- In the context of flowing waters being cut off, this could be translated as “were stopped” or “were caused to stop flowing” or “were divided.”
- The literal meaning of cutting something with a knife should be distinguished from the figurative uses of this term.

Bible References:

Waiting

cypress

Definition:

The term “cypress” refers to a kind of fir tree that was plentiful in the regions where people lived in Bible times, especially countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

- Cyprus and Lebanon are two places that are specifically mentioned in the Bible as having many cypress trees.
- The wood that Noah used to build the ark may have been cypress.
- Because cypress wood is sturdy and long-lasting, it was used by ancient peoples for building boats and other structures.

(See also: [ark](#), [Cyprus](#), [fir](#), [Lebanon](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Damascus

Facts:

Damascus is the capital city of the country of Syria. It is still in the same location as it was in Bible times.

- Damascus is one of the oldest, continuously inhabited cities in the world.
- During the time of Abraham, Damascus was the capital of the Aram kingdom (located in what is now Syria).
- Throughout the Old Testament, there are many references to the interactions between the inhabitants of Damascus and the people of Israel.
- Several biblical prophecies predict the destruction of Damascus. These prophecies may have been fulfilled when Assyria destroyed the city during Old Testament times, or there may be also be a future. more complete destruction of this city.
- In the New Testament, the Pharisee Saul (later known as Paul) was on his way to arrest Christians in the city of Damascus when Jesus confronted him and caused him to become a believer.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Aram](#), [Aramean](#), [Aramaic](#), [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [believer](#), [Syria](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Dan

Facts:

Dan was the fifth son of Jacob and was one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The region settled by the tribe of Dan in the northern part of Canaan also was given this name.

- During the time of Abram, there was a city named Dan located west of Jerusalem.
- Years later, during the time the nation of Israel entered the promised land, a different city named Dan was located about 60 miles north of Jerusalem.
- The term, “Danites” refers to the descendants of Dan, who were also members of his clan.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Jerusalem](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

death, die, dead

Definition:

This term is used to refer to both physical and spiritual death. Physically, it refers to when the physical body of a person stops living. Spiritually, it refers to sinners being separated from a holy God because of their sin.

1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- A person’s spirit leaves his body when he dies.
- When Adam and Eve sinned, physical death came into the world.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Spiritual death

- Spiritual death is the separation of a person from God.
- Adam died spiritually when he disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- Every descendant of Adam is a sinner, and is spiritually dead. God makes us spiritually alive again when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression that refers to death in the target language.
- In some languages, “to die” may be expressed as “to not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
- Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as “to pass away” in English. However in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
- In the Bible, physical life and death are often compared to spiritual life and death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and spiritual death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “spiritual death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression, “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as, “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)
- The expression, “put to death” could also be translated as, “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [faith](#), [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[01-11]** God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would **die**.
- **[02-11]** "Then you will **die**, and your body will return to dirt."
- **[07-10]** Then Isaac **died**, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
- **[37-05]** "Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he **dies**. Everyone who believes in me will never **die**."
- **[40-08]** Through his **death**, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
- **[43-07]** "Although Jesus **died**, God raised him from the dead."
- **[48-02]** Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone **dies**.
- **[50-17]** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or **death**.
-

deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive

Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true. The act of deceiving someone is called “deceit.”

- Another term, “deception” also refers to the act of causing someone to believe something that is not true.
- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms, “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as, “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as, “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated by “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See: [true](#), [truth](#), [come true](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

{{tag>publish review}}

declare, declaration

Definition:

The terms “declare” and “declaration” refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something.

- A “declaration” not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by, “the declaration of Yahweh” or “this is what Yahweh declares.” This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “declare” could also be translated as “proclaim” or “publicly state” or “strongly say” or “emphatically state.”
- The term “declaration” could also be translated as, “statement” or “proclamation.”
- The phrase, “this is Yahweh’s declaration” could be translated as, “this is what Yahweh declares” or “this is what Yahweh says.”

(See also: [proclaim](#), [proclamation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

deer, doe, buck, roebuck, fawn

Definition:

A deer is a large, graceful, four-legged animal that lives in forests or on mountains. The male animal has large horns or antlers on its head.

- The term “doe” refers to a female deer and a “fawn” is the name of a baby deer.
- The term “buck” refers to a male deer.
- A “roebuck” is the male of the specific variety called “roedeer.”
- Deer have strong, thin legs that help them jump high and run fast.
- Their feet have split hooves which help them walk or climb easily on most any terrain.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

defile, be defiled**Definition:**

The terms “defile” and “be defiled” refer to becoming polluted or dirty. Something can be defiled in a physical, moral, or ritual sense.

- God warned the Israelites to not defile themselves by eating or touching things that he had declared as “unclean” and “unholy.”
- Certain things such as dead bodies and contagious diseases were declared by God to be unclean and would defile a person if they touched them.
- God commanded the Israelites to avoid sexual sins. These would defile them and make them unacceptable to God.
- There were also certain kinds of bodily processes that defiled a person temporarily until he could become ritually pure again.
- In the New Testament, Jesus taught that sinful thoughts and actions are what truly defile a person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “defile” can also be translated as “cause to be unclean” or “cause to be unrighteous” or “cause to be ritually unacceptable.”
- To “be defiled” could be translated as “become unclean” or “be caused to be morally unacceptable (to God)” or “become ritually unacceptable.”

(See also: [unclean](#), [clean](#), [cleanse](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

descendant, descended from

Definition:

A “descendant” is someone who is a direct blood relative of someone else further back in history.

- For example, Abraham was a descendant of Noah.
- A person’s descendants are his children, grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and so on. Jacob’s descendants were the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The phrase “descended from” is another way of saying “a descendant of” as in, “Abraham was descended from Noah.” This could also be translated as, “from the family line of.”

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [ancestor](#), [father](#), [forefather](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Noah](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02-09] ”The woman’s **descendant** will crush your head, and you will wound his heel.”
- [04-09] ”I give the land of Canaan to your **descendants**.”
- [05-10] ”Your **descendants** will be more than the stars in the sky.”
- [17-07] ”Someone from your family will always rule as king over Israel, and the Messiah will be one of your **descendants!**”
- [18-13] The kings of Judah were **descendants** of David.
- [21-04] God promised King David that the Messiah would be one of David’s own **descendants**.
- [48-13] God promised David that the Messiah would be one of his **descendants**. Jesus, the Messiah, was that special **descendant** of David.

desert, wilderness

Definition:

A desert, or wilderness, is a dry, barren place where very few plants and trees can grow.

- A desert is a land area with a dry climate and few plants or animals.
- Because of the harsh conditions, very few people can live in the desert, so it is also referred to as “wilderness.”
- “Wilderness” conveys the meaning of being remote, desolate and isolated from people.
- This word can also be translated as “deserted place” or “remote place” or “uninhabited place.”

Bible References:

Waiting

desolate, desolation

Definition:

The terms “desolate” and “desolation” refer to destroying an inhabited region so that it becomes uninhabited.

- When referring to a person, the term “desolate” describes a condition of ruin, loneliness, and grief.
- The term “desolation” is the state or condition of being desolated.
- If a field where crops are growing is made desolate, it means that something has destroyed the crops, such as insects or an invading army.
- A “desolate region” refers to an area of land where few people live because few crops or other vegetation grow there.
- A “desolate land” or “wilderness” was often where outcasts (such as lepers) and dangerous animals lived.
- If a city is “made desolate” it means that its buildings and goods have been destroyed or stolen, and its people have been killed or captured. The city becomes “empty” and “ruined.” This is similar to the meaning of “devastate” or “devastated,” but with more emphasis on the emptiness.
- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “ruined” or “destroyed” or “laid waste” or “lonely and outcast” or “deserted.”

(See also: [desert](#), [wilderness](#), [devastate](#), [devastation](#), [ruin](#), [ruins](#), [waste](#), [wasteland](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

detestable, detest

Facts:

The term “detestable” describes something that should be disliked and rejected. To “detest” something means to strongly dislike it.

- Often the Bible talks about detesting evil. This means to hate evil and reject it.
- God used the word “detestable” to describe the evil practices of those who worshiped false gods.
- The Israelites were commanded to “detest” the sinful, immoral acts that some of the neighboring people groups practiced.
- God called all wrong sexual acts “detestable.”
- Divination, sorcery, and child sacrifice were all “detestable” to God.
- The term “detest” could be translated as, “strongly reject” or “hate” or “regard as very evil.”
- The term “detestable” could also be translated as “horribly evil” or “disgusting” or “deserving rejection.”
- When applied to the righteous being “detestable to” the wicked, this could be translated as “considered very undesirable to” or “distasteful to” or “rejected by.”
- God told the Israelites to “detest” certain kinds of animals that God had declared to be “unclean” and not suitable for food. This could also be translated as “strongly dislike” or “reject” or “regard as unacceptable.”

(See also: [divination](#), [diviner](#), [soothsaying](#), [soothsayer](#), [unclean](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

devastate, devastation

Definition:

The term “devastated” or “devastation” refers to having one’s property or land ruined or destroyed. It also often includes destroying or capturing the people living on that land.

- This refers to a very severe and complete destruction.
- For example, the city of Sodom was devastated by God as punishment for the sins of the people living there.
- The term “devastation” can also include causing great emotional grief resulting from the punishment or destruction.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “devastate” could be translated as “completely destroy” or “completely ruin.”
- Depending on the context, “devastation” could be translated as “complete destruction” or “total ruin” or “overwhelming grief” or “disaster.”

Bible References:

Waiting

devour**Definition:**

The term “devour” means to eat or consume in an aggressive manner.

- Using this word in a figurative sense, Paul warned believers to not devour one another, meaning to not attack or destroy each other with words or actions (Galatians 5:15).
- Also in a figurative sense, the term “devour” is often used with a meaning of “completely destroy” as when talking about nations devouring each other or a fire devouring buildings and people.
- This term could also be translated as “completely consume” or “totally destroy.”

(See also: other)

Bible References:

Waiting

discern, discernment

Definition:

The term “discern” means to be able to understand something, especially being able to know whether something is right or wrong.

- The term “discernment” refers to understanding and deciding wisely about a certain matter.
- It means to have wisdom and good judgment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “discern” could also be translated as “understand” or “know the difference between” or “distinguish good and evil” or “judge rightly about” or “perceive right from wrong.”
- “Discernment” could be translated as, “understanding” or “ability to distinguish good and evil.”

(See also: [judge](#), [judgment](#), [wise](#), [wisdom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

disgrace, disgraceful

Facts:

The term “disgrace” refers to a loss of honor and respect.

- When a person does something sinful, it can cause him to be in a state of disgrace or dishonor.
- The term “disgraceful” is used to describe a sinful act or the person who did it.
- Sometimes a person who is doing good things is treated in a way that causes him disgrace or shame.
- For example, when Jesus was killed on a cross, this was a disgraceful way to die. Jesus had done nothing wrong to deserve this disgrace.
- Ways to translate “disgrace” could include “shame” or “dishonor.”
- Ways to translate “disgraceful” could include “shameful” or dishonoring.”

(See also: [dishonor](#), [dishonorable](#), [honor](#), [to honor](#), [shame](#), [shameful](#), [ashamed](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

divination, diviner, soothsaying, soothsayer

Definition:

The terms “divination” and “soothsaying” refer to the practice of trying to get information from spirits in the supernatural world. A person who does this is sometimes called a “diviner” or “soothsayer.”

- In Old Testament times, God commanded the Israelites to not practice divination or soothsaying.
- God did permit his people to seek information from him using the Urim and Thummim, which were stones that he had designated to be used by the high priest for that purpose. But he did not allow his people to seek information through the help of evil spirits.
- Pagan diviners used different methods of trying to find out information from the spirit world. Sometimes they would examine the inside parts of a dead animal or throw animal bones on the ground, looking for patterns that they would interpret as messages from their false gods.
- In the New Testament, Jesus and the apostles also rejected divination, sorcery, witchcraft, and magic. All these practices involve using the power of evil spirits and are condemned by God.

(See also: [apostle](#), [apostleship](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [magic](#), [magician](#), [sorcery](#), [sorcerer](#), [witchcraft](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

donkey, mule

Definition:

A donkey is a four-legged work animal, similar to a horse, but smaller and with longer ears.

- A mule is the sterile offspring of a male donkey and a female horse.
- Mules are very strong animals and so they are valuable work animals.
- Both donkeys and mules are used for carrying burdens and people when traveling.
- In Bible times, kings would ride a donkey in times of peace, rather than a horse, which was used for times of war.
- Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey a week before he was crucified there.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

u

dove, pigeon

Definition:

Doves and pigeons are two kinds of small, gray-brown birds that look similar. A dove is often thought of as being lighter in color, almost white.

- Some languages have two different names for them, while others use the same name for both.
- Doves and pigeons were used in sacrifices to God, especially for people who could not afford to buy a larger animal.
- A dove brought the leaf of an olive tree to Noah when the flood waters were going down.
- Doves sometimes symbolize purity, innocence, or peace.
- If doves or pigeons are not known in the language area where the translation is being done, this term could be translated as “a small grayish brown bird called a dove” or “a small gray or brown bird, similar to a (name of local bird)”.
- If both a dove and a pigeon are referred to in the same verse, it is best to use two different words for these birds, if possible.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [olive](#), [innocent](#), [pure](#), [purify](#), [purification](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

dream

Definition:

A dream is something that people see or experience in their minds while they are sleeping.

- Dreams often seem like they are really happening, but they are not.
- Sometimes God causes people to dream about something so they can learn from it. He may also speak directly to people in their dreams.
- In the Bible, God gave special dreams to certain people to give them a message, often about something that would happen in the future.
- A dream is different from a vision. Dreams happen while a person is asleep, but visions usually happen when a person is awake.

(See also: [vision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-02]** Joseph's brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had **dreamed** that he would be their ruler.
- **[08-06]** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two **dreams** that disturbed him greatly. None of his advisors could tell him the meaning of the **dreams**.
- **[08-07]** God had given Joseph the ability to interpret **dreams**, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison. Joseph interpreted the **dreams** for him and said, "God is going to send seven years of plentiful harvests followed by seven years of famine."
- **[16-11]** So that night, Gideon went down to the camp and heard a Midianite soldier telling his friend about something he had **dreamed**. The man's friend said, "This **dream** means that Gideon's army will defeat the Midianite army!"
- **[23-01]** He (Joseph) did not want to shame her (Mary), so he planned to quietly divorce her. Before he could do that, an angel came and spoke to him in a **dream**.

drink offering

Definition:

A drink offering was a sacrifice to God that involved pouring wine on an altar. It was often offered together with a burnt offering and a grain offering.

- Paul refers to his life as being poured out like a drink offering. This means that he was totally dedicated to serving God and telling people about Jesus, even though he knew he would suffer and probably be killed because of that.
- Jesus' death on the cross was the ultimate drink offering, as his blood was poured out on the cross for our sins.

Translation Suggestions:

- Another way to translate this term could be, "offering of grape wine."
- When Paul says he is being "poured out like an offering" this could also be translated as, "I am completely committed to teaching God's message to people, just like an offering of wine is poured out completely on the altar."

(See also: [burnt offering](#), [offering by fire](#), [grain offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Eden, garden of Eden

Facts:

In ancient times, Eden was a region that had a garden where God placed the first man and woman to live.

- The garden where Adam and Eve lived was only part of Eden.
- The exact location of the region of Eden is not certain, but the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers were flowing through it.
- The word “Eden” comes from a Hebrew word meaning “to take great delight in.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Adam](#), [Euphrates River](#), [Eve](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Edom, Edomite, Idumea

Facts:

Edom was another name for Esau. The region where he lived also became known as “Edom” and later, “Idumea.” The “Edomites” were his descendants.

- The region of Edom changed locations over time. It was mostly located to the south of Israel and eventually extended into southern Judah.
- During New Testament times, Edom covered the southern half of the province of Judea. The Greeks called it “Idumea.”
- The name “Edom” means “red,” which may refer to the fact that Esau was covered with red hair when he was born. Or it may refer to the red lentil stew that Esau traded his birthright for.
- In the Old Testament, the country of Edom is often mentioned as an enemy of Israel.
- The entire book of Obadiah is about the destruction of Edom. Other Old Testament prophets also spoke negative prophecies against Edom.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [adversary](#), [enemy](#), [birthright](#), [Esau](#), [Obadiah](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Egypt, Egyptian

Facts:

Egypt is a country in the northeast part of Africa, to the southwest of the land of Canaan. An Egyptian is a person who is from the country of Egypt.

- In ancient times, Egypt was a powerful and wealthy country.
- Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts, Lower Egypt (northern part where the Nile River flowed downward into the sea) and Upper Egypt (southern part). In the Old Testament, these parts are referred to as “Egypt” and “Pathros” in the original language text.
- Several times when there was little food in Canaan, Israel’s patriarchs traveled to Egypt to buy food for their families.
- For several hundred years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph and Mary went down to Egypt with the young child Jesus, to escape from Herod the Great.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Herod the Great](#), [Joseph \(NT\)](#), [Nile River](#), [River of Egypt](#), [patriarchs](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-04]** The slave traders took Joseph to **Egypt**. **Egypt** was a large, powerful country located along the Nile River.
- **[08-08]** Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of **Egypt**!
- **[08-11]** So Jacob sent his older sons to **Egypt** to buy food.
- **[08-14]** Even though Jacob was an old man, he moved to **Egypt** with all of his family, and they all lived there.
- **[09-01]** After Joseph died, all of his relatives stayed in **Egypt**.

encourage, encouragement

Definition:

The terms “encourage” and encouragement” refer to saying and doing things to cause someone to have comfort, hope, confidence, and courage.

- A similar term is “exhort,” which means to urge someone to reject an activity that is wrong and to instead do things that are good and right.
- The apostle Paul and other New Testament writers taught Christians to encourage one another to love and serve others.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “encourage” could include, “urge” or “comfort” or “say kind things” or “help and support.”
- The phrase, “give words of encouragement” means, “say things that cause other people to feel loved, accepted, and empowered.”

(See also: [exhort](#), [exhortation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Enoch

Facts:

Enoch is the name of two men in the Old Testament.

- One man named Enoch was descended from Seth. He was the great grandfather of Noah.
- This Enoch had a close relationship with God and when he was 365 years old, God took him to heaven without dying.
- A different man named Enoch was a son of Cain.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Cain](#), [Noah](#), [Seth](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

enslave, in bondage

Definition:

To “enslave” someone means to force that person to serve a master or a ruling country. To be “enslaved” or “in bondage” means to be under the control of something or someone.

- A person who is enslaved or in bondage must serve others without payment; he is not free to do what he wants.
- To “enslave” also means to take away a person’s freedom.
- Another word for “bondage” is “slavery.”
- In a figurative way, human beings are “enslaved” to sin until Jesus frees them from its control and power.
- When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “enslave” could be translated as “cause to not be free” or “force to serve others” or “put under the control of others.”
- The phrase “enslaved to” or “in bondage to” could be translated as “forced to be a slave of” or “forced to serve” or “under the control of.”

(See also: [free](#), [freedom](#), [liberty](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

envy, covet

Definition:

The term “envy” refers to being jealous of someone because of what that person possesses or because of that person’s admirable qualities. The term “covet” means to envy someone to the point of strongly desiring to have something that person has.

- Envy is normally a negative feeling of resentment because of another person’s success, good fortune, or possessions.
- Coveting is a strong desire to have someone else’s property, or even, someone else’s spouse.

(See also: [jealous](#), [jealousy](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Ephraim

Facts:

Ephraim was the second son of Joseph. His descendants, the Ephraimites, formed one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

- The tribe of Ephraim was one of the ten tribes that were located in the northern part of Israel.
- Sometimes the name Ephraim is used in the Bible to refer to the whole northern kingdom of Israel. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- Ephraim was apparently a very mountainous or hilly area, based on references to “the hill country of Ephraim” or “the mountains of Ephraim.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Israel](#), [kingdom of Israel](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Esau

Facts:

Esau was one of the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. He was the first baby born. His twin brother was Jacob.

- Esau sold his birthright to his brother Jacob in exchange for a bowl of food.
- Since Esau was born first, his father Isaac was supposed to give him a special blessing. But Jacob tricked Isaac into giving him that blessing instead. At first Esau was so angry that he wanted to kill Jacob, but later he forgave him.
- Esau had many children and grandchildren, and these descendants formed a large people group living in the land of Canaan.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Edom](#), [Edomite](#), [Idumea](#), [Isaac](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Rebekah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[06-07]** When Rebekah's babies were born, the older son came out red and hairy, and they named him **Esau**.
- **[07-02]** So **Esau** gave Jacob his rights as the oldest son.
- **[07-04]** When Isaac felt the goat hair and smelled the clothes, he thought it was **Esau** and blessed him.
- **[07-05]** **Esau** hated Jacob because Jacob had stolen his rights as oldest son and also his blessing.
- **[07-10]** But **Esau** had already forgiven Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.

everlasting, eternal, eternity

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.
- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include, “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include, “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [forever](#), [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[27-01]** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- **[28-01]** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”
- **[28-10]** Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

Euphrates River

Facts:

The Euphrates is the name of one of the four rivers that flowed through the Garden of Eden. It is the river that is most often mentioned in the Bible.

- The modern day river named Euphrates is located in the Middle East and is the longest and most important river in Asia.
- Together with the Tigris River, the Euphrates borders a region of land known as Mesopotamia.
- The ancient city of Ur where Abraham came from was at the mouth of the Euphrates River.
- This river was one of the boundaries of the land that God promised to give to Abraham (Genesis 15:18).
- Sometimes the Euphrates is simply called “the River.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Eve

Facts:

This was the name of the first woman. Her name means “life” or “living.”

- God formed Eve from a rib that he took out of Adam.
- Eve was created to be Adam’s “helper.” She came alongside Adam to assist him in the work that God gave them to do.
- Eve was tempted by Satan (in the form of a snake) and was the first to sin by eating the fruit that God said not to eat.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Adam](#), [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#), [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[01-13]** Then God took one of Adam’s ribs and made it into a woman and brought her to him.
- **[02-02]** But there was a crafty snake in the garden. He asked the woman, “Did God really tell you not to eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”
- **[02-11]** The man named his wife **Eve**, which means “life-giver,” because she would become the mother of all people.
- **[21-01]** God promised that a descendant of **Eve** would be born who would crush the snake’s head.
- **[48-02]** Satan spoke through the snake in the garden in order to deceive **Eve**.
- **[49-08]** When Adam and **Eve** sinned, it affected all of their descendants.
- **[50-16]** Because Adam and **Eve** disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God cursed it and decided to destroy it.

evil, wicked, wickedness

Definition:

The terms “evil” and “wicked” both refer to anything that is opposed to God’s holy character and will.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering or being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral”
- Other ways to translate these could include, “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [good](#), [goodness](#), [righteous](#), demon, evil spirit, unclean spirit)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[02-04]** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- **[03-01]** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **[03-02]** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **[04-02]** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **[08-12]** “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- **[14-02]** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **[17-01]** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **[18-11]** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.

- [29-08] The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- [45-02] They said, "We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!"
- [50-17] He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

face

Definition:

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings.

- The expression “your face” is often a figurative way of saying “you.” Similarly, the expression “my face” often means, “I” or “me.”
- In a physical sense, “to face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide: to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine that affected many people living on earth.
- The figurative expression, “do not hide your face from your people” means “do not reject your people” or “do not desert your people” or “do not stop taking care of your people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the expression or use an expression in the project language that has a similar meaning.
- The term “to face” could be translated as “to turn toward” or “to look at directly” or “to look at the face of.”
- The expression “face to face” could be translated as “up close” or “right in front of” or “in the presence of.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “before his face” could be translated as, “ahead of him” or “in front of him” or “before him” or “in his presence.”
- The expression, “set his face toward” could be translated as “began traveling toward” or “firmly made up his mind to go to.”
- The expression, “hide his face from” could be translated as, “turn away from” or “stop helping or protecting” or “reject.”
- To “set his face against” a city or people could be translated as, “look at with anger and condemn” or “refuse to accept” or “decide to reject” or “condemn and reject” or “pass judgment on.”
- The expression, “say it to their face” could be translated as, “say it to them directly” or “say it to them in their presence” or “say it to them in person.”
- The expression, “on the face of the land” could also be translated as, “throughout the land” or “over the whole earth” or “living throughout the earth.”

Bible References:

Waiting

faith

Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression, “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- The expression, “keep the faith” could be translated by, “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence, “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by, “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression, “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like, “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-06]** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **[31-07]** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, “You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?”
- **[32-16]** Jesus said to her, “Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace.”

- **[38-09]** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.

faithful, faithfulness

Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means, “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include, “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

(See also: [faith](#), [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [08-05] Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- [14-12] Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- [15-13] The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- [17-09] David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- [18-04] God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s **unfaithfulness**, he promised to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after Solomon’s death.
- [35-12]”The older son said to his father, ‘All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!’
- [49-17] But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- [50-04] If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you.”

false god, foreign god, god, goddess

Definition:

A false god is something that people worship instead of the one true God. The term “goddess” refers specifically to a female false god.

- These false gods or goddesses do not exist. Yahweh is the only God.
- People sometimes make objects into idols to worship as symbols of their false gods.
- In the Bible, God’s people frequently turned away from obeying him in order to worship false gods.
- Demons often deceive people into believing that the false gods and idols they worship have power.
- Baal, Dagon, and Molech were three of the many false gods that were worshiped by people in Bible times.
- Asherah and Artemis (Diana) were two of the goddesses that ancient peoples worshiped.

Translation Suggestions:

- There may already be a word for “god” or “false god” in the language or in a nearby language.
- The term “idol” could be used to refer to false gods.
- In English, a lower case “g” is used to refer to false gods, and upper case “G” is used to refer to the one true God. Other languages also do that.
- Another option would be to use a completely different word to refer to the false gods.
- Some languages may add a word to specify whether the false god is described as male or female.

(See also: [God](#), [Asherah](#), [Asherah poles](#), [Ashtoreth](#), [Baal](#), [Molech](#), [Moloch](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [image](#), [carved image](#), [carved figure](#), [cast metal figure](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[10-02]** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt’s **gods**.
- **[13-04]** Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other **gods**.”
- **[14-02]** They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- **[16-01]** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- **[18-13]** But most of Judah’s kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

famine

Definition:

The term “famine” refers to an extreme lack of food throughout a country or region, usually due to not enough rain.

- Food crops can fail from natural causes such as lack of rain, crop disease, or insects.
- Food shortages can also be caused by people, such as enemies destroying crops.
- In the Bible, God often caused famine as a way to punish nations when they sinned against him.
- In Amos 8:11 the term “famine” is used figuratively to refer to a time when God punished his people by not speaking to them. This could be translated with the word for “famine” in your language, or with a phrase such as, “extreme lack” or “severe deprivation.”

Bible References:

Waiting

ancestor, father, forefather

Definition:

When used literally, the term “father” refers to a person’s male parent. There are also several figurative uses of this term.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to the ancestors of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated as, “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4, “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader.”
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as, “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: [God the Father](#), [heavenly Father](#), [Father](#), [son](#), [son of](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

favor, favorable, favoritism

Definition:

The term “favor” refers to doing something to benefit someone who is regarded positively. Something that is “favorable” is positive, approving, or beneficial.

- The term “favoritism” means to act favorably toward some people but not others. Often favoritism is The term “favoritism” means acting favorably toward some people, but not others. shown toward people who are rich or are considered
- Jesus grew up “in favor with” God and men. This means they approved of his character and behavior.
- The expression “find favor” means that someone is approved of by someone else.
- When a king shows favor to someone, it often means that he approves of that person’s request and grants it.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term “favor” could include, “blessing” or “benefit.”
- The “favorable year of Yahweh” could be translated as, “the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing.”
- The term “favoritism” could be translated as, “partiality” or “being prejudiced” or “unjust treatment.” This word is related to the word “favorite” which means “the one who is preferred or loved best.”

“find favor” “increased in favor” “won the favor of”

Bible References:

Waiting

fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh

Definition:

The terms “fear” and “afraid” refer to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.

- The term “fear” can also refer to a deep respect and awe for a person in authority.
- The phrase “fear of Yahweh,” and related terms “fear of God” and “fear of the Lord,” refer to deeply respecting God and showing that respect by obeying him. This fear is motivated by knowing that God is holy and hates sin.
- The Bible teaches that a person who fears Yahweh will become wise.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “to fear” can be translated as “to be afraid” or “to deeply respect” or “to revere” or “to be in awe of.”
- The term “afraid” could be translated as “terrified” or “scared” or “fearful.”
- The sentence, “The fear of God fell on all of them” could be translated as, “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as, “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”
- Note that the phrase “fear of Yahweh” does not occur in the New Testament. The phrase “fear of the Lord” or “fear of the Lord God” would be used instead.

(See also: [marvel](#), [wonder](#), [amazed](#), [astonished](#), [awe](#), [awesome](#), [Lord](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

feast

Definition:

The term “feast” refers to an event where a group of people eat a very large meal together, often for the purpose of celebrating something. The action “to feast” means to eat a large amount of food or to participate in eating a feast together.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In Bible times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- A feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.
- The term “to feast” could also be translated as “to eat lavishly” or “to celebrate by eating lots of food” or “to eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as, “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: [festival](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

fig**Definition:**

A fig is a small, soft, sweet fruit that grows on trees. When ripe, this fruit can be a variety of colors, including brown, yellow, or purple.

- Fig trees can grow to be as tall as 6 meters high and their large leaves provide pleasant shade. The fruit is about 3-5 centimeters long.
- Adam and Eve used the leaves from fig trees to make clothing for themselves after they had sinned.
- Figs can be eaten raw, cooked, or dried. People also chop them into small pieces and press them into cakes to eat later.
- In Bible times, figs were important as a source of food and income.
- The presence of fruitful fig trees is frequently mentioned in the Bible as a sign of prosperity.
- Several times Jesus used fig trees as an illustration to teach his disciples spiritual truths.

Bible References:

Waiting

firstborn

Definition:

The term “firstborn” refers to an offspring of people or animals that is born first, before the other offspring are born. Usually the firstborn

- In the Bible, “firstborn” usually refers to the first male offspring that is born.
- In Bible times, the firstborn son was given a place of prominence and twice as much of his family inheritance as the other sons.
- Often it was the firstborn male of an animal that was sacrificed to God.
- This concept can also be used figuratively. For example, the nation of Israel is called God’s firstborn son because God gave it special privileges over other nations.
- Jesus, the Son of God is called God’s firstborn because of his importance and authority over everyone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “firstborn” occurs in the text alone, it could also be translated as “firstborn male” or “firstborn son,” since that is what is implied. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- Other ways to translate this term could include, “the son who was born first” or “the eldest son” or “the number one son.”
- When used figuratively to refer to Jesus, this could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “the son who has authority over everything” or “the Son who is first in honor.”
- Caution: Make sure the translation of this term in reference to Jesus does not imply that he was created.

(See: [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [son](#), [son of](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

flesh

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “flesh” literally refers to the soft tissue of the physical body of a human being or animal.

- The Bible also uses the term “flesh” in a figurative way to refer to all human beings or all living creatures.
- In the New Testament, the term “flesh” is used to refer to the sinful nature of human beings. This is often used in contrast to their spiritual nature.
- The expression, “own flesh and blood” refers to someone who is biologically related to another person, such as a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.
- The expression “flesh and blood” can also refer to a person’s ancestors or descendants.
- The expression, “one flesh” refers to the physical uniting of a man and woman in marriage.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of an animal’s body, “flesh” could be translated as “body” or “skin” or “meat.”
- When it is used to refer generally to all living creatures, this term could be translated as “living beings” or “everything that is alive.”
- When referring in general to all people, this term could be translated as “people” or “human beings” or “everyone who lives.”
- The expression, “flesh and blood” could also be translated as “relatives” or “family” or “kin-folk” or “family clan.” There may be contexts where it could be translated as “ancestors” or “descendants.”
- Some languages may have an expression that is similar in meaning to “flesh and blood.”
- The expression, “become one flesh” could be translated as, “unite sexually” or “become as one body” or “become like one person in body and spirit.” The translation of this expression should be checked to make sure it is acceptable in the project language and culture. (See: [Euphemism](#)). It should also be understood that this is figurative, and does not mean that the man and woman literally become one person.

Bible References:

Waiting

flock, herd**Definition:**

In the Bible, “flock” refers to a group of sheep or goats and “herd” refers to a group of cattle, oxen, or pigs.

- Different languages may have different ways of naming groups of animals or birds.
- For example, in English the term “herd” can also be used for sheep or goats, but in the Bible text it is not used this way.
- The term “flock” in English is also used for a group of birds, but it can not be used for pigs, oxen, or cattle.
- Consider what terms are used in your language to refer to different groups of animals.
- For verses that refer to “flocks and herds” it may be better to add “of sheep” or “of cattle” for example, if the language does not have different words to refer to different kinds of animal groups.

(See also: [goat](#), [kid](#), [ox](#), [oxen](#), [pig](#), [swine](#), [pork](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

flood

Definition:

The term “flood” literally refers to a large amount of water that completely covers over the land.

- This term is also used figuratively to refer to an overwhelming amount of something, especially something that happens suddenly.
- In Noah’s time, people had become so evil that God caused a worldwide flood to come over the entire surface of the earth, even covering the mountaintops. Everyone who was not in the boat with Noah drowned. All other floods cover a much smaller land area.
- This term can also be an action as in, “the land was flooded by river water.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the literal meaning of “flood” could include, “an overflowing of water” or “large amounts of water.”
- The figurative comparison, “like a flood” could keep the literal term, or a substitute term could be used that refers to something that has a flowing aspect to it, such as a river.
- For the expression “like a flood of water” where water is already mentioned, the word “flood” could be translated as “an overwhelming amount” or “an overflowing.”
- This term can be used as a metaphor as in, “do not let the flood sweep over me,” which means “do not let these overwhelming disasters happen to me” or “don’t let me be devastated by disasters” or “don’t let your anger devastate me.” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- The figurative expression, “I flood my bed with tears” could be translated as “my tears soak my bed with water like a flood.”

(See also: [ark](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

fool, foolish, folly

Definition:

The term “fool” refers to a person who often makes wrong choices, especially choosing to disobey. The term “foolish” describes a person or behavior that is not wise.

- In the Bible, the term “fool” usually refers to a person who does not believe or obey God. This is often contrasted to the wise person, who trusts in God and obeys God.
- In the Psalms, David describes a fool as a person who does not believe in God, who ignores all the evidence of God in his creation.
- The Old Testament book of Proverbs also gives many descriptions of what a fool, or foolish person, is like.
- The term “folly” refers to an action that is not wise because it is against God’s will. Often “folly” also includes the meaning of something that is ridiculous or dangerous.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “fool” could be translated as, “foolish person” or “unwise person” or “senseless person” or “ungodly person.”
- Ways to translate “foolish” could include, “lacking understanding” or “unwise” or “senseless.”

(See also: [wise](#), [wisdom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

foreigner, foreign, alien

Definition:

The term “foreigner” refers to a person living in a country that is not his own. Another name for a foreigner is an “alien.”

- In the Old Testament, this term especially refers to anyone who came from a different people group than the people he was living among.
- A foreigner is also a person whose language and culture is different from your own.
- For example, when Naomi and her family moved to Moab, they were foreigners there. When Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth later moved to Israel, Ruth was called a “foreigner” there because she was not originally from Israel.
- The apostle Paul told the Ephesians that before they knew Christ, they were “foreigners” to God’s covenant.
- Sometimes “foreigner” is translated as “stranger,” but it should not only refer to someone who is unfamiliar or unknown.

Bible References:

Waiting

forever**Definition:**

In the Bible, the term “forever” refers to never-ending time. Sometimes it is used figuratively to mean, “a very long time.”

- The term “forever and ever” emphasizes that something will always exist.
- The phrase “forever and ever” is a way of expressing what eternity or eternal life is. It also has the idea of time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referring to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase, “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase, “forever and ever” could also be translated as, “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as, “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of mine will always be reigning.”

(See also: [David](#), [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [eternity](#), [reign](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

forgive, forgiveness

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against a person who did something hurtful. “Forgiveness” is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean, “cancel” as in the expression, “forgive a debt.”
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “forgive” could be translated as, “pardon” or “cancel” or “release” or “not hold against” (someone).
- The term “forgiveness” could be translated by a word or phrase that means, “practice of not resenting” or “declaring (someone) as not guilty” or “the act of pardoning.”

(See: [guilt](#), [guilty](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [07-10] But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- [13-15] Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- [17-13] David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- [21-05] In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people’s hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- [29-01] One day Peter asked Jesus, “Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?”
- [29-08] I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- [38-05] Then Jesus took a cup and said, “Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins.

forsake, forsaken, forsook**Definition:**

The term “forsake” means to abandon someone or to give up something. Someone who has been “forsaken” has been deserted or abandoned by someone else.

- When people “forsake” God, it means they are being unfaithful to him by disobeying him.
- When God “forsakes” people, it means he has stopped helping them and allowed them to experience suffering in order to cause them to turn back to him.
- This term can also mean to forsake things, such as forsaking, or not following God’s teachings.
- The term “forsaken” can be used as past tense as in “he has forsaken you” or to refer to someone who has “been forsaken.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include, “abandon” or “neglect” or “give up” or “go away from” or “leave behind,” depending on the context.
- To “forsake” God’s law could be translated “disobey God’s law.” This could also be translated as “abandon” or “give up on” or “stop obeying” his teachings or his laws.
- The phrase “be forsaken” can be translated as “be abandoned” or “be deserted.”
- The project language may find it more clear to use different words to translate this term, depending on whether the text is talking about forsaking a thing or a person.

Bible References:

Waiting

fountain, spring

Definition:

The terms “fountain” and “spring” usually refer to a large amount of water that flows out naturally from the ground.

- These words are also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to blessings flowing from God or to refer to something that cleanses and purifies.
- In modern times, a fountain is often a manmade object that has water flowing out of it, such as a drinking fountain. Make sure that the translation of this term refers to a natural source of flowing water.
- Compare the translation of this term with how the term “flood” is translated.

(See also: [flood](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

fruit, fruitful

Definition:

The term “fruit” literally refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” has a lot of fruit. These terms are also used figuratively in the Bible.

- The Bible often uses “fruit” to refer to a person’s actions and thoughts. Just as fruit on a tree shows what kind of tree it is, in the same way a person’s words and actions reveal what his character is like.
- A person can produce good or bad spiritual fruit, but the term “fruitful” always has the positive meaning of producing much good fruit.
- The term “fruitful” is also used figuratively to mean “prosperous.” This often refers to having many children and descendants, as well as having plenty of food and other wealth.
- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the “fruit of wisdom” refers to the good things that come from being wise.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.
- The figurative expression “fruit of the Spirit” refers to godly qualities that the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of people who obey him.
- The expression, “fruit of the womb” refers to “what the womb produces,” that is, children.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term using the general word for “fruit” that is commonly used in the project language to refer to the edible fruit of a fruit tree. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural
- , “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- Depending on the context, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much spiritual fruit” or “having many children” or “prosperous.”
- The expression, “fruit of the land” could also be translated as, “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When God created animals and people, he commanded them to “be fruitful and multiply,” which refers to having many offspring. This could also be translated as, “have many offspring” or “have many children and descendants” or “have many children so that you will have many descendants.”
- The expression, “fruit of the womb” could be translated as “what the womb produces” or “children a women gives birth to” or just “children.” When Elisabeth says to Mary, “blessed is the fruit of your womb” she means, “blessed is the child you will give birth to.” The project language may also have a different expression for this.
- Another expression, “fruit of the vine” could be translated as “vine fruit” or “grapes.”

- Depending on the context, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as, “will produce more fruit” or “will have more children” or “will be prosperous.”
- The apostle Paul’s expression, “fruitful labor” could be translated as, “work that brings very good results” or “efforts that result in many people believing in Jesus.”
- The “fruit of the Spirit” could also be translated as “works that the Holy Spirit produces” or “words and actions that show that the Holy Spirit is working in you.”

(See also: [descendant](#), [grain](#), [grape](#)[Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [vine](#), [womb](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

fulfill

Definition:

The term “fulfill” means to complete or accomplish something that was expected.

- When a prophecy is fulfilled, it means that God causes to happen what was predicted in the prophecy.
- If a person fulfills a promise or a vow, it means that he does what he has promised to do.
- To fulfill a responsibility means to do the task that was assigned or required.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “fulfill” could be translated as “accomplish” or “complete” or “cause to happen” or “obey” or “perform.”
- The phrase “has been fulfilled” could also be translated as, “has come true” or “has happened” or “has taken place.”
- Ways to translate “fulfill” as in “fulfill your ministry” could include, “complete” or “perform” or “practice” or “serve other people as God has called you to do.”

(See also: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophecy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [minister](#), [ministry](#), [call](#), [calling](#), [called](#), [call out](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[24-04]** John **fulfilled** what the prophets said, “See I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.”
- **[40-03]** The soldiers gambled for Jesus’ clothing. When they did this, they **fulfilled** a prophecy that said, “They divided my garments among them, and gambled for my clothing.”
- **[42-07]** Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in God’s word must be **fulfilled**.”
- **[43-05]** “This **fulfills** the prophecy made by the prophet Joel in which God said, ‘In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.’”
- **[43-07]** “This **fulfills** the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’”
- **[44-05]** “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to **fulfill** the prophecies that the Messiah would suffer and die.”

furnace

Facts:

A furnace was a very large oven used for heating objects to a high temperature.

- In ancient times, most furnaces were used for melting metals to make objects such as cooking pots, jewelry, weapons, and idols.
- Furnaces were also used in the making of clay pottery.
- Sometimes a furnace is referred to figuratively to explain that something is very hot.

(See also: [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [image](#), [carved image](#), [carved figure](#), [cast metal figure](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Gad

Facts:

Gad is the name of one of the sons of Jacob, that is, Israel.

- Gad's family became one of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Another man in the Bible named Gad was a prophet who confronted King David for his sin of taking a census of the Israelite people.
- The cities, Baalgad and Migdalgad are each two words in the original text and are sometimes written, "Baal Gad" and "Migdal Gad."

(Translation suggestions:[How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [census](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

gate, gate bar**Definition:**

A “gate” is a hinged barrier at an access point in a fence or wall that surrounds a house or city. The “gate bar” refers to a wooden or metal bar that can be moved into place to lock the gate.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A city gate was often the news and social center of a village. It was also where business transactions occurred and judgments were made, because city walls were thick enough to have gateways that produced cool shade from the hot sun. Citizens found it pleasant to sit in the shade to conduct their business and even to judge legal cases.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “gate” could be, “door” or “wall opening” or “barrier” or “entranceway.”
- The phrase, “bars of the gate” could be translated as, “gate bolts” or “wooden beams to lock the gate” or “metal locking rods of the gate.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Gaza

Facts:

During Bible times, Gaza was a prosperous Philistine city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, about 38 kilometers south of Ashdod. It was one of the Philistines' five major cities.

- Because of its location, Gaza was a key seaport where commercial activities took place between many different people groups and nations.
- Today, the city of Gaza is still an important seaport in the Gaza Strip, which is a region of land located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea bordered by Israel on the north and east, and by Egypt on the south.
- Gaza was the city that the Philistines took Samson to after they had captured him.
- Philip the evangelist was walking along the desert road to Gaza when he met an Ethiopian eunuch.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Ashdod](#), [Azotus](#), [Philip, the evangelist](#), [Philistines](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Ethiopian](#), [Gath](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

generation

UNDER REVIEW

Definition:

The term “generation” refers to a group of people who were all born around the same time period.

- A generation can also refer to a span of time. In Bible times, a generation was usually considered to be about 40 years.
- Parents and their children are from two different generations.
- In the Bible, the term “generation” is also used figuratively to refer generally to people who share common characteristics.

Translation Suggestions

- The phrase “this generation” or “people of this generation” could be translated as, “the people living now” or “you people.”
- “This wicked generation” could also be translated as, “these wicked people living now.”
- The expression “from generation to generation” or “from one generation to the next” could be translated as, “people living now, as well as their children and grandchildren” or “people in every time period” or “people in this time period and future time periods” or “all people and their descendants.”
- “A generation to come will serve him; they will tell the next generation about Yahweh” could also be translated as “Many people in the future will serve Yahweh and will tell their children and grandchildren about him.”

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [ancestor](#), [father](#), [forefather](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Gerar

Facts:

Gerar is a city and region in the land of Canaan, located southwest of Hebron and northwest of Beersheba.

- King Abimelech was the ruler of Gerar when Abraham and Sarah settled there.
- The Philistines dominated the region of Gerar during the time that the Israelites were living in Canaan.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abimelech](#), [Beersheba](#), [Hebron](#), [Philistines](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

giant

Definition:

A giant usually refers to a person who is unusually large in height and strength.

- Goliath, a Philistine soldier who fought David, was called a giant because he was a very tall, large, and strong man.
- The Israelite spies who explored the land of Canaan said that the people living there were like giants.

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Goliath](#), [Philistines](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

gift

Definition:

The term “gift” refers to anything that is given or offered to someone. A gift is given without the expectation of getting anything in return

- Money, food, clothing, or other things given to poor people are called “gifts.”
- In the Bible, an offering or sacrifice given to God is also called a gift
- The gift of salvation is something God gives us through faith in Jesus.
- In the New Testament, the term “gifts” is also used to refer to special spiritual abilities that God gives to all Christians for serving other people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “gift” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “something that is given.”
- In the context of someone having a gift or special ability that comes from God, the term “gift from the Spirit” could be translated as, “spiritual ability” or “special ability from the Holy Spirit” or “special spiritual skill that God gave.”

(See also: [spirit](#), [spiritual](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Gilead

Definition:

Gilead is the name of a mountainous region east of the Jordan river, where the Israelite tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh lived.

- This region is also referred to as the “hill country of Gilead” or “Mount Gilead.”
- “Gilead” was also the name of several men in the Old Testament. One of these men was the grandson of Manasseh. Another Gilead was the father of Jephthah.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Gad](#), [Jephthah](#), [Manasseh](#), [Reuben](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Girgashites

Facts:

The Girgashites were a people group living near the Sea of Galilee in the land of Canaan.

- They were descendants of Ham's son Canaan and so were one of the many people groups who were also known as "Canaanites."
- God promised the Israelites that he would help them defeat the Girgashites and other Canaanite people groups.
- Like all the Canaanite peoples, the Girgashites worshiped false gods and did immoral things as part of that worship.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#) , [Ham](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

glory, glorious

Definition:

In general, the term “glory” means honor, splendor, and extreme greatness. Anything that has glory is said to be “glorious.”

- Sometimes “glory” refers to something of great value and importance. In other contexts it communicates splendor, brightness, or judgment.
- For example, the expression “glory of the shepherds” refers to the lush pastures where their sheep had plenty of grass to eat.
- Glory is especially used to describe God, who is more glorious than anyone or anything in the universe. Everything in his character reveals his glory and his splendor.
- The expression “to glory in” means to boast about or take pride in something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “glory” could include, “splendor” or “brightness” or “majesty” or “awesome greatness” or “extreme value.”
- The term “glorious” could be translated as “full of glory” or “extremely valuable” or “brightly shining” or “awesomely majestic.”
- The expression, “give glory to God” could be translated as “honor God’s greatness” or “praise God because of his splendor” or “tell others how great God is.”
- The expression “glory in” could also be translated as, “praise” or “take pride in” or “boast about” or “take pleasure in.”

(See also: [glorify](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [23-07] Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “**Glory** to God in heaven and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- [25-06] Then Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their **glory** and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- [37-01] When Jesus heard this news, he said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the **glory** of God.”
- [37-08] Jesus responded, “Did I not tell you that you would see God’s **glory** if you believe in me?”

goat, kid

Definition:

A goat is a medium-sized, four-legged animal which is similar to a sheep and is raised primarily for its milk and meat. A baby goat is called a “kid.”

- Like sheep, goats were important animals of sacrifice, especially at Passover.
- Although goats and sheep can be very similar, these are some ways that they are different:
 - Goats have coarse hair; sheep have wool.
 - The tail of a goat stands up; the tail of a sheep hangs down.
 - A sheep usually like to stay with their herd, but goats are more independent and tend to wander away from the herd.
- In Bible times, goats were often the main source of milk in Israel.
- Goat skins were used for tent coverings and to make bags for holding wine.
- In both the Old and New Testaments, the goat was used as a symbol for unrighteous people, perhaps because of their tendency to wander away from the one taking care of them.
- The Israelites also used goats as symbolic sin bearers. When one goat was sacrificed, the priest would lay his hands on a second live goat and send it into the desert as a symbol of the animal bearing the people’s sins.

(See also: [flock](#), [herd](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [wine](#), [wineskin](#), [new wine](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

God

Facts:

In the Bible, the term “God” refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God’s personal name is “Yahweh.”

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as “Yahweh” which means, “he is” or “I am” or “the One who (always) exists.”
- The Bible also teaches about false “gods” which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “God” could include, “Deity” or “Creator” or “Supreme Being.”
- Other ways to translate “God” could be, “Supreme Creator” or “Infinite Sovereign Lord” or “Eternal Supreme Being.”
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for “God” in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god.
- Another way to make this distinction would be to use two different terms for “God” and “god.”
- The phrase, “I will be their God and they will be my people” could also be translated as, “I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [create](#), [creation](#), [Creator](#), [false god](#), [god](#), [God the Father](#), [Heavenly Father](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [idol](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Yahweh](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [01-01]**God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- [01-15]**God** made man and woman in his own image.
- [05-03]"I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- [09-14]**God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- [10-02] Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- [16-01] The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- [22-07] You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- [24-09] There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- [25-07]"Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- [28-01]"There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."
- [49-09] But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- [50-16] But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

godly, godliness

Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase, “the godly” could be translated as, “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))
- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”
- The phrase, “in a godly manner” could be translated as, “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”
- Ways to translate “godliness” could include, “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”

(See also [honor](#), [to honor](#), [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [ungodly](#), [godless](#), [ungodliness](#), [godlessness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

gold

Definition:

Gold is a yellow-colored high-quality metal that was used for making jewelry and religious objects. It was the most valuable metal in ancient times.

- In Bible times, many different kinds of objects were made out of solid gold or were covered with a thin layer of gold.
- These objects included ear rings and other jewelry, idols, altars, and other objects used in the tabernacle or temple, such as the ark of the covenant.
- In Old Testament times, gold was used as a means of exchange in buying and selling. It was weighed on a scale to determine its value.
- Later on, gold and other metals such as silver were used to make coins to use in buying and selling
- When referring to something that is not solid gold, but only has a thin covering of gold, the term “golden” or “gold-covered” or “gold-overlaid” could also be used.
- Sometimes an object is described as “gold-colored” which means it has the yellow color of gold, but may not actually be made of gold.

(See also: [altar](#), [ark of the covenant](#), [ark of the covenant decrees](#), [ark of Yahweh](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [silver](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Gomorrah

Facts:

Gomorrah was a city located in a fertile valley, near Sodom where Abraham's nephew Lot chose to live.

- The exact location of Gomorrah and Sodom is unknown, but there are indications that they may have been located directly south of the Salt Sea, near the Valley of Siddim.
- There were many kings at war in the region where Sodom and Gomorrah were located.
- When Lot's family got captured in a conflict between Sodom and other cities, Abraham and his men rescued them.
- Not long after that, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God because of the wickedness of the people who lived there.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: , [Abraham](#), [Abram](#) , [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Lot](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#), [Sodom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

good, goodness

Definition:

The word “good” has different meanings depending on the context. Many languages will use different words to translate these different meanings.

- In general, something is good if it fits with God’s character, purposes, and will.
- Something that is “good” could be pleasing, excellent, helpful, suitable, profitable, or morally right.
- Land that is “good” could be called “fertile” or “productive.”
- A “good” crop could be a “plentiful” crop.
- A person can be “good” at what they do if they are skillful at their task or profession, as in, “a good farmer.”
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”
- The term “goodness” usually refers to being morally good or righteous in thoughts and actions.
- The goodness of God refers to how he blesses people by giving them good and beneficial things. It also can refer to his moral perfection.

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include, “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as, “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone.
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include, “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [holy](#), [holiness](#), [profit](#), [profitable](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [01-04] God saw that what he had created was **good**.

- [01-11] God planted...the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.”
- [01-12] Then God said, ”It is not **good** for man to be alone.”
- [02-04]”God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does.”
- [08-12]”You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good!**”
- [14-15] Joshua was a **good** leader because he tTable of Contentsrusted and obeyed God.
- [18-13] Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- [28-01]”**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus said to him, ”Why do you call me ‘**good?**’ There is only one who is **good**, and that is God.”

Goshen

Definition:

Goshen is the name of a fertile region of land that was located along the Nile River in the northern part of Egypt.

- When Joseph was a ruler in Egypt, his father and brothers and their families came to live in Goshen to escape a famine in Canaan.
- They and their descendants lived well in Goshen for over 400 years, but then they were forced into slavery by the Egyptian pharaoh.
- Finally God sent Moses to help the people of Israel leave the land of Goshen and escape this slavery.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [famine](#), [Moses](#), [Nile River](#), [River of Egypt](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

governor, govern, proconsul, government

Definition:

A “governor” is a person who rules over a state, region, or territory. The word “govern” means to guide, lead, or manage people.

- The term “proconsul” was a more specific title for a governor who ruled over a Roman province.
- In Bible times, governors were appointed by a king or emperor and were under his authority.
- A “government” is made up of all the rulers who govern a certain country or empire. These rulers make laws that guide the behavior of their citizens so that there is peace, safety, and prosperity for all the people of that nation.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “governor” can also be translated as “ruler” or “overseer” or “regional leader” or “one who rules over a small territory.”
- Depending on the context, the term “govern” could also be translated as, “rule over” or “lead” or “manage” or supervise.”
- The term “governor” should be translated differently than the terms for king or emperor, since a governor was a less powerful ruler who was under their authority.
- The term “proconsul” could also be translated as, “Roman governor” or “Roman provincial ruler.”

(See also: [authority](#), [king](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [province](#), [provincial](#), [Rome](#), [Roman](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

grace, gracious**Definition:**

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression “to find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include, “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression, “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as, “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

Bible References:

Waiting

grain

Definition:

The term “grain” usually refers to the seed of a food plant such as wheat, barley, corn, millet, or rice. It can also refer to the whole plant.

- In the Bible, the main grains that are referred to are wheat and barley.
- The heads of grain are the part of the plant that holds the grain.
- Note that some older Bible versions use the word “corn” to refer to grain in general. In modern English however, “corn” only refers to one type of grain.

(See also: [head](#), [wheat](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

grape

Definition:

A grape is a small, round, smooth-skinned berry fruit that grows in clusters on vines. The juice of grapes is used in making wine.

- There are different colors of grapes, such as light green, purple, or red.
- Individual grapes can be around one to three centimeters in size.
- People grow grapes in gardens called vineyards. These normally consist of long rows of vines.
- Grapes were a very important food during Bible times and having vineyards was a sign of wealth.
- In order to keep grapes from rotting, people would often dry them. Dried grapes are called “raisins” and they were used to make raisin cakes.
- Jesus told a parable about a grape vineyard to teach his disciples about God’s kingdom.

(See also: [vine](#), [vineyard](#), [wine](#), [wineskin](#), [new wine](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

guilt, guilty

Definition:

The term “guilt” refers to the fact of having sinned or committed a crime.

- To “be guilty” means to have done something morally wrong, that is, to have disobeyed God.
- The opposite of “guilty” is “innocent.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages might translate “guilt” as “the weight of sin” or “the counting of sins.”
- Ways to translate “to be guilty” could include a word or phrase that means, “to be at fault” or “having done something morally wrong” or “having committed a sin.”

ULB exs: take away the guilt of your sin, take away your guilt, guilt offering, punish your guilt, no guilt for murder will attach to him, carry his own guilt, wash away his guilt, be in great guilt, our guilt grows to the heavens

(See also: [innocent](#), [iniquity](#)[punish](#), [punishment](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#).)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[39-02]** They brought many witnesses who lied about him (Jesus). However, their statements did not agree with each other, so the Jewish leaders could not prove he was **guilty** of anything.
- **[39-11]** After speaking with Jesus, Pilate went out to the crowd and said, “I find no **guilt** in this man.” But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “He is not **guilty**.” But they shouted even louder. Then Pilate said a third time, “He is not **guilty!**”
- **[40-04]** Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Don’t you fear God? We are **guilty**, but this man is innocent.
- **[49-10]** Because of your sin, you are **guilty** and deserve to die.

hades, sheol

Definition:

The terms “hades” and “sheol” are used in the Bible to refer to death and the place where the souls of people go when they die. Their meanings are similar.

- The Hebrew term “sheol” is often used in the Old Testament to refer generally to the place of death.
- In the New Testament, the Greek term “hades” refers to a place for the souls of people who rebelled against God. These souls are referred to as going “down” to hades. This is sometimes contrasted to going “up” to heaven, where the souls of people who believe in Jesus live.
- The term “hades” is coupled with the term “death” in the book of Revelation. In the end times, both death and hades will be thrown into the Lake of Fire, which is hell.

Translation Suggestions

- The Old Testament term “sheol” could be translated as “place of the dead” or “place for dead souls.” Some translations translate this as “the pit” or “death,” depending on the context.
- The New Testament term “hades” could also be translated as “place for unbelieving dead souls” or “place of torment for the dead” or “place for the souls of unbelieving dead people.”
- Some translations keep the word “sheol” or “hades,” spelling them to fit the sound patterns of the language of translation. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#)).
- A phrase could also be added to the term to explain it, for example, “sheol, place where dead people are” or “hades, place of death.”

(Translation suggestions: [Translate Names](#), [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [death](#), [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#), [hell](#), [lake of fire](#), [tomb](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Hagar

Facts:

Hagar was an Egyptian woman who was Sarai's personal slave.

- When Sarai was not able to bear children, she gave Hagar to her husband Abram to have a child by him.
- Hagar conceived and gave birth to Abram's son, Ishmael.
- God watched over Hagar when she was in distress in the desert and promised to bless her descendants.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [Ishmael](#), [Sarah](#), [Sarai](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-01]** So Abram's wife, Sarai, said to him, "Since God has not allowed me to have children and now I am too old to have children, here is my servant, **Hagar**. Marry her also so she can have a child for me."
- **[05-02]** **Hagar** had a baby boy, and Abram named him Ishmael.

Ham

Facts:

Ham was the second of Noah's three sons.

- During the worldwide flood that covered the whole earth, Ham and his brothers were with Noah in the ark, along with their wives.
- After the flood, there was an occasion where Ham was very dishonoring to his father, Noah. As a result, Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan and all his descendants, who eventually became known as the Canaanites.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [ark](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [dishonor](#), [dishonorable](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Hamor

Facts:

Hamor was a Canaanite man living in the city of Shechem when Jacob and his family were living in nearby Succoth. He was a Hivite.

- Jacob bought a family burial ground from Hamor's sons.
- While they were there, Hamor's son Shechem raped Jacob's daughter Dinah.
- Dinah's brothers took revenge on Hamor's family and killed all the men in the city of Shechem.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Hivite](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Shechem](#), [Succoth](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

hand, right hand, to hand over

Definition:

There are several figurative ways that “hand” is used in the Bible:

- To “hand” something to someone means to put something into that person’s hands.
- The term “hand” is often used in reference to God’s power and action, such as when God says, “Has not my hand made all these things?” (See: **Metonymy**)
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- Placing hands on someone is often done while speaking a blessing over that person.
- The term “laying on of hands” refers to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God’s service or to pray for healing.
- Some other figurative uses of “hand” include:
 - To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.”
 - To “save from the hand of” means to stop someone from harming someone else.
 - To be “close at hand” means to be “nearby.”
 - The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
 - The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, “by the hand of the Lord” means that the Lord is the one who caused something to happen.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that this part of the letter was physically written down by him, rather than spoken to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression, “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- When “hand” refers to the person, such as in “the hand of God did this,” it could be translated as “God did this.”
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as, “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as, “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression

with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: [adversary](#), [enemy](#), [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [captive](#), [captivity](#), [honor](#), [to honor](#), [power](#), [powers](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

hang

Definition:

The term “hang” means to suspend something or someone above the ground.

- Death by hanging typically is done using a rope noose that is tied around a person’s neck and suspended from an elevated object, like a tree limb. Judas killed himself by hanging.
- Jesus’ death by hanging on a wooden cross was done differently: the soldiers suspended him by nailing his hands (or wrists) and his feet to the cross.
- To hang someone always refers to a way of killing someone by hanging them with a rope around their neck.

(See also: other)

Bible References:

Waiting

Haran

Facts:

Haran was a younger brother of Abraham and the father of Lot.

- Haran was also the name of the town where Abram and his family lived for awhile on their journey from the city of Ur to the land of Canaan.
- A different man named Haran was a son of Caleb.
- A third man in the Bible named Haran was a descendant of Levi.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Caleb](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Levite](#), [Levi](#), [Lot](#), [Terah](#), [Ur](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

harp

Definition:

A harp is a stringed musical instrument, usually having a large open frame with vertical strings.

- In Bible times, fir wood was used to make harps and other musical instruments.
- Harps were often held in the hands and played while walking.
- In many places in the Bible, harps are mentioned as instruments that were used to praise and worship God.
- David wrote several psalms which were set to harp music.
- He also played a harp for King Saul to soothe the king's troubled spirit.

(See also: [David](#), [fir](#), [psalm](#), [Saul \(OT\)](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

harvest

Definition:

The term “harvest” refers to the gathering in of ripe fruits or vegetables from the plants on which they were growing.

- The harvest time normally happens at the end of a growing season.
- The Israelites held a “Festival of Harvest” or “Festival of Ingathering” to celebrate the reaping of the food crops. God commanded them to offer the first fruits of these crops as a sacrifice to him.
- In a figurative sense, the word “harvest” can refer to people coming to believe in Jesus or can describe a person’s spiritual growth.
- The idea of a harvest of spiritual crops fits with the figurative image of fruits being a picture of godly character qualities.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the word that is commonly used in the language to refer to the harvesting of crops.
- The event of harvesting could be translated as, “time of gathering in” or “crop gathering time” or “fruit picking time.”
- The verb “to harvest” could be translated as, “to gather in” or “to pick up” or “to collect.”

(See: [firstfruits](#), [festival](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

heal, cure

Definition:

The terms “heal” and “cure” both mean to cause a sick, wounded, or disabled person to be healthy again.

- A person who is “healed” or “cured” has been “made well” or “made healthy.”
- Healing can happen naturally since God gave our bodies the ability to recover from many kinds of wounds and diseases. This kind of healing usually happens slowly.
- However, certain conditions such as being blind or paralyzed, and certain serious diseases such as leprosy do not heal on their own. When people are healed of these things, it is a miracle that usually happens suddenly.
- For example, Jesus healed many people who were blind or lame or diseased and they became well right away.
- The apostles also healed people miraculously, such as when Peter caused a crippled man to immediately be able to walk.

(See also: [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[19-14]** One of the miracles happened to Naaman, an enemy commander, who had a horrible skin disease. He had heard of Elisha so he went and asked Elisha to **heal** him.
- **[21-10]** He (Isaiah) also predicted that the Messiah would **heal** sick people and those who could not hear, see, speak, or walk.
- **[26-06]** Jesus continued saying, “And during the time of the prophet Elisha, there were many people in Israel with skin diseases. But Elisha did not **heal** any of them. He only **healed** the skin disease of Naaman, a commander of Israel’s enemies.”
- **[26-08]** They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and Jesus **healed** them.
- **[32-14]** She had heard that Jesus had **healed** many sick people and thought, “I’m sure that if I can just touch Jesus’ clothes, then I will be **healed**, too!”
- **[44-03]** Immediately, God **healed** the lame man, and he began to walk and jump around, and to praise God.
- **[44-08]** Peter answered them, “This man stands before you **healed** by the power of Jesus the Messiah.”
- **[49-02]**] Jesus did many miracles that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, **healed** many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

heart

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with no holding back, with complete commitment and willingness.
- The expression, “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. They have been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

- Some languages use a different body part such as “stomach” or “liver” to refer to these ideas.
- Other languages may use one word to express some of these concepts and another word to express others.
- If “heart” or other body part does not have this meaning, some languages may need to express this nonfiguratively with terms such as “thoughts” or “emotions” or “desires.”
- Depending on the context, “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” could be translated as, “with all my energy” or “with complete dedication” or “completely” or “with total commitment.”
- The expression “take it to heart” could be translated as “treat it seriously” or “carefully think about it.”
- The expression “hard-hearted” could also be translated as, “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to obey” or “continually disobeying God.”
- Ways to translate “brokenhearted” could include, “very sad” or “feeling deeply hurt.”

(See also: [hard](#), [hardness](#), [harden](#) other)

Bible References:

Waiting

heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we can’t directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.
- When “heaven” is used figuratively, it is a way of referring to God. For example, when Matthew writes about the “kingdom of heaven” he is referring to the kingdom of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “heaven” is used figuratively, it could be translated as “God.”
- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as, “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See: [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [04-02] They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- [14-11] He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- [23-07] Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- [29-09] Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- [37-09] Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- [42-11] Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Hebrew

Facts:

The “Hebrews” were people who were descended from Abraham through the line of Isaac and Jacob. Abraham is the first person in the Bible to be called a “Hebrew.”

- The term “Hebrew” also refers to the language that the Hebrew people spoke. The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language.
- In different places in the Bible, the Hebrews were also called “Jewish people” or “Israelites.” It is best to keep all three terms in their original context in the text, as long as it is clear that these terms refer to the same people group.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Israel](#), [Jewish](#), [Jewish Leaders](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Hebron

Facts:

Hebron was a city located in the high, rocky hills about 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

- The city was built around 2,000 B.C. during the time of Abram. It was mentioned many times in the historical accounts given in the Old Testament.
- Hebron had a very important role in King David's life. Several of his sons, including Absalom, were born there.
- The city was destroyed around 70 A.D. by the Romans.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Absalom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

heifer

Definition:

A heifer is an adult female cow that has not yet given birth to a calf.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [cow](#), [calf](#), [bull](#), [cattle](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

heir

Definition:

An “heir” is a person who legally receives property or money that belongs to a person who has died.

- In Bible times, the main heir was the firstborn son, who received most of the property and money of his father.
- The Bible also uses “heir” in a figurative sense to refer to Christians receiving spiritual benefits from God as their spiritual father.
- As God’s children, Christians are said to be “joint heirs” with Jesus Christ. This could also be translated as, “co-heirs” or “fellow heirs” or “heirs together with.”
- The term “heir” could be translated as “person receiving benefits” or whatever expression is used in the language to communicate the meaning of someone who receives property and other things when a parent or other relative dies.

(See also: [firstborn](#), [inherit](#), [inheritance](#), [heritage](#), [heir](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Hittite

Definition:

The Hittites were descendants of Ham through his son Canaan. They became a large empire located in what is now Turkey and northern Palestine.

- Abraham bought a piece of property from Ephron the Hittite so that he could bury his deceased wife Sarah in a cave there. Eventually Abraham and several of his descendants were also buried in that cave.
- Esau's parents were grieved when he married two Hittite women.
- One of David's mighty men was named Uriah the Hittite.
- Some of the foreign women that Solomon married were Hittites. These foreign women turned Solomon's heart away from God because of the false gods they worshiped.
- The Hittites were often a threat to the Israelites, both physically and spiritually.

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [Esau](#), [foreigner](#), [foreign](#), [alien](#), [Ham](#), [mighty](#), [might](#), [Solomon](#), [Uriah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Hivite

Facts:

The Hivites were one of seven major people groups living in the land of Canaan.

- Like all these groups, the Hivites were descended from Canaan, who was Noah's grandson.
- Shechem the Hivite raped Jacob's daughter Dinah, and her brothers killed many Hivites in revenge.
- When Joshua led the Israelites to take over the land of Canaan, the Israelites were tricked into making a treaty with the Hivites instead of conquering them.

(Translation suggestions: [Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Hamor](#), [Noah](#), [Shechem](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

holy, holiness

Definition:

The terms “holy” and “holiness” refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- Since God is holy, people cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because they are mere human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “holy” might include, “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”
- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [consecratesanctify](#), [sanctification](#), [set apart](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [01-16] He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- [09-12]”You are standing on **holy** ground.”
- [13-02]”If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation.”
- [13-05]”Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**.”
- [22-05]”So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God.”
- [50-02] As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord

Facts:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as, “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include, “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: [holy](#), [holiness](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#), [God](#), [Lord](#), [God the Father](#), [heavenly Father](#), [Father](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#), [gift](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[01-01]** But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.
- **[24-08]** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **[26-01]** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **[26-03]** Jesus read, “God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed.”
- **[42-10]** “So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- **[43-03]** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **[43-08]** “And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are now seeing and hearing.”

- **[43-11]** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your sins. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit.**"
- **[45-01]** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

honey, honeycomb

Definition:

Honey is the sweet, sticky, edible substance that honeybees make out of flower nectar. Honeycomb is the waxy frame where the bees store honey.

- Depending on the kind, honey can be yellowish or brownish in color.
- Honey can be found in the wild, such as in the hollow of a tree, or wherever the bees make a nest. People also raise bees in hives in order to produce honey to eat or sell, but probably the honey mentioned in the Bible was wild honey.
- Three people that the Bible specifically mentions as eating wild honey were Jonathan, Samson, and John the Baptist.
- This term is often used figuratively to describe something that is sweet or very pleasurable. For example, God's words and decrees are said to be "sweeter than honey." (See also: [Simile](#), [Metaphor](#))
- Sometimes a person's words are described as seeming sweet like honey, but instead result in deceiving and harming others.

(See also: [John \(the Baptist\)](#), [Jonathan](#), [Philistines](#), [Samson](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

honor, to honor

Definition:

The terms “honor” and “to honor” refer to giving someone respect, esteem, or reverence.

- Honor is usually given to someone who is of higher status and importance, such as a king or God.
- God also instructs Christians to honor others, but not to try to get honor for themselves.
- Children are instructed to honor their parents, which includes respect and obedience.
- the terms “honor” and “glory” are often used together, especially when referring to Jesus. These may be two different ways of referring to the same thing.
- Honor for God includes thanking and praising him, and showing him respect by obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “honor” could include, “respect” or “esteem” or “high regard.”
- The term “to honor” could be translated as “to show special respect to” or “to cause to be praised” or “to show high regard for” or “to highly value.”

(See also: [dishonor](#), [dishonorable](#), [glory](#), [glorious](#), [glorify](#), [praise](#) other)

Bible References:

Waiting

horse

Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for doing farm work and for transporting people.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon's great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.

(See also: [chariot](#), , [donkey](#), [mule](#), [Solomon](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

horsemen

Definition:

In Bible times, the term “horsemen” referred to men who rode horses into battle.

- Warriors who rode in horse-pulled chariots may also have been called “horsemen,” though this term usually refers to men who are actually riding on the horses.
- The Israelites believed that using horses in battle placed too much emphasis on their own strength rather than on Yahweh, so they did not use a lot of horsemen.
- This term could also be translated as, “horse riders” or “men on horses.”

(See also: [chariot](#), [horse](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

house

Definition:

The term “house” is often used figuratively in the Bible.

- Sometimes it means “household,” referring to the people who live together in one house.
- Often “house” refers to a person’s descendants or other relatives. For example, the phrase “house of David” refers to all the descendants of King David.
- The terms “house of God” and “house of Yahweh” refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to where God is or dwells.
- In Hebrews 3, “God’s house” is used as a metaphor to refer to God’s people or more generally, to everything pertaining to God.
- The phrase “house of Israel” can refer generally to the entire nation of Israel or more specifically to the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “house” could be translated as, “household” or “people” or “family” or “descendants” or “temple” or “dwelling place.”
- The phrase “house of David” could be translated as, “clan of David” or “family of David” or “descendants of David.” Related expressions could be translated in a similar way.
- Different ways to translate “house of Israel” could include, “people of Israel” or “Israel’s descendants” or “Israelites.”
- The phrase “house of Yahweh” could be translated as “Yahweh’s temple” or “place where Yahweh is worshiped” or “place where Yahweh meets with his people” or “where Yahweh dwells.”
- “House of God” could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: [David](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [house of God](#), [Yahweh’s house](#), [household](#), [kingdom of Israel](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

household

Definition:

The term “household” refers to all the people who live together in a house, including family members and any servants they have.

- If someone manages a household, this would involve directing the servants as well as taking care of the property.
- Sometimes “household” can refer figuratively to the whole family line of someone, especially his descendants.

(See also: [house](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

house of God, Yahweh's house

Definition:

In the Bible, the phrases "house of God" (God's house) and "house of Yahweh (Yahweh's house) refer to a place where God is worshiped.

- This term is also used more specifically to refer to the tabernacle or the temple.
- Sometimes "God's house" is used to refer to the people of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a place of worship, this term could be translated as, "a house for worshiping God" or "a place for worshiping God."
- If it is referring to the temple or tabernacle, this could be translated as, "the temple (or tabernacle) where God is worshiped (or "where God is present" or "where God meets with his people.")
- The word "house" may be important to use in the translation in order to communicate that God "dwells" there, that is, his spirit is in that place to meet with his people and to be worshiped by them.

(See also: [people of God](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

image of God, image

Definition:

The term “image” refers to something that looks like something else or that is like someone in character or essence. The phrase “image of God” is used in different ways, depending on the context.

- At the beginning of time, God created human beings “in his image,” that is, “in his likeness.” This means that people have certain characteristics that reflect the image of God, such as the ability to feel emotion, the ability to reason and communicate, and a spirit that lives eternally.
- The Bible teaches that Jesus, God’s Son, is “the image of God,” that is, he is God himself. Unlike human beings, Jesus was not created. From all eternity, God the Son has all the divine characteristics because he has had the same essence with God the Father.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to Jesus, “image of God” could be translated as “exact likeness of God” or “same essence as God” or “same being as God.”
- When referring to human beings, “God created them in his image” could be translated with a phrase that means, “God created them to be like him” or “God created them with characteristics like himself.”

(See also: [image](#), [carved image](#), [carved figure](#), [cast metal figure](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir

Definition:

The terms “inherit” and “inheritance” refer to receiving something valuable from a parent or other person because of a special relationship with that person. The “heir” is the person who receives the inheritance.

- A physical inheritance that is received may be money, land, or other kinds of property.
- A spiritual inheritance is everything that God gives people who trust in Jesus, including blessings in the present life as well as eternal life with him.
- The Bible also calls God’s people his inheritance, which means that they belong to him; they are his valued possession.
- God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would inherit the land of Canaan, that it would belong to them forever.
- There is also a figurative or spiritual sense in which people who belong to God are said to “inherit the land.” This means that they will prosper and be blessed by God in both physical and spiritual ways.
- In the New Testament, God promises that those who trust in Jesus will “inherit salvation” and “inherit eternal life.” It is also expressed as, “inherit the kingdom of God.” This is a spiritual inheritance that lasts forever.
- There are other figurative meanings for these terms:
 - The Bible says that wise people will “inherit glory” and righteous people will “inherit good things.”
 - To “inherit the promises” means to receive the good things that God has promised to give his people.
 - This term is also used in a negative sense to refer to foolish or disobedient people who “inherit the wind” or “inherit folly.” This means they receive the consequences of their sinful actions, including punishment and worthless living.

Translation Suggestions:

- As always, consider first whether there are already terms in the target language for the concept of an heir or an inheritance and use those terms.
- Depending on the context, other ways that the term “inherit” could be translated might include, “receive” or “possess” or “come into possession of.”
- Ways to translate “inheritance” could include, “promised gift” or “secure possession.”
- When God’s people are referred to as his inheritance this could be translated as, “valued ones belonging to him.”
- The term “heir” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “privileged child who receives the father’s possessions” or “person chosen to receive (God’s) spiritual possessions or blessings.”
- The term “heritage” could be translated as, “blessings from God” or “inherited blessings.”

(See also: [heir](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Promised Land](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[04-06]** When Abram arrived in Canaan God said, "Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an **inheritance**."
- **[27-01]** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to **inherit** eternal life?"
- **[35-03]** "There was a man who had two sons. The younger son told his father, 'Father, I want my **inheritance** now!' So the father divided his property between the two sons."

iniquity

Definition:

The term “iniquity” is a word that is very similar in meaning to the term “sin,” but may more specifically refer to conscious acts of wrongdoing or great wickedness.

- The word “iniquity” literally means a twisting or distorting (of the law). It refers to major injustice.
- Iniquity could be described as deliberate, harmful actions against other people.
- Other definitions of iniquity include “perversity” and “depravity,” which are both words that describe conditions of terrible sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “iniquity” could be translated as “wickedness” or “perverse actions” or “harmful acts.”
- Often, “iniquity” occurs in the same text as the word “sin” and “transgression” so it is important to have different ways of translating these terms.

(See also: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [transgress](#), [transgression](#), [trespass](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

innocent

Definition:

The term “innocent” means to not be guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing. It can also refer more generally to people who are not involved in evil things.

- A person accused of doing something wrong is innocent if he has not committed that wrong.
- Sometimes the term “innocent” is used to refer to people who have done nothing wrong to deserve the bad treatment they are receiving, as in an enemy army attacking “innocent people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- In most contexts, the term “innocent” can be translated as “not guilty” or “not responsible” or “not to blame” for something.
- When referring in general to innocent people, this term could be translated as, “who have done nothing wrong” or “who are not involved in evil.”
- The frequently occurring expression, “innocent blood” could be translated as, “people who did nothing wrong to deserve being killed.”
- The expression “shed innocent blood” could be translated as, “kill innocent people” or “kill people who did nothing wrong to deserve it.”
- In the context of someone being killed, “innocent of the blood of” could be translated as, “not guilty for the death of.”
- When talking about people not accepting the good news about Jesus but not accepting it, “innocent of the blood of” could be translated as “not responsible for whether they remain spiritually dead or not” or “not responsible for whether they accept this message.”
- When Judas said, “I have betrayed innocent blood” he was saying, “I have betrayed a man who did nothing wrong” or “I have caused the death of a man who was sinless.”
- When Pilate said about Jesus, “I am innocent of the blood of this innocent man,” this could be translated as, “I am not responsible for the killing of this man who has done nothing wrong to deserve it.”

(See also: [guilt](#), [guilty](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [08-06] After two years, Joseph was still in prison, even though he was **innocent**.

- **[40-04]** One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, "Do you have no fear of God? We are guilty, but this man is **innocent**."
- **[40-08]** When the soldier guarding Jesus saw everything that happened, he said, "Certainly, this man was **innocent**. He was the Son of God."
-

instruct, instruction

Facts:

The terms “instruct” and “instruction” refer to giving specific directions about what to do.

- To “give instructions” means to tell someone specifically what he is supposed to do.
- When Jesus gave the disciples the bread and fish to distribute to the people, he gave them specific instructions about how to do it.
- Depending on the context, the term “instruct” could also be translated as “tell” or “direct” or “teach” or “give instructions to.”
- The term “instructions” could be translated as “directions” or “explanations” or “what he has told you to do.”
- When God gives instructions, this term is sometimes translated as “commands” or “orders.”

(See also: [command](#), [to command](#), [commandment](#), [decree](#), [teach](#), [teaching](#), [teacher](#), [taught](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

interpret, interpretation

Facts:

The terms “interpret” and “interpretation” refer to understanding and explaining the meaning of something that is not clear.

- Often in the Bible these terms are used in connection with explaining the meaning of dreams or visions.
- When the king of Babylon had some confusing dreams, God helped Daniel to interpret them and to explain their meanings.
- The “interpretation” of the dream is the “explanation” of the meaning of the dream.
- In the Old Testament, God sometimes used dreams to reveal to people what would happen in the future. So the interpretations of those dreams were prophecies.
- The term “interpret” can also refer to figuring out the meaning of other things, such as figuring out what the weather will be like based on how cold or hot it is, how windy it is, and what the sky looks like.
- Ways to translate the term “interpret” could include, “figure out the meaning of” or “explain” or “give the meaning of.”
- The term “interpretation” could also be translated as, “explanation” or “meaning.”

(See also: [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Daniel](#), [dream](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [vision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Isaac

Facts:

Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah. God had promised to give them a son even though they were very old.

- The name “Isaac” means “he laughs.” When God told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, Abraham laughed because they were both very old. Some time later, Sarah also laughed when she heard this news.
- But God fulfilled his promise and Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age.
- God told Abraham that the covenant he had made with Abraham would also be for Isaac and his descendants forever.
- When Isaac was a youth, God tested Abraham’s faith by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac.
- Isaac’s son Jacob had twelve sons whose descendants later became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [forever](#), [fulfill](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Sarah](#), [Sarai](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-04]** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of promise. Name him **Isaac**.”
- **[05-06]** When **Isaac** was a young man, God tested Abraham’s faith by saying, “Take **Isaac**, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **[05-09]** God had provided the ram to be the sacrifice instead of **Isaac**.
- **[06-01]** When Abraham was very old and his son, **Isaac**, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, **Isaac**.
- **[06-05]** **Isaac** prayed for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- **[07-10]** Then **Isaac** died, and Jacob and Esau buried him. The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to **Isaac** now passed on to Jacob.

Ishmael

Facts:

Ishmael was the son of Abraham and the Egyptian slave Hagar. There are also several other men in the Old Testament named Ishmael.

- The name “Ishmael” means, “God hears.”
- God promised to bless Abraham’s son Ishmael, but he was not the son God had promised to establish his covenant with.
- God protected Hagar and Ishmael when they were sent into the desert.
- While Ishmael was living in the desert of Paran, he married an Egyptian woman.
- Ishmael son of Nethaniah was an army officer from Judah who led a group of men to kill a governor who had been appointed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar.
- There are also four other men named Ishmael in the Old Testament.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [covenant](#), [desert](#), [wilderness](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Hagar](#), [Isaac](#), [Nebuchadnezzar](#), [Paran](#), [Sarah](#), [Sarai](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-02]** So Abram married Hagar. Hagar had a baby boy, and Abram named him **Ishmael**.
- **[05-04]**”I will make **Ishmael** a great nation, too, but my covenant will be with Isaac.”

Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel

Facts:

The term “Israel” is the name that God gave to Jacob. It means, “he struggles with God.”

- The descendants of Jacob became known as the “people of Israel,” the “nation of Israel,” or the “Israelites.”
- God formed his covenant with the people of Israel. They were his chosen people.
- The nation of Israel was made up of twelve tribes.
- Soon after King Solomon died, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: the southern kingdom, called “Judah” and the northern kingdom, called “Israel.”
- Often the term “Israel” can be translated as, “the people of Israel” or “the nation of Israel,” depending on the context.

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [kingdom of Israel](#), [Judah](#), [kingdom of Judah](#), [nation](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-15]** The descendants of the twelve sons became the twelve tribes of **Israel**.
- **[09-03]** The Egyptians forced the **Israelites** to build many buildings and even whole cities.
- **[09-05]** A certain **Israelite** woman gave birth to a baby boy.
- **[10-01]** They said, “This is what the God of **Israel** says, ‘Let my people go!’”
- **[14-12]** But despite all this, the people of **Israel** complained and grumbled against God and against Moses.
- **[15-09]** God fought for **Israel** that day. He caused the Amorites to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the Amorites.
- **[15-12]** After this battle, God gave each tribe of **Israel** its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave **Israel** peace along all its borders.
- **[16-16]** So God punished **Israel** again for worshiping idols.
- **[43-06]** “Men of **Israel**, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”

Issachar

Facts:

Issachar was the fifth son of Jacob. His mother was Leah.

- The tribe of Issachar was one of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Issachar's land was bordered by Naphtali, Zebulun, Manasseh, and Gad.
- It was located just south of the Sea of Galilee.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Gad](#), [Manasseh](#), [Naphtali](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#), [Zebulun](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Jacob, Israel

Facts:

Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac and Rebekah.

- Jacob's name means "he grabs the heel" which is an expression meaning, "he deceives." As Jacob was being born, he was holding onto the heel of his twin brother Esau.
- Many years later, God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," which means, "he struggles with God."
- Jacob was clever and deceptive. He found ways to take the firstborn blessing and inheritance rights from his older brother, Esau.
- Esau was angry and planned to kill him, so Jacob left his homeland. But years later Jacob returned with his wives and children to the land of Canaan where Esau was living, and their families lived peacefully near each other.
- Jacob had twelve sons. Their descendants became the twelve tribes of Israel.
- A different man named Jacob is listed as being Joseph's father in Matthew's genealogy.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [deceive](#), [deceit](#), [deception](#), [deceptive](#), [Esau](#), [Isaac](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Rebekah](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[07-01]** As the boys grew up, Rebekah loved **Jacob**, but Isaac loved Esau. **Jacob** loved to stay at home, but Esau loved to hunt.
- **[07-07]** **Jacob** lived there for many years, and during that time he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God made him very wealthy.
- **[07-08]** After twenty years away from his home in Canaan, **Jacob** returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.
- **[07-10]** The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to **Jacob**.
- **[08-01]** Many years later, when **Jacob** was an old man, he sent his favorite son, Joseph, to check on his brothers who were taking care of the herds.

Japheth

Facts:

Japheth was one of Noah's three sons.

- During the worldwide flood that covered the whole earth, Japheth and his two brothers were with Noah in the ark, along with their wives.
- Noah's sons are usually listed in the order, "Shem, Ham, and Japheth." This indicates that Japheth was the youngest brother.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [ark](#), [flood](#), [Ham](#), [Noah](#), [Shem](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

jealous, jealousy

Definition:

The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” refer to a strong desire to protect the purity of a relationship. They can also refer to a strong desire to keep possession of something or someone.

- These terms are often used to describe the angry feeling that a person has toward a spouse who has been unfaithful in their marriage.
- When used in the Bible, these terms often refer to God’s strong desire for his people to remain pure and unstained by sin.
- God is also “jealous” for his name, that it be treated with honor and reverence.
- Another meaning of jealous involves being angry that someone else is successful or more popular. This is close in meaning to the word “envy.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “jealous” could include, “strong protective desire” or “possessive desire.”
- The term “jealousy” could be translated as, “strong protective feeling” or “possessive feeling.”
- When talking about God, make sure the translation of these terms does not give a negative meaning of being resentful of someone else.
- In the context of people’s wrong feelings of anger toward toward other people who are more successful, the terms “envious” and “envy” could be used. But these terms should not be used for God.

(See also: [envy](#), [covet](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Jebusites, Jebus

Facts:

The Jebusites were a people group living in the land of Canaan. They were descended from Ham's son Canaan.

- The Jebusites lived in the city of Jebus, whose name was later changed to Jerusalem when King David conquered it.
- Melchizedek, the king of Salem, was probably of Jebusite origin.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Ham](#), [Jerusalem](#), [Melchizedek](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Jordan River

Facts:

The Jordan River is a river that flows from north to south, and forms the eastern boundary of the land that was called Canaan.

- Today, the Jordan River separates Israel on the west from Jordan on the east.
- The Jordan River flows through the Sea of Galilee and then empties into the Dead Sea.
- When Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan, they had to cross the Jordan River. Because it was too deep, God miraculously stopped the water from flowing so they could go across.

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#), [Sea of Galilee](#), [Sea of Chinnereth](#), [Lake of Genesaret](#), [Sea of Tiberias](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[15-02]** The Israelites had to cross the **Jordan River** to enter into the Promised Land.
- **[15-03]** After the people crossed the **Jordan River**, God told Joshua how to attack the powerful city of Jericho.
- **[19-14]** Elisha told him (Naaman) to dip himself seven times in the **Jordan River**.

Joseph (OT)

Facts:

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob and the first son of his mother Rachel.

- Joseph was his father's favorite son.
- His brothers were jealous of him and sold him into slavery.
- While in Egypt, Joseph was falsely accused and put into prison.
- In spite of his difficulties, Joseph remained faithful to God.
- God brought him to the second highest place of power in Egypt and used him to save people in a time when there was little food. The people of Egypt, as well as his own family, were kept from starving.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-02]** Joseph's brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had dreamed that he would be their ruler.
- **[08-04]** The slave traders took **Joseph** to Egypt.
- **[08-05]** Even in prison, **Joseph** remained faithful to God, and God blessed him.
- **[08-07]** God had given **Joseph** the ability to interpret dreams, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison.
- **[08-09]** **Joseph** told the people to store up large amounts of food during the seven years of good harvests.
- **[09-02]** The Egyptians no longer remembered **Joseph** and all he had done to help them.

Judah

Facts:

Judah was one of Jacob's older sons. His mother was Leah. His descendants were called the "tribe of Judah."

- It was Judah who told his brothers to sell their younger brother Joseph as a slave instead of leaving him to die in a deep pit.
- King David and all the kings after him were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
- When Solomon's reign ended and the nation of Israel divided, the kingdom of Judah was the southern part of the nation.
- In the New Testament book of Revelation, Jesus is called the "Lion of Judah."
- The words "Jew" and "Judea" come from the name "Judah."

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Jew](#), [Jewish](#), [Jews](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [Judah](#), [kingdom of Judah](#), [Judea](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

judge, judgment

Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether something is morally right or wrong.

- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “to judge” could include, “to decide” or “to condemn” or “to punish” or “to decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as, “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: [decree](#), [judge](#), [judgment day](#), [just](#), [justice](#), [justly](#), [law](#), [principle](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[19-16]** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- **[21-08]** A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.

- **[39-04]** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, "We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?"
- **[50-14]** But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

judge

Definition:

A judge is a person who decides what is right or wrong when there are disputes between people, usually in matters that pertain to the law.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a judge because he is the one perfect judge who makes the final decisions about what is right or wrong.
- After the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan and before they had kings to rule them, God appointed leaders called “judges” to lead them in times of trouble. Often these judges were military leaders who rescued the Israelites by defeating their enemies.
- The term “judge” could also be called “decision-maker” or “leader” or “deliverer” or “governor,” depending on the context.

(See also: [governor](#), [govern](#), [proconsul](#), [government](#), [judge](#), [judgment](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

just, justice, justly

Definition:

These terms refer to treating people fairly according to God's laws. Human laws that reflect God's standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be "just" is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God's eyes.
- To act "justly" means to treat people in a way that is right, good and proper according to God's laws.
- To receive "justice" means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term "just" has the broader meaning of "righteous" or "following God's laws."

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "just" could include, "morally right" or "fair."
- The term "justice" could be translated as, "fair treatment" or "deserved consequences."
- To "act justly" could be translated as, "treat fairly" or "behave in a just way."
- In some contexts, "just" could be translated as, "righteous" or "upright."

(See also: [judge](#), [judgment](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [17-09] David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- [18-13] Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.
- [19-16] They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- [50-17] Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

justify, justification

Definition:

The terms “justify” and “justification” refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- “Justification” refers to what God does when he forgives a person’s sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “justify” could include, “declare (someone) to be righteous” or “cause (someone) to be righteous.”
- The term “justification” could be translated as, “being declared righteous” or “becoming righteous” or “causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “resulting in justification” could be translated as, “so that God justified many people” or “which resulted in God causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “for our justification” could be translated as, “in order that we could be made righteous by God.”

(See also: [forgive](#), [forgiveness](#), [guilt](#), [guilty](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, Meribah Kadesh

Facts:

The names Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea, and Meribah Kadesh all refer to an important city in Israel's history which was located in the southern part of Israel, near the region of Edom.

- The city of Kadesh was an oasis, a place where there was water and fertile soil in the middle of a desert named Zin.
- Moses sent twelve spies into the land of Canaan from Kadesh Barnea.
- Israel also encamped at Kadesh during the wandering in the wilderness.
- Kadesh Barnea was where Miriam died.
- It was at Meribah Kadesh where Moses disobeyed God and hit a rock to get water for the Israelites, instead of speaking to it as God had told him to do.
- The name “kadesh” comes from the Hebrew word meaning “holy” or “set apart.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [desert](#), [wilderness](#), [Edom](#), [Edomite](#), [Idumea](#), [holy](#), [holiness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

kind, kinds

Definition:

The terms “kind” and “kinds” refer to groups or classifications of things that are connected by shared characteristics.

- In the Bible, this term is specifically used to refer to the distinctive kinds of plants and animals that God made when he created the world.
- Often there are many different variations or species within each “kind.” For example, horses, zebras, and donkeys are all members of the same “kind,” but they are different species.
- The main thing that distinguishes each “kind” as a separate group is that members of that group can reproduce more of their same “kind.” Members of different kinds cannot do that with each other.

Translation Suggestions

- Ways to translate this term could include, “type” or “class” or “group” or “animal (plant) group” or “category.”
- The word “species” would *not* be an accurate translation of this term, since “kind” is a more general category, with several species within it.

Bible References:

Waiting

king

Definition:

The term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a city, state, or country.

- A king is usually chosen to rule because of his family relation to previous kings.
- When a king dies, it is usually his oldest son who becomes the next king.
- In ancient times, the king had absolute authority over the people in his kingdom.
- Rarely the term “king” may be used to refer to someone who is not a true king, such as “King Herod” in the New Testament.
- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a king who rules over his people.
- The “kingdom of God” refers to God’s rule over his people.
- Jesus was called “king of the Jews,” “king of Israel,” and “king of kings.”
- When Jesus comes back, he will rule as king over the world.
- This term could also be translated as, “supreme chief” or “absolute leader” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” could be translated as, “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

(See also: [authority](#), [Herod Antipas](#), [kingdom](#), [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-06]** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- **[16-01]** The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- **[16-18]** Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.
- **[17-05]** Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- **[21-06]** God’s prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- **[48-14]** David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

kiss**Definition:**

A kiss is an action in which one person puts his lips to another person's lips or face. This term can also be used figuratively.

- Some cultures kiss each other on the cheek as a form of greeting or to say goodbye.
- A kiss can communicate deep love between two people, such as a husband and wife.
- The expression "to kiss someone farewell" means to say goodbye with a kiss.
- Sometimes the word "kiss" is used to mean "say goodbye to." When Elisha said to Elijah, "Let me first go and kiss my father and mother," he wanted to say goodbye to his parents before leaving them to follow Elijah.

Bible References:

Waiting

Laban

Facts:

In the Old Testament, Laban was the uncle and father-in-law of Jacob.

- Jacob lived with Laban's household in Padan Aram and managed his sheep and goats as a condition of marriage to Laban's daughters.
- Jacob's preference was for Laban's daughter Rachel to be his wife.
- Laban deceived Jacob and made him marry his oldest daughter Leah first before giving Rachel to him as his wife.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Nahor](#), [Leah](#), [Rachel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

labor pains, in labor

Definition:

A woman who is “in labor” is experiencing the pains that lead up to the birth of her child. These are called “labor pains.”

- In his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul used this term figuratively to describe his own intense striving to help his fellow believers become more and more like Christ.
- The analogy of labor pains is also used in the Bible to describe how disasters in the last days will happen with increasing frequency and intensity.

(See also: [labor](#), [laborer](#), [last day](#), [last days](#), [latter days](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

lamb, Lamb of God

Definition:

The term “lamb” refers to the young of a sheep. Sheep are four-legged animals with thick, woolly hair, used for sacrifices to God. Jesus is called the “Lamb of God” because he was sacrificed to pay for people’s sins.

- These animals are easily led astray and need protecting. God compares human beings to sheep.
- God instructed his people to sacrifice physically perfect sheep and lambs to him.
- Jesus is called the “Lamb of God” who was sacrificed to pay for people’s sins. He was a perfect, unblemished sacrifice because he was completely without sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- If sheep are known in the language area, the name for their young should be used to translate the terms “lamb” and “Lamb of God.”
- “Lamb of God” could be translated as “God’s (sacrificial) Lamb,” or “Lamb sacrificed to God” or “(sacrificial) Lamb from God.”
- If sheep are not known, this term could be translated as “the young of a sheep” with a footnote that describes what sheep are like. The note could also compare sheep and lambs to an animal from that area that lives in herds, that is timid and defenseless, and that often wanders away.
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation of a nearby local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#), [shepherd](#), [to shepherd](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-07]** As Abraham and Isaac walked to the place of the sacrifice Isaac asked, “Father, we have wood for the sacrifice, but where is the **lamb**?”
- **[11-02]** God provided a way to save the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him. Each family had to choose a perfect **lamb** or goat and kill it.
- **[24-06]** The next day, Jesus came to be baptized by John. When John saw him, he said, “Look! There is the **Lamb of God** who will take away the sin of the world.”
- **[45-08]** He read, “They led him like a **lamb** to be killed, and as a **lamb** is silent, he did not say a word.

- **[48-08]** When God told Abraham to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice, God provided a **lamb** for the sacrifice instead of his son, Isaac. We all deserve to die for our sins! But God provided Jesus, the **Lamb** of God, as a sacrifice to die in our place.
- **[48-09]** When God sent the last plague on Egypt, he told each Israelite family to kill a perfect **lamb** and spread its blood around the tops and sides of their door frames.

Lamech

Facts:

Lamech was the name of two men mentioned in the book of Genesis.

- The first Lamech mentioned was a descendant of Cain. He boasted to his two wives that he had killed a man for injuring him.
- The second Lamech was a descendant of Seth. He was also the father of Noah.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Cain](#), , [Noah](#), [Seth](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

law, principle

Definition:

A “law” is a legal rule that is usually written down and enforced by someone in authority. A “principle” is a guideline for decision-making and behavior.

- Both “law” and “principle” can refer to a general rule or belief that guides a person’s behavior.
- This meaning of “law” is different from its meaning in the term, “law of Moses” where it refers to commands and instructions that God gave the Israelites.
- When a general law is being referred to, “law” could be translated as “principle” or “general rule.”

(See also: [law, principle](#) , [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Leah

Facts:

Leah was one of Jacob's wives. She was the mother of ten of Jacob's sons whose descendants were some of the twelve tribes of Israel.

- Leah's father was Laban, who was the brother of Jacob's mother Rebekah.
- Jacob didn't love Leah as much as he loved his other wife Rachel, but God abundantly blessed Leah by giving her many children.
- One of Leah's sons, Judah, was an ancestor of King David and Jesus.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Judah](#), [Laban](#), [Rachel](#), [Rebekah](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Levite, Levi

Definition:

Levi was one of the twelve sons of Jacob, or Israel. The term “Levite” refers to a person who is a member of the Israelite tribe whose ancestor was Levi.

- The Levites were responsible for taking care of the temple and conducting religious rituals, including offering sacrifices and prayers.
- All Jewish priests were Levites, descended from Levi and part of the tribe of Levi. (Not all Levites were priests, however.)
- The Levite priests were set apart and dedicated for the special work of serving God in the temple.
- Two other men named “Levi” were ancestors of Jesus and their names are in the genealogy in the gospel of Luke.
- Jesus’ disciple, Matthew was also called Levi.

(See also: [Matthew](#), [Levi](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [temple](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

life, live, living, alive

Definition:

All these terms refer to being physically alive, not dead. They are also used figuratively to refer to being alive spiritually. The following discusses what is meant by “physical life” and “spiritual life.”

1. Physical life

- Physical life is the presence of the spirit in the body. God breathed life into Adam’s body, and he became a living being.
- A “life” can also refer to an individual person, as in, “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living, as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive as in, “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Spiritual life

- A person has spiritual life when he believes in Jesus and God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- This life is also called “eternal life” to indicate that it does not end.
- The opposite of spiritual life is spiritual death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as, “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives’ could be translated as, “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as, “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about being alive spiritually, “life” could be translated as “spiritual life” or “eternal life,” depending on the context.
- The concept of “spiritual life” could also be translated as, “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as, “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#), [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [eternity](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [01-10] So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- [03-01] After a long time, many people were **living** in the world.
- [08-13] When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- [17-09] However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- [27-01] One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- [37-05] Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- [44-05] "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

lion**Definition:**

A lion is a large, cat-like, wild animal, with powerful teeth and claws for killing and tearing apart its prey.

- Lions have powerful bodies and great speed to catch their prey. Their fur is short and golden-brown in color.
- Male lions have a mane of hair that encircles their heads.
- Lions kill other animals to eat them and can also be dangerous to human beings.
- When King David was a boy, he killed lions who tried to attack the sheep he was caring for.
- Samson also killed a lion with his bare hands.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [David](#), [leopard](#), [Samson](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

livestock

Facts:

The term “livestock” refers to animals which are raised to provide food and other useful products. Some types of livestock are also trained as work animals.

- Kinds of livestock include sheep, cattle, goats, horses, and donkeys.
- In Biblical times, wealth was partly measured by how much livestock a person had.
- Livestock are used for production of products such as wool, milk, cheese, housing materials, and clothing.
- This could also be translated as, “farm animals.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [cow](#), [calf](#), [bull](#), [cattle](#), [donkey](#), [mule](#), [goat](#), [kid](#), [horse](#), [ox](#), [oxen](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#),

Bible References:

Waiting

loins

Definition:

The term “loins” refers to the part of the body of an animal or person that is between the lower ribs and the hip bones, also known as the lower abdomen.

- The expression “gird up the loins” refers to preparing to work hard. It comes from the custom of tucking the bottom of one’s robe into a belt around the waist in order to move with ease.
- The term “loins” is often used in the Bible to refer to the lower back part of an animal that was sacrificed.
- In the Bible, the term “loins” often refers figuratively and euphemistically to a man’s reproductive organs as the source of his descendants. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- The expression “will come from your loins” could also be translated as, “will be your offspring” or “will be born from your seed” or “God will cause to come from you.” (See: [Euphemism](#))
- When referring to a part of the body, this could also be translated as “abdomen” or “hips” or “waist,” depending on the context.

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [gird](#), [offspring](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

lord, master, sir

Definition:

The term “lord” refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term should be translated as “master” when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It could also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, it could be translated as “master” if the context shows it means “religious teacher.”
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, “lord” could be translated as “sir.” This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is written as “Lord” (capitalized).

(See also: [Lord](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[25-05]** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, “In God’s word, he commands his people, ‘Do not test the **Lord** your God.’”
- **[25-07]** Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, ‘Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.’”
- **[26-03]** This is the year of the **Lord’s** favor.
- **[27-02]** The law expert replied that God’s law says, “Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.”
- **[31-05]** Then Peter said to Jesus, “**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water”
- **[43-09]** “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!”
- **[47-03]** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- **[47-11]** Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved.”
-

Lord

Facts:

The term “Lord” refers to someone who has ownership or authority over people. When it is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note however that when used as a form of addressing someone or at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as, “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as, “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULB and UDB, the title, “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages translate this term as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme ruler.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [God](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God

Facts:

In the Old Testament, “Lord Yahweh” is frequently used to refer to the one true God.

- The term “Lord” is a divine title and “Yahweh” is God’s personal name.
- “Yahweh” is also often combined with the term “God” to form “Yahweh God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If some form of “Yahweh” is used for the translation of God’s personal name, the terms “Lord Yahweh” and “Yahweh God” can be translated literally. Also consider how the term “Lord” is translated in other contexts when referring to God.
- Some languages put titles after the name and would translate this as “Yahweh Lord.” Consider what is natural in the project language: should the title “Lord” come before or after “Yahweh”?
- “Yahweh God” could also be rendered as “God who is called Yahweh” or “God who is the Living One” or “I am, who is God.”
- If the translation follows the tradition of rendering “Yahweh” as “Lord” or “LORD,” the term “Lord Yahweh” could be translated as “Lord God” or “God who is the Lord.” Other possible translations could be, “Master LORD” or “God the LORD.”
- The term “Lord Yahweh” should *not* be rendered as “Lord LORD” because readers may not notice the difference in letter size that has traditionally been used to distinguish these two words.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [God](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [Lord](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Lot

Facts:

Lot was the name of Abraham's nephew.

- He was the son of Abraham's brother Haran.
- Lot traveled with Abraham to the land of Canaan and settled in the city of Sodom
- Lot was the ancestor of the Moabites and Ammonites.
- When enemy kings attacked Sodom and captured Lot, Abraham came with several hundred men to rescue Lot and recover his belongings.
- The people living in the city of Sodom were very wicked so God destroyed that city. But he first told Lot and his family to leave the city so that they could escape.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Ammon](#), [Ammonites](#), [Ammonitess](#), [Haran](#), [Moab](#), [Moabite](#), [Moabites](#), [Sodom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

love

Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” which some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others, even when it doesn’t benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.

- Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
- When people love others with this kind of love, it involves actions that show that someone is thinking of what will cause the other person to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
- In the ULB, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.

2. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

- This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
- It can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.

3. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

4. In the figurative expression, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated,” the term “loved” refers to God’s choosing of Jacob to be in a covenant relationship with him. This could also be translated as “chosen.” Although Esau was also blessed by God, he wasn’t given the privilege of being in the covenant. The term “hated” is used figuratively here to mean “rejected” or “not chosen.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULB refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God’s love can include giving up one’s own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means, “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”

- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.
- Many languages must express “love” as an action. So for example, they might translate “love is patient, love is kind” as, “when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him.”

(See also: [covenant](#), [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [save](#), [safe](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [27-02] The law expert replied that God’s law says, “**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself.”
- [33-08] “The thorny ground is a person who hears God’s word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God.”
- [36-05] As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I **love**.”
- [39-10] “Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me.”
- [47-01] She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- [48-01] When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- [49-03] He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- [49-04] He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- [49-07] Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- [49-09] But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- [49-13] God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

lust

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral.

- In the Bible, “lust” usually refers to sexual desire for someone other than one’s own spouse.
- Sometimes this term is used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, “lust” could also be translated as “wrong desire” or “strong desire” or “wrongful sexual desire” or “strong immoral desire” or “to strongly desire to sin.”
- The phrase “to lust after” could also be translated as “to wrongly desire” or “to think immorally about” or “to immorally desire.”

(See also: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

magic, magician

Definition:

The term “magic” refers to the practice of using supernatural power that does not come from God. A “magician” is someone who practices magic.

- In Egypt, when God did miraculous things through Moses, the Egyptian pharaoh’s magicians were able to do some of the same things, but their power did not come from God.
- Magic often involves casting spells or repeating certain words in order to make something supernatural happen.
- God commands his people to not do any of these practices of magic or divination.
- A sorcerer is a type of magician, usually one who uses magic to do harm to others.

(See also: [divination](#), [diviner](#), [soothsaying](#), [soothsayer](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Pharaoh](#), [king of Egypt](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [sorcery](#), [sorcerer](#), [witchcraft](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

manager, steward

Definition:

The term “manager” or “steward” in the Bible refers to a servant who was entrusted with taking care of his master’s property and business dealings.

- A steward was given a lot of responsibility, which included supervising the work of other servants.
- The term “manager” is a more modern term for a steward. Both terms refer to someone who manages practical affairs for someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as, “supervisor” or “household organizer” or “servant who manages” or “person who organizes.”

(See also: [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Manasseh

Facts:

There were five men by the name of Manasseh in the Old Testament:

- Manasseh was the name of Joseph's firstborn son.
- Both Manasseh and his younger brother Ephraim were adopted by Joseph's father, Jacob which gave their descendants the privilege of being among the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The descendants of Manasseh formed one of the tribes of Israel.
- The tribe of Manasseh was often called the "half-tribe of Manasseh" because only part of the tribe settled in the land of Canaan, on the west side of the Jordan River. The other part of the tribe settled on the east side of the Jordan.

- One of the kings of Judah was also named Manasseh.
- King Manasseh was an evil king who sacrificed his own children as burnt offerings to false gods.
- God punished King Manasseh by allowing him to be captured by an enemy army. Manasseh turned back to God and destroyed the altars where idols were worshiped.

- Two men named Manasseh lived during the time of Ezra. These men were required to divorce their pagan wives, who had influenced them to worship false gods.
- One other Manasseh was the grandfather of some Danites who were priests for false gods.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [altar](#), [Dan](#), [Ephraim](#), [Ezra](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Judah](#), [pagan](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

meditate**Definition:**

The term “meditate” means to spend time thinking about something carefully and deeply.

- This term is often used in the Bible to refer to thinking about God and his teachings.
- Psalm 1 says that the person who meditates on the law of the Lord “day and night” will be greatly blessed.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “meditate on” could be translated as “to think about carefully and deeply” or “to consider thoughtfully” or “to think about often.”
- The noun form is “meditation” and could be translated as, “deep thoughts.” A phrase like, “meditation of my heart” could be translated as, “what I think deeply about” or “what I often think about.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Melchizedek

Facts:

During the time when Abram lived, Melchizedek was the king of the city of Salem (later, “Jerusalem”)

- Melchizedek’s name means, “king of righteousness” and his title “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”
- He was also called a “priest of God Most High.”
- Melchizedek is first mentioned in the Bible when he served Abram bread and wine after Abram rescued his nephew Lot from powerful kings. Abram gave Melchizedek one-tenth of the plunder from his victory.
- In the New Testament, Melchizedek is described as someone who had no father or mother. He was called a priest and king who will reign forever.
- The New Testament also says that Jesus is a priest according to the priestly “order of Melchizedek.” Jesus was not descended from Levi as the Israelite priests were. His priesthood is directly from God, as Melchizedek’s was.
- Based on these descriptions of him in the Bible, Melchizedek was a human priest who was also chosen by God to represent or point forward to Jesus, the eternal king of peace and righteousness and our great high priest.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [eternity](#), [high priest](#), [Jerusalem](#), [Levite](#), [Levi](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

mercy, merciful

Definition:

The terms “mercy” and “merciful” refer to helping people who are in need, especially when they are in a lowly or humbled condition.

- The term “mercy” can also include the meaning of not punishing people for something they have done wrong.
- A powerful person such as a king is described as “merciful” when he treats people kindly instead of harming them.
- Being merciful also means to forgive someone who has done something wrong against us.
- We show mercy when we help people who are in great need.
- God is merciful to us, and he wants us to be merciful to others.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “mercy” could be translated as, “kindness” or “compassion” or “pity.”
- The term “merciful” could be translated as, “showing pity” or “being kind to” or “forgiving.”
- To “show mercy to” or “have mercy on” could be translated as, “treat kindly” or “be compassionate toward.”

(See: [compassion](#), [compassionate](#), [forgive](#), [forgiveness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[19-16]** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.
- **[19-17]** He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- **[20-12]** The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- **[27-11]** Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- **[32-11]** But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”

- **[34-09]**”But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

Meshech

Facts:

Meshech is the name of two men in the Old Testament.

- One Meshech was a son of Japheth.
- The other Meshech was a grandson of Shem.
- Meshech was also the name of a region of land, which was probably named after one of these men.
- The region of Meshech may have been located in part of what is now the country of Turkey.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Japheth](#), [Noah](#), [Shem](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Mesopotamia, Aram Naharaim

Facts:

Mesopotamia is the area of land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Its location is in the region of the modern day country of Iraq.

- In the Old Testament, this region was called “Aram Naharaim.”
- The word “Mesopotamia” means “between rivers.” The phrase “Aram Naharaim” means “Aram of two rivers.”
- Abraham lived in the Mesopotamian cities of Ur and Haran before moving on to the land of Canaan.
- Babylon was another important city in Mesopotamia.
- The region called “Chaldea” was also part of Mesopotamia.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See: [Aram](#), [Aramean](#), [Aramaic](#), [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Chaldea](#), [Chaldean](#), [Euphrates River](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Midian, Midianites

Facts:

Midian was a son of Abraham and his wife Keturah. It is also the name of a people group and region located in the northern Arabian Desert to the south of the land of Canaan. The people of that group were called “Midianites.”

- When Moses first left Egypt, he went to the region of Midian where he met the daughters of Jethro and helped them water their flocks. Later Moses married one of Jethro’s daughters.
- Joseph was taken to Egypt by a group of Midianite slave traders.
- Many years later the Midianites attacked and raided the Israelites in the land of Canaan. Gideon led the Israelites in defeating them.
- Many of the modern-day Arabian tribes are descendants of this group.

(See also [Arabia](#), [Arabian](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [flock](#), [herd](#), [Gideon](#), [Jethro](#), [Reuel](#), [Moses](#),

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[16-03]** But then the people forgot about God and started worshiping idols again. So God allowed the **Midianites**, a nearby enemy people group, to defeat them.
- **[16-04]** The Israelites were so scared, they hid in caves so the **Midianites** would not find them.
- **[16-11]** The man’s friend said, ”This dream means that Gideon’s army will defeat the **Midianite** army!”
- **[16-14]** God confused the **Midianites**, so that they started attacking and killing each other.

mighty, might

Definition:

The terms “mighty” and “might” refer to having great strength or power.

- Often the word “might” is another word for “strength.” When talking about God, it can mean “power.”
- The phrase, “mighty men” often refers to men who are courageous and victorious in battle. David’s band of faithful men who helped protect and defend him were often called “mighty men.”
- God is also referred to as the “mighty one.”
- The phrase, “mighty works” usually refers to the amazing things God does, especially miracles.
- This term is related to the term, “almighty,” which is a common description for God, meaning that he has complete power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “mighty” could be translated as “powerful” or “amazing” or “very strong.”
- The phrase “his might” could be translated as “his strength” or “his power.”
- In Acts 7, Moses is described as a man who was “mighty in word and deed.” This could be translated as, “Moses spoke powerful words from God and did miraculous things” or “Moses spoke God’s word powerfully and did many amazing things.”
- Depending on the context, “mighty works” could be translated as, “amazing things that God does” or “miracles” or “God doing things with power.”
- The term “might” could also be translated as “power” or “great strength.”
- Do not confuse this term with the English word that is used to express a possibility, as in “It might rain.”

(See also: [Almighty](#), [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [strength](#), [strengthen](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

mind

Definition:

The term “mind” refers to the part of a person that thinks and makes decisions.

- The mind of each person is the total of his or her thoughts and reasoning.
- To “have the mind of Christ” means to be thinking and acting as Jesus Christ would think and act. It means being obedient to God the Father, obeying the teachings of Christ, being enabled to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- To “change his mind” means someone made a different decision or had a different opinion than he had previously.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “mind” could also be translated as “thoughts” or “reasoning” or “thinking” or “understanding.”
- The expression, “keep in mind” could be translated as, “remember” or “pay attention to this” or “be sure to know this.”
- The expression, “heart, soul, and mind” could also be translated as, “what you feel, what you believe, and what you think about.”
- The expression “call to mind” could be translated as, “remember” or “think about.”
- The expression, “changed his mind and went” could also be translated as, “decided differently and went” or “decided to go after all” or “changed his opinion and went.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [heart](#), [soul](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Moab, Moabite, Moabites

Facts:

Moab was the son of Lot's elder daughter. It also became the name of the land where he and his family lived. The term "Moabite" refers to a person who is descended from Moab or who lives in the country of Moab.

- The country of Moab was located east of the Salt Sea.
- Moab was southeast from the town of Bethlehem where Naomi's family lived.
- The people in Bethlehem called Ruth a "Moabites" because she was a woman from the country of Moab. This term could also be translated as, "Moabite woman" or "woman from Moab."

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethlehem](#), [Ephrathah](#), [Judea](#), [Lot](#), [Ruth](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

mock, ridicule, scoff at

Definition:

The terms “mock,” “ridicule,” and “scoff at” all refer to making fun of someone, especially in a cruel way.

- Mocking often involves imitating people’s words or actions with the intent to embarrass them or show contempt for them.
- The Roman soldiers mocked or ridiculed Jesus when they put a robe on him and pretended to honor him as king.
- A group of young people ridiculed or scoffed at Elisha when they called him a name, making fun of his bald head.
- The term “scoff at” can also refer to ridiculing an idea that is not considered believable or important.

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [21-12] Isaiah prophesied that people would spit on, **mock**, and beat the Messiah.
- [39-05] The Jewish leaders all answered the high priest, “He deserves to die!” Then they blindfolded Jesus, spit on him, hit him, and **mocked** him.
- [39-12] The soldiers whipped Jesus, and put a royal robe and a crown made of thorns on him. Then they **mocked** him by saying, “Look, the King of the Jews!”
- [40-04] Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them **mocked** Jesus, but the other said, “Do you have no fear of God?”
- [40-05] The Jewish leaders and the other people in the crowd **mocked** Jesus. They said to him, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and save yourself! Then we will believe you.”

Most High

Facts:

The term, “Most High” is a title for God. It refers to his greatness or authority.

- The meaning of this term is similar to the meaning of “Sovereign” or “Supreme.”
- The word “high” in this title does not refer to physical height or distance. It refers to greatness.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can also be translated as, “Most High God” or “Most Supreme being” or “God Most High” or “Greatest One” or “Supreme One” or “God, who is Greater than all.”
- If a word like “high” is used, make sure it does not refer to being physically high or tall.

(See also: [God](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

mourn, mourning

Facts:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively, to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: [sackcloth](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

multiply

Definition:

The term “multiply” means to greatly increase in number. It can also mean to cause something to increase in amount, such as causing pain to multiply.

- God told animals and human beings to “multiply” and fill the earth. This was a command to reproduce many more of their own kind.
- Jesus made the bread and fish multiply in order to feed the 5000 people. The amount of food kept increasing so that there was more than enough food to feed everyone.
- Depending on the context, this term could also be translated as “increase” or “cause to increase” or “greatly increase in number” or “become greater in number” or “become more numerous.”
- The phrase “greatly multiply your pain” could also be translated as, “cause your pain to become more severe” or “cause you to experience much more pain.”
- To “multiply horses” means to “greedily keep acquiring more horses” or to “get large numbers of horses.”

Bible References:

Waiting

myrrh

Definition:

Myrrh is an oil or spice that is made from the resin of a myrrh tree that grows in Africa and Asia. It is related to frankincense.

- Myrrh was also used to make incense, perfume, and medicine, and to prepare dead bodies for burial.
- Myrrh was one of the gifts that the learned men gave to Jesus when he was born.
- Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh in order to ease the pain when he was crucified.

(See also: [frankincense](#), [learned men](#), [astrologers](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Nahor

Facts:

Nahor was the name of two relatives of Abraham: his grandfather and his brother.

- Abraham's brother Nahor was the grandfather of Isaac's wife Rebekah.
- The phrase "city of Nahor" could mean, "the city named Nahor" or "the city where Nahor had lived" or "Nahor's city."

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Rebekah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

name

Definition:

In the Bible, the word “name” is used in several figurative ways.

- In some contexts, “name” can refer to a person’s reputation, as in, “let us make a name for ourselves.”
- The term “name” can also refer to the memory of something. For example, “cut off the names of the idols” means to destroy those idols so that they are no longer remembered or worshiped.
- Speaking “in the name of God” means speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative.
- The “name” of someone can refer to the entire person, as in “there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- An expression like, “his good name” could be translated as “his good reputation.”
- Doing something “in the name of” could be translated as, “with the authority of” or “with the permission of” or “as the representative of” that person.
- The expression, “make a name for ourselves” could be translated, “cause many people to know about us” or “make people think we are very important.”
- The expression, “call his name” could be translated as, “name him” or “give him the name.”
- The expression, “those who love your name” could be translated as, “those who love you.”
- The expression, “cut off the names of idols” could be translated as “get rid of pagan idols so that they are not even remembered” or “cause people to stop worshiping false gods” or “completely destroy all idols so that people no longer even think about them.”

(See: [call](#), [calling](#), [called](#), [call out](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Naphtali

Facts:

Naphtali was the sixth son of Jacob. His descendants formed the tribe of Naphtali, which was one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

- Sometimes the name Naphtali is used to refer to the land where the tribe lived. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- The land of Naphtali was located in the northern part of Israel, next to the tribes of Dan and Asher. It was also on the western border of the Sea of Chinnereth.
- This tribe is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Asher](#), [Dan](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Sea of Galilee](#), [Sea of Chinnereth](#), [Lake of Gennesaret](#), [Sea of Tiberias](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

nation

Definition:

A nation is a large group of people ruled by some form of government. The people of a nation often have the same ancestors and share a common ethnicity.

- The term “nation” usually includes the idea of a well-defined culture and territorial boundaries.
- In the Bible, a “nation” can be a country (like Egypt or Ethiopia), but often it is more general and refers to a people group, especially when used in the plural. It is important to check the context.
- Nations in the Bible included the Israelites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, the Romans, and the Greeks, among many others.
- Sometimes the word “nation” is used figuratively to refer to the ancestor of a certain people group, as when Rebekah was told by God that her unborn sons were “nations” that would fight against each other. This could be translated as “the founders of two nations” or the “ancestors of two people groups.”
- The word translated as “nation” is also sometimes used to refer to “Gentiles” or to people who do not worship Yahweh. The context usually makes the meaning clear.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the word “nation” could also be translated as, “people group” or “people” or “country.”
- If a language has a term for “nation” that is distinct from these other terms, then that term can be used wherever it occurs in the Bible text, as long as it is natural and accurate in each context.
- The plural term “nations” can often be translated as “people groups.”
- In certain contexts, this term could also be translated as “Gentiles” or “nonJews.”

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Gentile](#), [Greek](#), [Grecian](#), [people group](#), [peoples](#), [the people](#), [a people](#), [Philistines](#), [Rome](#), [Roman](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Negev

Facts:

The Negev is a desert region in the southern part of Israel, southwest of the Salt Sea.

- The original word means “the South” and some English versions translate it this way.
- It could be that this southern region is not the same location as the present day Negev Desert.
- When Abraham lived in the city of Kadesh, he was in the Negev or southern region.
- Isaac was living in the Negev when Rebekah traveled to meet him and became his wife.
- The Jewish tribes of Judah and Simeon lived in this southern region.
- The largest city in the Negev region was Beersheba.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Beersheba](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Judah](#), [Kadesh](#), [Kadesh-Barnea](#), [Meribah Kadesh](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#), [Simeon](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Nile River, River of Egypt

Facts:

The Nile is a very long and wide river in northeastern Africa. It is especially well-known as the main river of Egypt.

- The Nile River flows north through Egypt and into the Mediterranean Sea.
- Crops grow well in the fertile land on either side of the Nile River.
- Most Egyptians live near the Nile River since it is an important source of water and food crops.
- The Israelites lived in the land of Goshen which was very fertile because it was located along the Nile River.
- When Moses was a baby, his parents placed him in a basket among the reeds of the Nile to hide him from Pharaoh's men.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Goshen](#), [Moses](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-04]** Egypt was a large, powerful country located along the **Nile River**.
- **[09-04]** Pharaoh saw that the Israelites were having many babies, so he ordered his people to kill all Israelite baby boys by throwing them into the **Nile River**.
- **[09-06]** When the boy's parents could no longer hide him, they put him in a floating basket among the reeds along the edge of the **Nile River** in order to save him from being killed.
- **[10-03]** God turned the **Nile River** into blood, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.

Nineveh, Ninevite

Facts:

Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria. A “Ninevite” was a person who lived in Nineveh.

- God sent the prophet Jonah to warn the Ninevites to turn from their wicked ways. The people repented and God did not destroy them.
- The Assyrians later stopped serving God. They conquered the kingdom of Israel and carried the people away to Nineveh.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Jonah](#), [repent](#), [repentance](#), [turn](#), [turn away](#), [turn back](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Noah

Facts:

Noah was a man who lived over 4,000 years ago, at the time when God sent a worldwide flood to destroy all the evil people in the world. God told Noah to build a gigantic boat in which he and his family could live while the flood waters covered the earth.

- Noah was a righteous man who obeyed God in everything.
- When God told Noah how to build the gigantic boat, Noah built it exactly the way God told him to.
- Inside the boat, Noah and his family were kept safe and later their children and grandchildren filled the earth with people again.
- Everyone born since the time of the flood is a descendant of Noah.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-02]** But **Noah** found favor with God.
- **[03-04]** **Noah** obeyed God. He and his three sons built the boat just the way God had told them.
- **[03-13]** Two months later God said to **Noah**, “You and your family and all the animals may leave the boat now. Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.” So **Noah** and his family came out of the boat.

oak

Definition:

An oak is a tall, shade tree with a large trunk and wide spreading branches.

- Oak trees have strong, hard wood that was used to build ships and to make farming plows, oxen yokes and walking sticks for elderly people.
- The seed of an oak tree is called an acorn.
- The trunk of certain oak trees could be as wide around as 6 meters.
- Oak trees were symbolic of long life and had other spiritual meanings. In the Bible, they were often associated with holy places.

Translation Suggestions:

- Many translations will have to say “oak tree” rather than just “oak.”
- If oak trees are not known in the receptor area, this could be translated as “an oak, which is a large shade tree like...,” then give the name of a local tree that has similar characteristics.
- See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#)

(See also: [holy](#), [holiness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

oath, swear, swear by

Definition:

In the Bible, an oath is a formal promise to do something. The person making the oath is required to fulfill that promise. An oath involves a commitment to being faithful and truthful.

- Often in a court of law, a witness gives an oath to promise that whatever he says will be true and factual.
- In the Bible, the term “swear” means to speak an oath.
- The term “swear by” means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made.
- Sometimes these terms are used together as in, “swear an oath.”
- Abraham and Abimelech swore an oath when they made a covenant together concerning the use of a well.
- Abraham told his servant to swear (formally promise) that he would find Isaac a wife from among Abraham’s relatives.
- God also made oaths in which he made promises to his people.
- A modern-day use of the word “swear” means to use foul language. This is not its meaning in the Bible.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “an oath” could also be translated as “a pledge” or “a solemn promise.”
- “To swear” could be translated by “to formally promise” or “to pledge” or “to commit to do something.”
- Other ways to translate “swear by my name” could include, “make a promise using my name to confirm it.”
- To “swear by heaven and earth” could be translated as, “promise to do something, stating that heaven and earth will confirm it.”
- Make sure the translation of “swear” or “oath” does not refer to cursing. In the Bible it does not have that meaning.

(See also: [Abimelech](#), [covenant](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

obey, obedient, obedience

Definition:

The term “obey” means to do what is required or commanded. The term “obedient” describes the character of someone who obeys. Sometimes the command is about not doing something, as in, “do not steal.”

- Usually the term “obey” is used in the context of obeying the commands or laws of a person in authority.
- For example, people obey laws which are created by the leaders of a country, kingdom, or other organization.
- Children obey their parents, slaves obey their masters, people obey God, and citizens obey the laws of their country.
- When someone in authority commands people not to do something, they obey by not doing that.
- Ways to translate this term could include a word or phrase that means, “do what is commanded” or “follow orders” or “do what God says to do.”
- The term “obedient” could be translated as, “doing what was commanded” or “following orders” or “doing what God commands.”

(See also: [citizen](#), [command](#), [to command](#), [commandment](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [kingdom](#), [law](#), [principle](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-04]** Noah **obeyed** God. He and his three sons built the boat just the way God had told them.
- **[05-06]** Again Abraham **obeyed** God and prepared to sacrifice his son.
- **[05-10]** “Because you (Abraham) have **obeyed** me, all the families of the world will be blessed through your family”
- **[11-06]** But the Egyptians did not believe God or **obey** his commands.
- **[13-07]** If the people **obeyed** these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them.

offspring**Definition:**

The term “offspring” is a general reference to the biological descendants of people or animals.

- Often in the Bible, “offspring” has the same meaning as “children” or “descendants.”
- The term “seed” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to offspring.

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [seed](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

oil**Definition:**

Oil is a thick, clear liquid that is taken from certain plants or fruits. In Bible times, oil usually came from olives.

- Olive oil was used for cooking, anointing, sacrifice, lamps, and medicine.
- In ancient times, olive oil was highly prized and the possession of oil was considered a measurement of wealth.
- Make sure the translation of this term refers to the kind of oil that can be used in cooking, not motor oil. Some languages have different words for these different kinds of oil.

(See also: [olive](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

olive

Definition:

The olive is the small, oval fruit from an olive tree, which is mostly grown in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

- Olive trees are a type of large evergreen shrub with tiny white flowers. They grow best in hot weather and can survive well with little water.
- The olive tree's fruit is green in color, changing to black as they ripen. Olives are used for eating and extracting oil.
- Olive oil was used for cooking, for lighting lamps, and for religious ceremonies.
- In the Bible, olive trees and branches are sometimes used figuratively to refer to people.

(See also: [lamp](#), [the sea](#), [the Great Sea](#), [the western sea](#), [Mediterranean Sea](#), [Mount of Olives](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

oppress, oppression, oppressor

Definition:

The terms “oppress” and “oppression” refer to treating people harshly. An “oppressor” is a person who oppresses people.

- The term “oppression” especially refers to a situation where people of greater strength mistreat or enslave people who are under their power or rule.
- The term “oppressed” describes the people who are being harshly treated.
- Often enemy nations and their rulers were oppressors to the people of Israel.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “oppress” could be translated by, “severely mistreat” or “cause to be heavily burdened” or “put under miserable bondage” or “rule harshly.”
- Ways to translate “oppression” could include, “heavy suppression and bondage” or “burdensome control.”
- The phrase “the oppressed” could be translated as “oppressed people” or “people in terrible bondage” or “those who are treated harshly.”
- The term “oppressor” could be translated as “person who oppresses” or “nation who controls and rules harshly” or “persecutor.”

(See also: [bind](#), [bond](#), [bound](#), [enslave](#), [in bondage](#), [persecute](#), [persecution](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

overseer**Definition:**

The term “overseer” refers to a person who is in charge of the work and welfare of other people.

- In the Old Testament, an overseer had the job of making sure the workers under him did their work well.
- In the New Testament, this term is used to describe leaders of the early Christian church. Their work was to take care of the spiritual needs of the church, making sure the believers received accurate biblical teaching.
- Paul refers to an overseer as being like a shepherd who takes care of the believers in a local church, who are his “flock.”
- The overseer, like a shepherd, keeps watch over the flock. He guards and protects the believers from false spiritual teaching and other evil influences.
- In the New Testament, the terms “overseer,” “elder,” and “shepherd/pastor” are different ways of referring to the same spiritual leaders.

Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could be, “supervisor” or “caretaker” or “manager.”
- When referring to a leader of a local group of God’s people, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “spiritual supervisor” or “someone who takes care of the spiritual needs of a group of believers” or “person who oversees the spiritual needs of the Church.”

(See also: [church](#), [Church](#), [elder](#), [pastor](#), [shepherd](#), [to shepherd](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

ox, oxen

Definition:

An “ox” refers to a type of cattle that is specifically trained to do agricultural work. The plural of this term is “oxen.” Usually oxen are male and have been castrated.

- Throughout the Bible, oxen are depicted as animals tied together by a yoke to pull a cart or a plow.
- Oxen working together under a yoke was such a common occurrence in the Bible that the phrase “to be under a yoke” became a metaphor for hard work and labor.
- A bull is also a male type of cattle, but it has not been castrated and has not been trained as a work animal.

(See also: [cow](#), [calf](#), [bull](#), [cattle](#), [yoke](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Paddan Aram

Facts:

Paddan Aram was the name of a region where Abraham's family lived before moving to the land of Canaan. It means "plain of Aram."

- When Abraham left Haran in Paddan Aram to travel to the land of Canaan, most of the rest of his family stayed behind in Haran.
- Many years later, Abraham's servant went to Paddan Aram to find a wife for Isaac among his relatives there and found Rebekah, grand-daughter of Bethuel.
- Isaac and Rebekah's son Jacob also traveled to Paddan Aram and married two daughters of Rebekah's brother Laban who was living in Haran.
- Aram, Paddan-Aram, and Aram-Nahariam were all part of the same region that is now where the modern-day country of Syria is located.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Aram](#), [Aramean](#), [Aramaic](#), [Bethuel](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Haran](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Laban](#), [Rebekah](#), [Syria](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Paran

Facts:

Paran was a desert or wilderness area east of Egypt and south of the land of Canaan. There was also a Mount Paran, which may have been another name for Mount Sinai.

- The slave Hagar and her son Ishmael went to live in the wilderness of Paran after Sarah ordered Abraham to send them away.
- When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, they passed through the wilderness of Paran.
- It was from Kadesh-Barnea in the wilderness of Paran that Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan and bring back a report.
- The wilderness of Zin was north of Paran and the wilderness of Sin was south of Paran.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [desert](#), [wilderness](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Kadesh](#), [Kadesh-Barnea](#), [Meribah Kadesh](#), [Sinai](#), [Mount Sinai](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

peace, peaceful

Definition:

The term “peace” refers to a state of being or a feeling of having no conflict, anxiety, or fearfulness. A person who is “peaceful” feels calm and assured of being safe and secure.

- “Peace” can also refer to a time when people groups or countries are not at war with each other. These people are said to have “peaceful relations.”
- To “make peace” with a person or a group of people means to take actions to cause fighting to stop.
- A “peacemaker” is someone who does and says things to influence people to live at peace with each other.
- To be “at peace” with other people means being in a state of not fighting against those people.
- A good or right relationship between God and people happens when God saves people from their sin. This is called having “peace with God.”
- The greeting “grace and peace” was used by the apostles in their letters to their fellow believers as a blessing.
- The term “peace” can also refer to being in a good relationship with other people or with God.

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [15-06] God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- [15-12] Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- [16-03] Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- [21-13] He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- [48-14] David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- [50-17] Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

people group, peoples, the people, a people

Definition:

The term “peoples” or “people groups” refers to groups of people who share a common language and culture. The phrase “the people” often refers to a gathering of people in a certain place or at a specific event.

- When God set apart “a people” for himself, it means that he chose certain people to belong to him and serve him.
- In Bible times, the members of a people group usually had the same ancestors and lived together in a particular country or area of land.
- Depending on the context, a phrase such as “your people” can mean “your people group” or “your family” or “your relatives.”
- The term “peoples” is often used to refer to all people groups on the earth. Sometimes it refers more specifically to people who are not Israelites or who do not serve Yahweh. In some English Bible translations the term “nations” is also used in this way.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people group” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “large family group” or “clan” or “ethnic group.”
- A phrase such as “my people” could be translated as “my relatives” or “my fellow Israelites” or “my family” or “my people group,” depending on the context.
- The expression “scatter you among the peoples” could also be translated as “cause you to go live with many different people groups” or “cause you to separate from each other and go live in many different regions of the world.”
- The term “the peoples” or “the people” could also be translated as “the people in the world” or “people groups,” depending on the context.
- The phrase, “the people of” could be translated as, “the people living in” or “the people descended from” or “the family of” depending on whether it is followed by the name of a place or a person.
- “All the peoples of the earth” could be translated as, “everyone living on earth” or “every person in the world” or “all people.”
- The phrase “a people” could also be translated as, “a group of people” or “certain people” or “a community of people” or “a family of people.”

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [nation](#), [tribe](#), [world](#), [worldly](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[14-02]** God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the Promised Land to their descendants, but now there were many **people groups** living there. what follows is
- **[21-02]** God promised Abraham that through him all **people groups** of the world would receive a blessing. This blessing would be that the Messiah would come sometime in the future and provide the way of salvation for people from all the **people groups** of the world.
- **[42-08]** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all **people groups** everywhere."
- **[42-10]** "So go, make disciples of all **people groups** by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **[48-11]** Because of this New Covenant, anyone from any **people group** can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.
- **[50-03]** He (Jesus) said, "Go and make disciples of all **people groups!**" and, "The fields are ripe for harvest!"

people of God, my people

Definition:

The term, “people of God” refers to people whom God has called out from the world to have a special relationship with him.

- When God says, “my people” he is talking about the people whom he has chosen and who have a relationship with him.
- God’s people are chosen by him and are set apart from the world to live in a way that is pleasing to him. He also calls them his children.
- In the Old Testament, “people of God” refers to the nation of Israel which was chosen by God and set apart from among the other nations of the world to serve and obey him.
- In the New Testament, “people of God” especially refers to all those who believe in Jesus and are called the Church. This includes both Jews and Gentiles.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people of God” could be translated as “God’s people” or “the people who worship God” or “people who serve God” or “people who belong to God.”
- Other ways to translate “my people” when God says it, could include, “the people I have chosen” or “the people who worship me” or “the people who belong to me.”
- Similarly, “your people” could be translated as “the people who belong to you” or “the people you chose to belong to you.”
- Also “his people” could be translated as “the people who belong to him” or “the people God chose to belong to himself.”

(See also: [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [people group](#), [peoples](#), [the people](#), [a people](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Perizzite

Facts:

The Perizzites were one of several people groups in the land of Canaan. Little is known about this group as to who their ancestors were or what part of Canaan they lived in.

- The Perizzites are mentioned most frequently in the Old Testament book of Judges, where it is recorded that the Perizzites intermarried with the Israelites and influenced them to worship false gods.
- Note that the clan of Perez, called the “Perezites,” was a different people group from the Perizzites. It may be necessary to spell the names very differently to make this clear.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Pharaoh, king of Egypt

Facts:

In ancient times, the kings who ruled over the country of Egypt were called pharaohs.

- Altogether, over 300 pharaohs ruled Egypt for more than 2,000 years.
- These Egyptians kings were very powerful and wealthy.
- Several of these pharaohs are mentioned in the Bible.
- Often this title is used as a name rather than as a title. In these cases, it is capitalized and written as, “Pharaoh.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [king](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-06]** One night, the **Pharaoh**, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- **[08-08]** **Pharaoh** was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of Egypt!
- **[09-02]** So the **Pharaoh** who was ruling over Egypt at that time made the Israelites slaves to the Egyptians.
- **[09-13]** “I will send you to **Pharaoh** so that you can bring the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt.”
- **[10-02]** Through these plagues, God showed **Pharaoh** that he is more powerful than **Pharaoh** and all of Egypt’s gods.

Philistines

Facts:

The Philistines were a people group who occupied a region known as Philistia along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Their name means “people of the sea.”

- There were five main Philistine cities: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza.
- The city of Ashdod was in the northern part of Philistia, and the city of Gaza was in the southern part.
- The Philistines are probably best known for the many years they were at war against the Israelites.
- The judge Samson was a famous warrior against the Philistines, using supernatural strength from God.
- King David often led battles against the Philistines, including the time as a youth when he defeated the Philistine warrior, Goliath.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Ashdod](#), [Azotus](#), [Ashkelon](#), [David](#), [Ekron](#), [Gath](#), [Gaza](#), [Goliath](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

pillar, column

Definition:

The term “pillar” usually refers to a large vertical structure that is used to hold up a roof or other part of a building. Another word for “pillar” is “column.”

- In Bible times, pillars used as support in buildings were normally carved from a single piece of stone.
- When Samson in the Old Testament was captured by the Philistines, he destroyed their pagan temple by pushing the supporting pillars and causing the temple to collapse.
- The word “pillar” sometimes refers to a large stone or boulder that is set up as a memorial to mark a grave or to mark the place where an important event happened.
- It can also refer to an idol that was made to worship a false god. It is another name for a “carved image” and could be translated as “statue.”
- The term “pillar” is used to refer to something that is shaped like a pillar, such as the “pillar of fire” that led the Israelites at night through the desert or the “pillar of salt” that Lot’s wife became after she looked back at the city.
- AS a structure supporting a building, the term “pillar” or “column” could be translated as “upright stone support beam” or “supporting stone structure.”
- Other uses of “pillar” could be translated as “statue” or “pile” or “mound” or “monument” or “tall mass,” depending on the context.

(See also: [foundation](#), [founded](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [image](#), [carved image](#), [carved figure](#), [cast metal figure](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

pit**Definition:**

A pit is a deep hole that has been dug in the ground.

- People dig pits for the purpose of trapping animals or finding water.
- A pit can also be used as a temporary place to hold a prisoner.
- Sometimes the phrase “the pit” refers to the grave or to hell. Other times it may refer to “the abyss.”
- A very deep pit can also be called a “cistern.”
- The term “pit” is also used figuratively in phrases such as, “pit of destruction” which describes being trapped in a disastrous situation or being deeply involved in sinful, destructive practices.

(See also: [abyss](#), [hell](#), [lake of fire](#), [prison](#), [prisoner](#), [imprison](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

plague

Definition:

Plagues are events which cause suffering or death to a large number of people. Often a plague is a disease that spreads quickly and causes many people to die before it can be stopped.

- Many plagues have natural causes, but some were sent by God to punish people for sin.
- In the time of Moses, God sent ten plagues against Egypt to force Pharaoh to let Israel leave Egypt. These plagues included water turning into blood, physical diseases, destruction of crops by insects and hail, three days of complete darkness, and death of the firstborn sons.
- This could also be translated as, “widespread disasters” or “widespread disease,” depending on the context.

(See also: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [hail](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Moses](#), [Pharaoh](#), [king of Egypt](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

pledge

Definition:

The term “pledge” refers to formally and solemnly promising to do something or give something.

- In the Old Testament the officials of Israel pledged to be loyal to King David.
- The object given as a pledge would be returned to its owner when the promise was fulfilled.
- “To pledge” could be translate as, “to formally commit to” or “to strongly promise.”
- The term “pledge” can also refer to an object given as a guarantee or promise that a debt will be paid.
- Ways to translate “a pledge” could include “a solemn promise” or “a formal commitment” or “a guarantee” or “a formal assurance,” depending on the context.

(See also: [promise](#), [oath](#), [swear](#), [swear by](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

possess, possession

Facts:

The terms “possess” and “possession” usually refer to owning something. They can also mean to gain control over something or occupy an area of land.

- In the Old Testament, this term is often used in the context of “possessing” or “taking possession of” an area of land.
- When Yahweh commanded the Israelites to “possess” the land of Canaan, it meant that they should go into the land and live there. This involved first conquering the Canaanite peoples who were living on that land.
- Yahweh told the Israelites that he had given them the land of Canaan as “their possession.” This could also be translated as, “their rightful place to live.”
- The people of Israel were also called Yahweh’s “special possession.” This means that they belonged to him as his people whom he had specifically called to worship and serve him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The terms “possess” could also be translated as, “own” or “have” or “have charge over.”
- The phrase, “take possession of” could be translated as “take control of” or “occupy” or “live on,” depending on the context.
- When referring to things that people own, “possessions” could be translated as, “belongings” or “property” or “owned things” or “things they owned.”
- When Yahweh calls the Israelites, “my special possession” this could also be translated as “my special people” or “people who belong to me” or “my people whom I love and rule.”
- The sentence, “they will become their possession” when referring to land, means “they will occupy the land” or “the land will belong to them.”
- The expression, “found in his possession” could be translated as, “that he was holding” or “that he had with him.”
- The phrase “as your possession” could also be translated as, “as something that belongs to you” or “as a place where your people will live.”
- The phrase, “in his possession” could be translated as “that he owned” or “which belonged to him.”

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Potiphar

Facts:

Potiphar was an important official for the pharaoh of Egypt during the time that Joseph was sold as a slave to some Ishmaelites.

- Potiphar bought Joseph from the Ishmaelites and appointed him to be in charge of his household.
- When Joseph was falsely accused of doing wrong, Potiphar had Joseph put in prison.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [household](#), [Ishmael](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [Pharaoh, king of Egypt](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

power, powers

Definition:

The term “power” refers to the ability to do things or make things happen, often using great strength. “Powers” refers to people or spirits who have great ability to cause things to happen.

- The “power of God” refers to God’s ability to do everything, especially things that are not possible for people to do.
- God has complete power over everything that he has created.
- God gives his people power to do what he wants, so that when they heal people or do other miracles, they do this by the power of God.
- Because Jesus and the Holy Spirit are also God, they have this same power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “power” could also be translated as “ability” or “strength” or “energy” or “ability to do miracles” or “control.”
- Possible ways to translate the term “powers” could include, “powerful beings” or “controlling spirits” or “those who control others.”
- An expression like “save us from the power of our enemies” could be translated as, “save us from being oppressed by our enemies” or “rescue us from being controlled by our enemies.” In this case, “power” has the meaning of using one’s strength to control and oppress others.

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[22-05]** The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the **power** of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the Son of God.”
- **[26-01]** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the **power** of the Holy Spirit to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **[32-15]** Immediately Jesus realized that **power** had gone out from him.
- **[42-11]** Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, “Stay in Jerusalem until my Father gives you **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- **[43-06]** “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the **power** of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- **[44-08]** Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the **power** of Jesus the Messiah.”

praise

Definition:

To praise someone is to express admiration and honor for that person.

- People praise God because of how great he is and because of all the amazing things he has done as the Creator and Savior of the world.
- Praise for God often includes being thankful for what he has done.
- Music and singing is often used as a way to praise God.
- Praising God is part of what it means to worship him.
- The term “to praise” could also be translated as, “to speak well of” or “to highly honor with words” or “to say good things about.”
- The noun “praise” could be translated as, “spoken honor” or “speech that honors” or “speaking good things about.”

(See also: [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[12-13]** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to **praise** God because he saved them from the Egyptian army.
- **[17-08]** When David heard these words, he immediately thanked and **praised** God because he had promised David this great honor and many blessings.
- **[22-07]** Zechariah said, “**Praise** God, because he has remembered his people!
- **[43-13]** They (disciples) enjoyed **praising** God together and they shared everything they had with each other.
- **[47-08]** They put Paul and Silas in the most secure part of the prison and even locked up their feet. Yet in the middle of the night, they were singing songs of **praise** to God.

pray, prayer

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. This term is also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [forgive](#), [forgiveness](#), [praise](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [06-05] Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- [13-12] But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- [19-08] Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- [21-07] Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.
- [38-11] Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- [43-13] The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- [49-18] God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

priest, priesthood

Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him".
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like, "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: [Aaron](#), [chief priests](#), [high priest](#), [mediator](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [04-07] "Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High"
- [13-09] Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight. God chose Moses' brother, Aaron, and Aaron's descendants to be his **priests**.
- [19-07] So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire.
- [21-07] An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

prince, princess

Definition:

A “prince” is the son of a king. A “princess” is a daughter of a king.

- The term “prince” is often used figuratively to refer to a leader, ruler, or other powerful person.
- Because of Abraham’s wealth and importance, he was referred to as a “prince” by the Hittites he was living among.
- In the book of Daniel, the term “prince” is used in the expressions “prince of Persia” and “prince of Greece,” which in those contexts probably refer to powerful evil spirits who had authority over those regions.
- The archangel Michael is also referred to as a “prince” in the book of Daniel.
- Sometimes in the Bible Satan is referred to as “the prince of this world.”
- Jesus is called the “Prince of Peace” and the “Prince of Life.”
- In Acts 2:36, Jesus is referred to as “Lord and Christ” and in Acts 5:31 he is referred to as “Prince and Savior,” showing the parallel meaning of “Lord” and “Prince.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “prince” could include, “king’s son” or “ruler” or “leader” or “chieftain” or “captain.”
- When referring to angels, this could also be translated as, “spirit ruler” or “leading angel.”
- When referring to Satan or other evil spirits, this term could also be translated as, “evil spirit ruler” or “powerful spirit leader” or “ruling spirit,” depending on the context.

(See also: [angel](#), [archangel](#), [authority](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#), [Savior](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

prison, prisoner, imprison**Definition:**

The term “prison” refers to a place where criminals are kept as a punishment for their crimes. A “prisoner” is someone who has been put in the prison.

- A person may be kept in a prison while waiting to be judged in a trial.
- The term “imprisoned” means “kept in a prison” or “kept in captivity.”
- Many prophets and other servants of God were put in prison even though they had not done anything wrong.

Translation Suggestions:

- Another word for “prison” is “jail.”
- This term could also be translated as “dungeon” in contexts where the prison is probably underground or beneath the main part of a palace or other building.
- The term “prisoners” can also refer in general to people who have been captured by an enemy and kept somewhere against their will. Another way to translate this meaning would be “captives.”
- Other ways to translate “imprisoned” could be, “kept as a prisoner” or “kept in captivity” or “held captive.”

(See also: [captive](#), [captivity](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Promised Land

Facts:

The term “Promised Land” only occurs in the Bible Stories, not the Bible text. It is an alternate way of referring to the land of Canaan which God had promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.

- When Abram was living in the city of Ur, God commanded him to go live in the land of Canaan. He and his descendants, the Israelites, lived there for many years.
- When a severe famine caused there to be no food in Canaan, the Israelites moved to Egypt.
- Four hundred years later, God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and brought them back to Canaan again, the land God had promised to give them.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “Promised Land” can be translated as the “land that God said he would give to Abraham” or “land that God promised to Abraham” or “land God promised to his people” or “land of Canaan.”
- In the Bible text, this term occurs as some form of, “the land God promised.”

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [promise](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[12-01]** They (Israelites) were no longer slaves, and they were going to the **Promised Land!**
- **[14-01]** After God had told the Israelites the laws he wanted them to obey as part of his covenant with them, God began leading them from Mount Sinai toward the **Promised Land**, which was also called Canaan.
- **[14-02]** God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the **Promised Land** to their descendants, but now there were many people groups living there.
- **[14-14]** Then God led the people to the edge of the **Promised Land** again.
- **[15-02]** The Israelites had to cross the Jordan River to enter into the **Promised Land**.
- **[15-12]** After this battle, God gave each tribe of Israel its own section of the **Promised Land**.
- **[20-09]** This period of time when God’s people were forced to leave the **Promised Land** is called the Exile.

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promise

Definition:

A promise is a pledge to do a certain thing. When someone promises something, it means he is committing to do something.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.
- A promise is often accompanied by an oath to confirm that it will be done.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as, “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as, “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: [covenant](#), [oath](#), [swear](#), [swear by](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-15]** God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”?
- **[03-16]** God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- **[04-08]** God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- **[05-04]** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- **[08-15]** The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.
- **[17-14]** Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- **[50-01]** Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example, the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as, “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as, “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as, “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: [Baal](#), [divination](#), [diviner](#), [soothsaying](#), [soothsayer](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [false prophet](#), [fulfill](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [vision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [12-12] When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- [17-13] God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- [19-01] Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God's messages.
- [19-06] All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- [19-17] Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- [21-09] The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- [43-05]"This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- [43-07]"This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- [48-12] Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.
-

prosper, prosperity, prosperous

Definition:

The term “prosper” generally refers to living well and can refer to prospering physically or spiritually. When people or a country are “prosperous,” it means they are wealthy and have all that they need to be successful. They are experiencing “prosperity.”

- The term “prosperous” often refers to success in owning money and property or in producing everything needed for people to live well.
- In the Bible, the term “prosperous” also includes good health and being blessed with children.
- A “prosperous” city or country is one that has many people, good production of food, and businesses that bring in plenty of money.
- The Bible teaches that a person will prosper spiritually when he obeys God’s teachings. He will also experience the blessings of joy and peace. God does not always give people a lot of material wealth, but he will always prosper them spiritually as they follow his ways.
- Depending on the context, the term “prosper” could also be translated as “succeed spiritually” or “be blessed by God” or “experience good things” or “live well.”
- The term “prosperous” could also be translated as “successful” or “wealthy” or “spiritually fruitful.”
- “Prosperity” could also be translated as, “well-being” or “wealth” or “success” or “abundant blessings.”

(See also: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#), [fruit](#), [fruitful](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

prostitute, harlot, whore

Definition:

The terms “prostitute” and “harlot” both refer to a person who performs sexual acts for money or for religious rites. Prostitutes or harlots were usually female, but some were male.

- In the Bible, the word “prostitute” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to a person who worships false gods or who practices witchcraft.
- The expression “play the harlot” means to act like a harlot by being sexually immoral. This expression is also used in the Bible to refer to a person who worships idols.
- To “prostitute oneself” to something means to be sexually immoral or when used figuratively, to be unfaithful to God by worshiping false gods.
- In ancient times, some pagan temples used male and female prostitutes as part of their rituals.
- This term could be translated by the word or phrase that is used in the project language to refer to a prostitute. Some languages may have a euphemistic term that is used for this. (See: [Euphemism](#))

(See: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [sexual immorality](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

prostrate

Definition:

The term “prostrate” means to be lying face down, stretched out on the ground.

- To “fall prostrate” or to “prostrate oneself” before someone means to suddenly bow down very low or in front of that person.
- Usually this position of being prostrate is a response that shows shock, amazement, and awe because of something miraculous that happened. It also shows honor and respect for the person being bowed to.
- Being prostrate also was a way to worship God. People often responded this way to Jesus in thanksgiving and worship when he did a miracle or to honor him as a great teacher.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “prostrated” could include, “bowed down low with the face to the ground” or “worshiped him by lying face down in front of him” or “bowed down low to the ground in amazement” or “worshiped.”
- The phrase, “will not prostrate ourselves” could be translated as, “will not worship” or “will not lie face down in worship” or “will not bow down and worship.”
- “Prostrate himself to” could also be translate as “worship” or “bow down in front of.”

(See also: [awe](#), [awesome](#), [bow](#), [bow down](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

punish, punishment

Definition:

The term “punish” means to cause someone to suffer a negative consequence for doing something wrong. The term “punishment” refers to the negative consequence that is given as a result of that wrong behavior.

- Often punishment is intended to motivate a person to stop sinning.
- God punished the Israelites when they disobeyed him, especially when they worshiped false gods. Because of their sin, God allowed their enemies to attack and capture them.
- God is righteous and just, so he has to punish sin. Every human being has sinned against God and deserves punishment.
- Jesus was punished for all the evil things that every person has ever done. He received each person’s punishment on himself even though he did nothing wrong and did not deserve that punishment.
- The expressions “go unpunished” and “leave unpunished” mean to decide not to punish people for their wrongdoing. God often allows sin to go unpunished as he waits for people to repent.

(See also: [just](#), [justice](#), [justly](#), [repent](#), [repentance](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

their

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[13-07]** God also gave many other laws and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would **punish** them.
- **[16-02]** Because the Israelites kept disobeying God, he **punished** them by allowing their enemies to defeat them.
- **[19-16]** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would judge them as guilty, and he would **punish** them.
- **[48-06]** Jesus was the perfect high priest because he took the **punishment** for every sin that anyone has ever committed.
- **[48-10]** When anyone believes in Jesus, the blood of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s **punishment** passes over him.
- **[49-09]** But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be **punished** for his sins, but will live with God forever.

- [49-11] Jesus never sinned, but he chose to be **punished** and die as the perfect sacrifice to take away your sins and the sins of every person in the world.

pure, purify, purification

Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as, “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as, “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase, “provided purification for sins” could be translated as, “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include, “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See: [atonement](#), [atone](#), [clean](#), [cleanse](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Rachel

Facts:

Rachel was one of Jacob's wives. She and her sister Leah were the daughters of Laban, Jacob's uncle.

- Rachel was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, whose descendants became two of the tribes of Israel.
- For many years, Rachel was not able to have any children. Then God enabled her to give birth to Joseph.
- Years later, when she gave birth to Benjamin, Rachel died and Jacob buried her near Bethlehem.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethlehem](#), [Ephrathah](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Laban](#), [Leah](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

reap, reaper**Definition:**

The term “reap” means to harvest crops such as grain. A “reaper” is someone who harvests the crop.

- Usually reapers harvested the crops by hand, pulling up the plants or cutting them with a sharp cutting tool.
- The idea of reaping a harvest is often used figuratively to refer to telling people the good news about Jesus and bringing them into God’s family.
- This term is also used figuratively to refer to the consequences that come from a person’s actions, as in the saying “a man reaps what he plants.” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- Other ways to translate “to reap” and “reaper” could include “to harvest” and “harvester” (or “person who harvests”). (See link to “harvest” page for more translation suggestions.)

(See also: [good news](#), [gospel](#), [harvest](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Rebekah

Facts:

Rebekah was a grand-daughter of Abraham's brother Nahor.

- God chose Rebekah to be the wife of Abraham's son Isaac.
- Rebekah left the region of Aram Naharaim where she lived and went with Abraham's servant to the region of the Negev where Isaac was living.
- For a long time Rebekah did not have any children, but finally God blessed her with twin boys, Esau and Jacob.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Aram](#), [Aramean](#), [Aramaic](#), [Esau](#), [Isaac](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Nahor](#), [Negev](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[06-02]** After a very long journey to the land where Abraham's relatives lived, God led the servant to **Rebekah**. She was the granddaughter of Abraham's brother.
- **[06-06]** God told **Rebekah**, "There are two nations inside of you."
- **[07-01]** As the boys grew up, **Rebekah** loved Jacob, but Isaac loved Esau.
- **[07-03]** Isaac wanted to give his blessing to Esau. But before he did, **Rebekah** and Jacob tricked him by having Jacob pretend to be Esau.
- **[07-06]** But **Rebekah** heard of Esau's plan. So she sent Jacob far away to live with her relatives.

rebel, rebellious, rebellion

Definition:

The term “rebel” means to refuse to submit to someone’s authority. A “rebellious” person often disobeys and does evil things. This kind of person is called “a rebel.”

- A person is rebelling when he does something the authorities over him have told him not to do.
- A person can also rebel by refusing to do what the authorities have commanded him to do.
- Sometimes people rebel against their government or leader who is ruling over them.
- The term “to rebel” could also be translated as “to disobey” or “to revolt,” depending on the context.
- “Rebellious” could also be translated as “continually disobedient” or “refusing to obey.”
- The term “rebellion” means “refusal to obey” or “disobedience” or “law-breaking.”
- The phrase “the rebellion” or “a rebellion” can also refer to an organized group of people who publicly rebel against ruling authorities by breaking the law and attacking leaders and other people. Often they try to get other people to join them in rebelling.

:(See also: [authority](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [governor](#), [govern](#), [proconsul](#), [government](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [14-14] After the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness for forty years, all of them who had **rebelled** against God were dead.
- [18-07] Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel **rebelled** against Rehoboam.
- [18-09] Jeroboam **rebelled** against God and caused the people to sin.
- [18-13] Most of the people of Judah also **rebelled** against God and worshiped other gods.
- [20-07] But after a few years, the king of Judah **rebelled** against Babylon.
- [45-03] Then he (Stephen) said, “You stubborn and **rebellious** people always reject the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors always rejected God and killed his prophets.

rebuke

Definition:

To rebuke is to give someone a stern verbal correction, often in order to help that person turn away from sin.

- The New Testament commands Christians to rebuke other believers when they are clearly disobeying God.
- The book of Proverbs instructs parents to rebuke their children when they are disobedient.
- A rebuke is typically given to prevent the one who committed the wrong from involving themselves further in sin.
- This could be translated by, “sternly correct” or “admonish.”
- The phrase “a rebuke” could be translated by, “a stern correction” or “a strong criticism.”
- “Without rebuke” could be translated as, “without admonishing” or “without criticism.”

(See also [admonish](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

refuge, shelter

Definition:

The term “refuge” refers to a place or condition of safety and protection. A “shelter” refers to a physical structure that protects from weather or danger.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a refuge where his people can be safe, protected, and cared for.
- The term, “city of refuge” in the Old Testament referred to certain cities where a person who accidentally killed someone could run to for protection from people who would attack them in revenge.
- A “shelter” is often a physical structure such as a building or roof that can provide protection to people or animals.
- Sometimes “shelter” means “protection” as when Lot said that his guests were “under the shelter” of his roof. He was saying that they should be safe because they were in his house.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “refuge” could be translated as “safe place” or “place of protection.”
- Depending on the context, the term “shelter” could be translated as, “something that protects” or “protection” or “protected place.”
- If it refers to a physical structure, “shelter” could also be translated as “protective building” or “ ”
- The phrase “into safe shelter” could be translated as “into a safe place” or “into a place that will protect.”
- To “find shelter” or “take shelter” or “take refuge” could be translated as, “find a place of safety” or “put oneself in a protected place.”

Bible References:

Waiting

reign

Definition:

The term “to reign” means to rule as a king over the people of a particular country or kingdom. The reign of a king is the time period during which he is ruling.

- The term ”reign is also used to refer to God reigning as king over the entire world.
- God allowed human kings to reign over Israel when they rejected him as their king.
- When Jesus Christ returns, he will openly reign as king over the whole world and Christians will reign with Him.
- This term could also be translated as “absolute rule” or “rule as king” or “governing as king.”

(See also: [king](#), [kingdom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

remnant**Definition:**

The term “remnant” literally refers to people or things that are “remaining” or “leftover” from a larger amount or group.

- Often a “remnant” refers to people who survive a life-threatening situation or who remain faithful to God while undergoing persecution.
- Isaiah referred to a group of Jews as being a remnant who survived attacks from outsiders and lived to return to the Promised Land in Canaan.
- Paul talks about there being a “remnant” of people who were chosen by God to receive his grace.
- The term “remnant” implies that there were other people who did not remain faithful or who did not survive or who were not chosen.

Translation Suggestions:

- A phrase such as, “the remnant of this people” could be translated as “the rest of these people” or “the people who remain faithful” or “the people who are left.”
- The “whole remnant of people” could be translated by “all the rest of the people” or “the remaining people.”

Bible References:

Waiting

renown, renowned**Definition:**

The term “renown” refers to being well-known and having a praiseworthy reputation.

- A “renowned” person is someone who is well-known and highly esteemed.
- “Renown” especially refers to a good reputation that is widely known over a long period of time.
- A city that is “renowned” is often well-known for its wealth and prosperity.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “renown” could also be translated as, “fame” or “esteemed reputation” or “greatness that is well-known by many people.”
- The term “renowned” could also be translated as “well-known and highly esteemed” or “having an excellent reputation.”
- The expression, “May the Lord’s name be renowned in Israel” could be translated as, “May the Lord’s name be well-known and honored by the people of Israel.”
- The phrase, “men of renown” could be translated as, “men well-known for their courage” or “famous warriors” or “highly esteemed men.”
- The expression “your renown endures through all generations” could be translated as “throughout the years people will hear about how great you are” or “your greatness is seen and heard by people in every generation.”

(See also: [honor](#), [to honor](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

rest

Definition:

The term “to rest” literally means to stop working in order to relax or regain strength. The phrase “the rest of” refers to the remainder of something.

- An object can be said to be “resting” somewhere, which means it is “standing” or “sitting” there.
- A boat that “comes to rest” somewhere has “stopped” or “landed” there.
- When a person or animal rests, it can mean that they are sitting or lying down in order to refresh themselves.
- God commanded the Israelites to rest on the seventh day of the week. This day of not working was called the “Sabbath” day.
- To rest an object on something means to “place” or “put” it there.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “to rest (oneself)” could also be translated as “to stop working” or “to refresh himself” or “to stop carrying burdens.”
- To “rest” an object on something could be translated as to “place” or “put” or “set” that object on something.
- When Jesus said, “I will give you rest,” this could also be translated as, “I will cause you to stop carrying your burden” or “I will help you be at peace” or “I will empower you to relax and trust in me.”
- When God says, “they will not enter my rest,” this could be translated as, “they will not experience my blessings of rest” or “they will not experience the joy and peace that comes from trusting in me.”
- The term “the rest” could be translated as “those that remain” or “all the other people” or “everything that is left.”

(See also: [remnant](#), [Sabbath](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

restore, restoration

Definition:

The terms “restore” and “restoration” refer to causing something to return to its original and better condition.

- When a diseased body part is restored, this means it has been “healed.”
- A broken relationship that is restored, has been “reconciled.” God restores sinful people and brings them back to himself.
- If people are restored to their home country it means they have been “brought back” or “returned” to that country.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “restore” could include: “renew” or “repay” or “return” or “heal” or “bring back.”
- An expression for this term could be “make new” or “make like new again.”
- When property is “restored,” it means it has been “repaired” or “replaced” or “given back” to its owner.
- Depending on the context, “restoration,” could be translated as, “renewal” or “healing” or “reconciliation.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Reuben

Facts:

Reuben was the firstborn son of Jacob. His mother was Leah.

- When his brothers were planning to kill their younger brother Joseph, Reuben spared Joseph's life by telling them to put him into a pit instead.
- Reuben came back later to rescue Joseph, but the other brothers had sold him as a slave to merchants passing by.
- Reuben's descendants became one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [Leah](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

reveal, revelation

Definition:

The term “reveal” means to cause something to be known. A “revelation” is something that has been made known.

- In the Bible, the term “reveal” is often used to describe how God has made himself known to people.
- God has revealed himself through everything he has created and through his communication with people by spoken and written messages.
- God also reveals himself through dreams or visions.
- When Paul says that he received the gospel by “revelation from Jesus Christ,” he means that Jesus himself explained the gospel to him.
- The New Testament book “Revelation” is about God revealing events that will happen in the end times. He revealed this to the apostle John through visions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “reveal” could include, “make known” or “disclose” or “show clearly.”
- Depending on the context, possible ways to translate “revelation” could be, “communication from God” or “things that God has revealed” or “teachings about God.” It is best to keep the meaning of “reveal” in this word.
- The phrase, “where there is no revelation” could be translated as, “when God does not reveal himself to people” or “when God has not spoken to people” or “among people whom God has not communicated to.”

(See also: [good news, gospel](#), [good news, gospel](#), [dream](#), [vision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

righteous, righteousness

Definition:

The terms “righteous” and “righteousness” refer to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people who the Bible calls “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous based on Jesus’ righteousness.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as, “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When referring to people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase, “the righteous” could also be translated as, “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means, “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good
- Sometimes “the righteous” is used figuratively and refers to “people who think they are good” or “people who seem to be righteous.”

(See also: [good](#), [goodness](#), [holy](#), [holiness](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [just](#), [justice](#), [justly](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-02]** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **[04-08]** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God’s promise.
- **[17-02]** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **[23-01]** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **[50-10]** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.”

right hand

Definition:

The figurative expression “right hand” refers to the place of honor or strength on the right side of a ruler or other important individual.

- The right hand is also used as a symbol of power, authority, or strength.
- The Bible describes Jesus as sitting “at the right hand of” God the Father as the head of the body of believers (the Church) and in control as ruler of all creation.
- A person’s right hand was used to show special honor when placed on the head of someone being given a blessing (as when the patriarch Jacob blessed Joseph’s son Ephraim).
- To “serve at the right hand” of someone means to be the one whose service is especially helpful and important to that person.

Translation Suggestions:

- Sometimes the term “right hand” literally refers to a person’s right hand, as when Roman soldiers put a staff into Jesus’ right hand to mock him. This should be translated using the term that the language uses to refer to this hand.
- Regarding figurative uses, if an expression that includes the term “right hand” does not have the same meaning in the project language, then consider whether that language has a different expression with the same meaning.
- The expression “at the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of” or “in the place of honor beside” or “in the position of strength” or “ready to help.”
- Ways to translate “with his right hand” could include, “with authority” or “using power” or “with his amazing strength.”
- The figurative expression “his right hand and his mighty arm” uses two ways of emphasizing God’s power and great strength. One way to translate this expression could be, “his amazing strength and mighty power.” (See: [Parallelism](#))
- The expression “their right hand is falsehood” could be translated by, “even the most honorable thing about them is corrupted by lies” or “their place of honor is corrupted by deception” or “they use lies to make themselves powerful.”
- In Psalm 105:9, God calls for an accuser to be at the “right hand” of a wicked leader sent to punish his rebellious people. This could be translated as, “appoint an accuser to have the place of honor beside that wicked leader” or “appoint an accuser to help that wicked leader punish them.”

(See also: [accuse](#), [accusation](#), [accuser](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [honor](#), [to honor](#), [mighty](#), [might](#), [punish](#), [punishment](#), [rebel](#), [rebellious](#), [rebellion](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

robe**Definition:**

A robe is an outer garment with long sleeves that can be worn by both men and women. It is similar to a coat.

- Robes are open in the front and are tied shut with a sash or belt.
- They can be long or short in length.
- Purple robes were worn by kings as a sign of royalty, wealth, and prestige.

(See also: [royal](#), [tunic](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

royal

Definition:

The term “royal” describes people and things which are associated with a king or queen.

- Examples of things that can be called “royal” include a king’s clothing, palace, throne, or crown.
- A king or queen usually lives in a royal palace.
- A king wears special clothing, sometimes called “royal robes.” Often a king’s robes were colored purple, which was a rare and expensive type of dye.
- In the New Testament, believers in Jesus are called a “royal priesthood.” Other ways to translate this could include, “priests who serve God the King” or “called to be priests for God the King.”
- The term “royal” could also be translated as “kingly” or “belonging to a king.”

(See also: [king](#), [palace](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [purple](#), [queen](#), [robe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

ruler, rulers, rule

Definition:

The term “ruler” is a general reference to a person who has authority over other people, such as a leader of a country, kingdom, or religious group.

- In the Old Testament, a king was also referred to with the general term “ruler,” as in the phrase, “appointed him ruler over Israel.”
- God is referred to as the ultimate ruler, who rules over all other rulers.
- In the New Testament, the leader of a synagogue was called a “ruler.”
- Another type of ruler in the New Testament was a “governor.”
- Depending on the context, “ruler” could be translated as “leader” or “person who has authority over.”
- The action “to rule” means to “lead” to “have authority over.” It means the same thing as “reign” when referring a king ruling.

(See also: [authority](#), [governor](#), [govern](#), [proconsul](#), [government](#), [king](#), [synagogue](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sackcloth

Definition:

Sackcloth was a coarse, scratchy type of cloth that was made out of goat hair or camel hair.

- Clothing made out of sackcloth was uncomfortable for the person wearing it. It was worn as a way of showing mourning, grief, or humble repentance.
- The phrase “sackcloth and ashes” was a common term referring to a traditional expression of grief and repentance.

Translation Suggestions

- This term could also be translated as, “coarse cloth from animal hair” or “clothes made of goat hair” or “rough, scratchy clothing.”
- Other ways to translate this term could include, “rough, scratchy mourning clothes.”
- The phrase “sit in sackcloth and ashes” could be translated as, “show mourning and humility by wearing scratchy cloth and sitting in ashes.”

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See: [ash](#), [ashes](#), [dust](#), [camel](#), [goat](#), [kid](#), [humble](#), [humility](#), [mourn](#), [mourning](#), [repent](#), [repentance](#), [sign](#), [proof](#), [reminder](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sacred**Definition:**

Term “sacred” describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, often the term “sacred” is used to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as “religious.”
- “Sacred songs” or “sacred music” refer to music that is sung or played for God’s glory. This could be translated as “music for worshiping Yahweh” or “songs that praise God.”
- The phrase “sacred duties” refers to the “religious duties” or “rituals” that a priest performs to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god.

(See also: [holy](#), [holiness](#), [consecrate](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#)))

Bible References:

Waiting

sacrifice, offering

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “sacrifice” and “offering” refer to special gifts given to God as an act of worshiping him. People also offered sacrifices to false gods.

- The word “offering” generally refers to anything that is offered or given. The term “sacrifice” refers to something that is given or done at great cost to the giver.
- Offerings to God were specific things that he commanded the Israelites to give in order to express devotion and obedience to him.
- The names of the different offerings, such as “burnt offering” and “peace offering,” indicated what kind of offering was being given.
- Sacrifices to God often involved the killing of an animal.
- Only the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s perfect, sinless Son, can completely cleanse people from sin. Animal sacrifices could never do that.
- The figurative expression “offer yourselves as a living sacrifice” means, “live your life in complete obedience to God, giving up everything in order to serve him.”

Translation Suggestions

- The term “offering” could also be translated as “a gift to God” or “something given to God” or “something valuable that is presented to God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sacrifice” could also be translated as “something valuable given in worship” or “a special animal killed and presented to God.”
- The action, “to sacrifice” could be translated as, “to give up something valuable” or “to kill an animal and give it to God.”
- Another way to translate “present yourself as a living sacrifice” could be, “As you live your life, offer yourself to God as completely as an animal that is offered on an altar.”

(See also: [altar](#), [burnt offering](#), [offering by fire](#), [drink offering](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [fellowship offering](#), [freewill offering](#) [peace offering](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [sin offering](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[03-14]** After Noah got off the boat, he built an altar and **sacrificed** some of each kind of animal which could be used for a **sacrifice**. God was happy with the **sacrifice** and blessed Noah and his family.

- [05-06] "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a **sacrifice** to me." Again Abraham obeyed God and prepared to **sacrifice** his son.
- [05-09] God had provided the ram to be the **sacrifice** instead of Isaac.
- [13-09] Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the Tent of Meeting as a **sacrifice** to God. A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was **sacrificed** covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- [17-06] David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him **sacrifices**.
- [48-06] Jesus is the Great High Priest. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only **sacrifice** that could take away the sin of all the people in the world.
- [48-08] But God provided Jesus, the Lamb of God, as a **sacrifice** to die in our place.
- [49-11] Because Jesus **sacrificed** himself, God can forgive any sin, even terrible sins.

salvation

Definition:

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated using the word “save” or “rescue” as in, “when God saves people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God will rescue his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as, “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as, “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: [save](#), [safe](#), [Savior](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sanctify, sanctification

Definition:

To sanctify is to set apart or to make holy. Sanctification is the process of being made holy.

- In the Old Testament, certain people and things were sanctified, or set apart, for service to God.
- The New Testament teaches that God sanctifies people who believe in Jesus. That is, he makes them holy and sets them apart to serve him.
- Believers in Jesus are also commanded to sanctify themselves to God, to be holy in everything they do.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term, “to sanctify” can be translated as “to set apart” or “to make holy” or “to purify.”
- When people sanctify themselves, it means that they purify themselves and dedicate themselves to God’s service. Often the word “consecrate” is used in the Bible with this meaning.
- With the meaning of “consecrate” this term could be translated as “dedicate someone (or something) to God’s service.”
- Depending on the context, the phrase, “your sanctification” could be translated as “making you holy” or “setting you apart (for God)” or “what makes you holy.”

(See also: [consecrate](#), [holy](#), [holiness](#), [set apart](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Sarah, Sarai

Facts:

- Sarah was Abraham's wife.
- Her name was originally "Sarai," but God changed it to "Sarah."
- Sarah gave birth to the son God had promised to give her and Abraham.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Isaac](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[05-01]** "So Abram's wife, **Sarai**, said to him, "Since God has not allowed me to have children and now I am too old to have children, here is my servant, Hagar. Marry her also so she can have a child for me."
- **[05-04]** "Your wife, **Sarai**, will have a son—he will be the son of promise."
- **[05-04]** "God also changed **Sarai's** name to **Sarah**, which means "princess."
- **[05-05]** "About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and **Sarah** was 90, **Sarah** gave birth to Abraham's son. They named him Isaac as God had told them to do."

Satan, devil, evil one

Facts:

The devil is a spirit being that God created, but he rebelled against God and became God's enemy. The devil is also called "Satan" and "the evil one."

- The devil hates God and all that God created, because he wants to take the place of God and be worshiped as God.
- Satan tempts people to rebel against God.
- God sent his Son, Jesus to rescue people from Satan's control.
- The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "enemy."
- The word "devil" means "accuser."

Translation Suggestions:

- The word "devil" could also be translated as "the accuser" or "the evil one" or "the king of evil spirits" or "the chief evil spirit."
- "Satan" can be translated as "Opponent" or "Adversary" or some other name that shows that he is the devil.
- These terms should be translated differently from demon and evil spirit.
- Consider how these terms are translated in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#), [tempt](#), [temptation](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[21-01]** The snake who deceived Eve was **Satan**. The promise meant that the Messiah who would come would defeat **Satan** completely.
- **[25-06]** Then **Satan** showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory and said, "I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me."
- **[25-08]** Jesus did not give in to **Satan's** temptations, so **Satan** left him.
- **[33-06]** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the word of God. The path is a person who hears God's word, but does not understand it, and the **devil** takes the word from him."
- **[38-07]** After Judas took the bread, **Satan** entered into him.

- **[48-04]** God promised that one of Eve's descendants would crush **Satan's** head, and **Satan** would wound his heel. This meant that **Satan** would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of **Satan** forever.
- **[49-15]** God has taken you out of **Satan's** kingdom of darkness and put you into God's kingdom of light.
- **[50-09]** "The weeds represent the people who belong to the **evil one**. The enemy who planted the weeds represents the **devil**."
- **[50-10]** "When the world ends, the angels will gather together all the people who belong to the **devil** and throw them into a raging fire, where they will cry and grind their teeth in terrible suffering."
- **[50-15]** When Jesus returns, he will completely destroy **Satan** and his kingdom. He will throw **Satan** into hell where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

save, safe

Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” it means that through Jesus’ death on the cross, God has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include, “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression, “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”

(See also: [cross](#), [deliver](#), [deliverer](#), [deliverance](#), [punish](#), [punishment](#), [salvation](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [09-08] Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- [11-02] God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- [12-05] Moses told the Israelites, “Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you.”
- [12-13] The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- [16-17] This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- [44-08] “You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!”
- [47-11] The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, “What must I do to be **saved**?” Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**.”

- [49-12] Good works cannot **save** you.
- [49-13] God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

scepter

Definition:

The term “scepter” refers to an ornamental rod or staff held by a ruler, such as a king.

- Scepters were originally a branch of wood with carved decorations. Later scepters were also made of precious metals such as gold.
- The scepter was a symbol of royalty and authority which symbolized the honor and dignity associated with a king.
- In the Old Testament, God is described as having a scepter of righteousness. This is related to God ruling as king over his people.
- An Old Testament prophecy refers to the Messiah as a symbolic scepter that would come from Israel to rule over all nations.
- This could also be translated as, “ruling rod” or “king’s rod.”

(See also: [authority](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [king](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

seal, to seal

Definition:

To seal an object means to keep it closed with something that makes it impossible to open without breaking the seal.

- Often a seal is marked with a design to show who it belongs to.
- Melted wax was used to seal letters or other documents that needed to be protected. When the wax cooled and hardened, the letter could not be opened without breaking the wax seal.
- A seal was put on the stone in front of Jesus' grave in order to keep anyone from moving the stone.
- Paul figuratively refers to the Holy Spirit as a "seal" showing that our salvation is secure.

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [tomb](#), [grave](#), [burial place](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

seed

Definition:

A seed is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant. It also has several figurative meanings.

- The term “seed” is used figuratively and euphemistically to refer to the tiny cells inside a man or woman that combine to cause a baby to grow inside the woman.
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a person’s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared seeds to the Word of God being planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- For a literal seed, it is best to use the literal term for “seed” that is used in the target language for what a farmer plants in his field.
- The literal term should also be used in contexts where it refers figuratively to God’s Word.
- For the figurative use that refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of seed. Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people. (See: [euphemism](#))

(See also: [descendant](#), [offspring](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

seize**Definition:**

The term “seize” means to take or capture someone or something by force. It can also mean to overpower and control someone.

- When a city was taken by means of military force, the soldiers would seize the valuable property of the people they had conquered.
- When used figuratively, a person can be described as being “seized with fear.” This means that the person was suddenly “overcome by fear.” It could also be translated as, “suddenly became very afraid.”
- In the context of labor pains that “seize” a woman, the meaning is that the pains are sudden and overpowering. This could be translated as “overcome” or “suddenly come upon.”
- This term could also be translated as, “take control of” or “suddenly take” or “grab.”
- The expression, “seized and slept with her” could be translated as, “forced himself on her” or “violated her” or “raped her.” Make sure the translation of this concept is acceptable. (See: [Euphemism](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

send, send out, sent**Definition:**

To “send” is to cause someone or something to go somewhere. To “send out” someone is to tell that person to go on an errand or a mission.

- Often a person who is “sent out” has been appointed to do a specific task.
- Phrases like “send rain” or “send disaster” mean “to cause...to come.” This type of expression is usually used in reference to God causing these things to happen.
- The term “send” is also used in expressions such as “send word” or “send a message” which means to give someone a message to tell someone else.
- To “send” someone “with” something can mean to “give” that thing “to” someone else, usually moving it some distance in order for the person to receive it.
- Jesus frequently uses the phrase “the one who sent me” to refer to God the Father who “sent” him to earth to redeem and save people. This could also be translated as, “commissioned me” or “caused me to come” or “appointed me to go.”

(See also: [appoint](#), [appointed](#), [redeem](#), [redemption](#), [redeemer](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

serpent, snake, viper

Facts:

These terms all refer to a kind of reptile that has a long, thin body and large, fanged jaws, and which moves by slithering back and forth across the ground. The term “serpent” usually refers to a large snake and “viper” refers to a type of snake that has venom which it uses to poison its prey.

- This animal is also used figuratively to refer to a person who is evil, especially deceitful.
- Jesus called the religious leaders “offspring of vipers” because they pretended to be righteous, but they deceived people and treated them unfairly.
- In the garden of Eden, Satan took the form of a serpent when he talked to Eve and tempted her to disobey God.
- After the serpent tempted Eve to sin, God cursed the snake, saying that from then on, all snakes would slither along the ground, implying that before that they had legs.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [curse](#), [cursed](#), [deceive](#), [deceit](#), [deception](#), [deceptive](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [Eden](#), [garden of Eden](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [offspring](#), [prey](#), [to prey on](#), [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [tempt](#), [temptation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

servant, slave, slavery

Definition:

The word for “servant” can also mean “slave” and refers to a person who works for another person, either by choice or by force. The surrounding text usually makes it clear whether a servant or a slave is being referred to.

- In Bible times, there was less of a difference between a servant and a slave than there is today. Both servants and slaves were an important part of their master’s household and many were treated almost like members of the family. Sometimes a servant would choose to become a lifetime servant to his master.
- A slave is a kind of servant who is the property of the person he works for. The person who buys a slave is called his “owner” or “master.” Some masters treat their slaves very cruelly, while other masters treat their slaves very well, like a servant who is a valued member of the household.
- In ancient times, some people willingly became slaves to a person they owed money to in order to pay off their debt to that person.
- In the Bible, the phrase “I am your servant” was used as a sign of respect and service to a person of higher rank, such as a king. It does not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God are often referred to as his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obey God through faith in Christ are often called his “servants.”
- Christians are also called “slaves to righteousness,” which is a metaphor that compares the commitment to obey God to a slave’s commitment to obeying his master. (See: [Metaphor](#))

(See also: [commit](#), [committed](#), [commitment](#), [enslave](#), [in bondage](#), [household](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [serve](#), [service](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[06-01]** When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **[08-04]** The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- **[09-13]** ”I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt.”

- [19-10] Then Elijah prayed, "O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**."
- [29-03] "Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, 'Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.'"
- [35-06] "All my father's **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving."
- [47-04] The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, "These men are servants of the Most High God."
- [50-04] Jesus also said, "A **servant** is not greater than his master."

serve, service

Definition:

The term “serve” means to do things to help other people. It can also mean to “worship.”

- In the context of a woman serving her guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.”
- When Jesus told the disciples to serve the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute to” or “hand out to” or “give to.”¹[comment_5adb7a6af206fdb7787dd58f4b215940](#)
- The term “service” refers to the act of serving. It can also be used to refer to a “meeting” of Christians as they worship God together.
- The term “serve” can also be translated as, “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- “To serve God” can be translated as “to worship and obey God” or “to do the work that God has commanded.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables.
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses.
- Now they “serve” the new covenant, that is, because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about this in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”

(See also: [covenant](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sleep with, have relations with, lovemaking

Definition:

In the Bible, these terms are euphemisms that refer to having sexual intercourse. (See: [Euphemism](#))

- To “sleep with” someone is a common way of referring to having sexual relations. The past tense is, “slept with.”
- In the Old Testament book, “Song of Solomon,” the ULB uses the term “lovemaking” to translate the word “love,” which in that context refers to sexual relations. This is related to the expression, “make love to.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages may use different expressions of this term in different contexts, depending on whether it is talking about a husband and wife, or whether it is about some other relationship. It is important to make sure that the translation of this term has the correct meaning in each context.
- Depending on the context, expressions like these could be used to translate “sleep with”: “lie with” or “make love to” or “be intimate with.”
- Other ways to translate “have relations with” could include, “have sexual relations with” or “have marital relations with.”
- The term “lovemaking” could also be translated as, “loving” or “intimacy.” Or there may be an expression that is a natural way to translate this in the project language.
- It is important to check that the terms used to translate this concept are acceptable to the people who will be using the Bible translation.

(See: [sexual immorality](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

shadow

Definition:

The word “shadow” literally refers to the darkness that is caused by an object blocking the light. It also has several figurative meanings.

- The “shadow of death” means that death is present or near, just as a shadow indicates the presence of its object.
- Many times in the Bible, the life of a human being is compared to a shadow, which does not last very long and has no substance.
- Sometimes “shadow” is used as another word for “darkness.”
- The Bible talks about being hidden or protected in the shadow of God’s wings or hands. This is a picture of being protected and hidden from danger. Other ways to translate “shadow” in these contexts could include “shade” or “safety” or “protection.”
- It is best to translate “shadow” literally using the local term that is used to refer to an actual shadow.

(See also: [darkness](#), [light](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

shame, shameful, ashamed

Definition:

The term “shame” refers to a painful feeling of being disgraced a person has because of something dishonorable or improper that he or someone else has done.

- Something that is “shameful” is “improper” or “dishonorable.”
- The term “ashamed” describes how a person feels when he has done something shameful.
- The phrase “put to shame” means to defeat people or expose their sin so that they feel ashamed of themselves.
- The prophet Isaiah said that those who make and worship idols will be put to shame.
- God can bring shame to a person who does not repent, by exposing that person’s sin and causing him to be humiliated.

(See also: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [humble](#), [humility](#), [humiliate](#), [humiliation](#), [Isaiah](#), [repent](#), [repentance](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Shechem

Facts:

Shechem is a town in Canaan located about 40 miles north of Jerusalem. Shechem is also the name of a man in the Old Testament.

- The town of Shechem is where Jacob settled after being reconciled to his brother Esau.
- Jacob bought land from the sons of Hamor the Hivite in Shechem, which later became his family burial ground and where Jacob's sons buried him.
- Hamor's son Shechem raped Jacob's daughter Dinah, which resulted in Jacob's sons killing all the men in the town of Shechem.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))[Hamor](#)

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Esau](#), [Hamor](#), [Hivite](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sheep, ram, ewe

Definition:

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. The male sheep is called a “ram.” The female sheep is called a “ewe.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially males and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [lamb](#), [Lamb of God](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [shepherd](#), [to shepherd](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[09-12]** One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- **[17-02]** David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father’s **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- **[30-03]** To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.
- **[38-08]** Jesus said, “All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.’”

Shem

Facts:

Shem was one of Noah's three sons who went with him into the ark during the worldwide flood described in the book of Genesis.

- Shem was the ancestor of Abraham and his descendants.
- The descendants of Shem are known as "Semites" who speak "Semitic" languages such as Hebrew and Arabic.
- The Bible records the length of Shem's life to be nearly 600 years.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Arabia](#), [Arabian](#), [ark](#), [flood](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

shepherd, to shepherd

Definition:

A shepherd is a person who takes care of sheep. The verb “to shepherd” means to protect the sheep and provide them with food and water.

- Shepherds watch over the sheep, leading them to places with good food and water. Shepherds also keep the sheep from getting lost and protect them from wild animals.
- This term is often used metaphorically in the Bible to refer to taking care of people’s spiritual needs. This includes teaching them what God has told them in the Bible and guiding them in the way they should live. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- In the Old Testament, God is called the “shepherd” of his people because he takes care of all their needs and protects them. He also leads and guides them.
- Moses was a shepherd for the Israelites as he guided them spiritually in their worship of Yahweh and led them physically on their journey to the land of Canaan.
- In the New Testament, Jesus calls himself the “good shepherd.” The apostle Paul also refers to him as the “great shepherd” over the Church.
- Also in the New Testament, the term “shepherd” is used to refer to a person who is a spiritual leader over other believers. The term “pastor” is the same word as “shepherd.” The elders and overseers were also called shepherds.

Translation Suggestions

- When used literally, the action “shepherd” could be translated as “take care of sheep” or “watch over sheep.”
- The person “shepherd” could be translated as, “person who takes care of sheep” or “sheep tender” or “sheep caregiver.”
- When used as a metaphor, different ways to translate this term could include, “spiritual shepherd” or “spiritual leader” or “one who is like a shepherd” or “one who cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his sheep” or “one who leads his people like a shepherd guides his sheep” or “one who takes care of God’s sheep.”
- In some contexts, “shepherd” could be translated as “leader” or “guide” or “caregiver.”
- The expression, “to shepherd (a flock)” could be translated as, “to take care of” or “to spiritually nourish” or “to guide and teach” or “to lead and take care of (like a shepherd cares for sheep)”
- In figurative uses, it is best to use or include the literal word for “shepherd” in the translation of this term.

(See also: [believer](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [church](#), [Church](#), [Moses](#), [pastor](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [09-11] Moses became a **shepherd** in the wilderness far away from Egypt.to
- [17-02] David was a **shepherd** from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father's sheep, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the sheep.
- [23-06] That night, there were some **shepherds** in a nearby field guarding their flocks.
- [23-08] The **shepherds** soon arrived at the place where Jesus was and they found him lying in a feeding trough, just as the angel had told them.
- [30-03] To Jesus, these people were like sheep without a **shepherd**.

Shiloh

Facts:

Shiloh was a walled Canaanite city that was conquered by the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua.

- The city of Shiloh was located west of the Jordan River and northeast of the city of Bethel.
- During the time that Joshua was leading Israel, the city of Shiloh was a meeting place for the people of Israel.
- The twelve tribes of Israel met together at Shiloh to hear Joshua tell them which portion of the land of Canaan had been assigned to each of them.
- Before any temple was built in Jerusalem, Shiloh was the place where the Israelites came to sacrifice to God.
- When Samuel was a young boy, his mother Hannah took him to live in Shiloh to be trained by the priest Eli to serve Yahweh.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethel](#), [dedicate](#), [dedication](#), [Hannah](#), [Jerusalem](#), [Jordan River](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [Samuel](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Shinar

Facts:

Shinar means “country of two rivers” and was the name of a plain or region in southern Mesopotamia.

- Shinar later became known as “Chaldea” and then, “Babylonia.”
- Ancient peoples living in the city of Babel in the Plain of Shinar built a tall tower to try to make themselves great.
- Generations later, the Jewish patriarch Abraham lived in the city of Ur in this region, which by that time was called “Chaldea.”

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Babel](#), [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Chaldea](#), [Chaldean](#), [Mesopotamia](#), [Aram Naharaim](#), [patriarchs](#), [Ur](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Sidon, Sidonians

Facts:

Sidon was the oldest son of Canaan. There is also a Canaanite city called Sidon, probably named after Canaan's son.

- The city of Sidon was located northwest of Israel on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is now part of the present-day country of Lebanon.
- The “Sidonians” were a Phoenician people group who lived in ancient Sidon and the region surrounding it.
- In the Bible, Sidon is closely associated with the city of Tyre, and both cities were known for their wealth and the immoral behavior of their people.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Noah](#), [Phoenicia](#), [the sea](#), [the Great Sea](#), [the western sea](#), [Mediterranean Sea](#), [Tyre](#), [Tyrians](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sign, proof, reminder

Definition:

A sign is an object, event, or action that communicates a special meaning.

- Signs can be reminders of something that was promised:
 - The rainbow God created in the sky was a sign to remind people that he would never again destroy all life with a worldwide flood.
 - God commanded the Israelites to circumcise their sons as a sign of his covenant with them.
- Signs can reveal or point to something:
 - An angel told shepherds a sign that would help them know which baby in Bethlehem was the newborn Messiah.
 - Judas kissed Jesus as a sign to the religious leaders that Jesus was the one they should arrest.
- Signs can prove that something is true:
 - The miracles done by the prophets and apostles were signs that proved they were speaking God's message.
 - The miracles that Jesus performed were signs that proved he was truly the Messiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on its context, “sign” could also be translated as “signal” or “symbol” or “mark” or “evidence” or “proof” or “gesture.”
- To “make signs with the hands” could also be translated as, “motion with the hands” or “gesture with the hands” or “make gestures.”
- In some languages, there may be one word for a “sign” that proves something and a different word for a “sign” that is a miracle.

(See also: [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#), [apostle](#), [apostleship](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [covenant](#), [circumcise](#), [circumcision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

silver

Definition:

Silver is a shiny, gray precious metal used to make coins, jewelry, containers, and ornaments.

- The containers would include silver cups and bowls, among other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, silver coins and silver weights called shekels were used.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.

(See also: [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Simeon

Facts:

In the Bible, there are several men named Simeon.

- In the Old Testament, the second son of Jacob (Israel) and Leah was named Simeon. His descendants became one of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The tribe of Simeon occupied the southernmost territory in the promised land of Canaan, an area that was part of Judah's inheritance.
- When Joseph and Mary brought the baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate him to God, an elderly man named Simeon praised God for allowing him to see the Messiah.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [dedicate](#), [dedication](#), [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Judah](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a sinful nature that controls them.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- “To sin” could also be translated as “to disobey God” or “to do wrong.”
- Depending on the context, “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means, “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include, “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- In expressions like “slaves to sin” or “ruled by sin,” the term “sin” could be translated as “disobedience” or “evil desires and actions.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [flesh](#), [tax collector](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- * **[03-15]** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- * **[13-12]** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- * **[20-01]** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- * **[21-13]** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- * **[35-01]** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- * **[38-05]** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- * **[43-11]** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- * **[48-08]** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- * **[49-17]** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Sodom

Definition:

Sodom was a city in the southern part of Canaan where Abraham's nephew Lot lived with his wife and children.

- The land of the region surrounding Sodom was very well-watered and fertile, so that is where Lot chose to live when he first settled in Caanan.
- The exact location of this city is not known because Sodom and the nearby city of Gomorrah were completely destroyed by God as punishment for the evil things the people there were doing.
- The most significant sin that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were practicing was homosexuality.

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Gomorrah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

son, son of

Definition:

The term “son” refers to a boy or man in relation to his parents. It can refer either to someone’s male offspring or to an adopted son.

- “Son” is often used figuratively in the Bible to refer to any male descendant, such as a grandson or great-grandson.
- The term “son” can also be used as a polite form of address to a boy or man who is younger.
- Sometimes “sons of God” is used in the New Testament to refer to believers in Christ.
- God calls Israel his “firstborn son.” This refers to God’s choosing of the nation of Israel to be his special people. It is through them that God’s message of redemption and salvation came, with the result that many other people have become his spiritual children.
- The phrase “son of” often has the figurative meaning, “having the characteristics of.” Examples of this include, “sons of the light,” “sons of disobedience,” “a son of peace,” and “sons of thunder.”
- The phrase “son of” is also used to tell who a person’s father is. This phrase is used in genealogies and many other places.
- Using “son of” to give the name of the father frequently helps distinguish people who have the same name. For example, “Azariah, son of Zadok” and “Azariah, son of Nathan” in 1 Kings 4, and “Azariah, son of Amaziah in 2 Kings 15 are three different men.

Translation Suggestions:

- In most occurrences of this term, it is best to translate “son” using the literal term in the language that is used to refer to a son.
- When translating the term “Son of God,” the project language’s common term for “son” should be used.
- When used to refer to a descendant rather than a direct son, the term “descendant” could be used, as in referring to Jesus as the “descendant of David” or in genealogies where sometimes “son” refers to a male descendant, not an actual son.
- Sometimes “sons” can be translated as “children,” when both males and females are being referred to. For example, “sons of God” could be translated as “children of God” since this expression also includes girls and women.
- The figurative expression “son of” could also be translated as “someone who has the characteristics of” or “someone who is like” or “someone who has” or “someone who acts like.”

(See also: [Azariah](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [ancestor](#), [father](#), [forefather](#), [firstborn](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#), [sons of God](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[04-08]** God spoke to Abram and promised again that he would have a **son** and as many descendants as the stars in the sky.
- **[04-09]** God said, "I will give you a **son** from your own body."
- **[05-05]** About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham's **son**.
- **[05-08]** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his **son** Isaac and laid him on an altar. He was about to kill his **son** when God said, "Stop! Do not hurt the boy! Now I know that you fear me because you did not keep your only **son** from me."
- **[09-07]** When she saw the baby, she took him as her own **son**.
- **[11-06]** God killed every one of the Egyptians' firstborn **sons**.
- **[18-01]** After many years, David died, and his **son** Solomon began to rule.
- **[26-04]** "Is this the **son** of Joseph?" they said.

sons of God

Definition:

The term, “sons of God” is a figurative expression that has several possible meanings.

- In the New Testament, the term “sons of God” refers to all believers in Jesus and is often translated as “children of God” since it includes both males and females.
- This use of the term speaks of a relationship with God that is like the relationship between a human son and his father, with all the privileges associated with being sons.
- In Genesis 6, some people interpret “sons of God” to be fallen angels, that is, evil spirits or demons. Others think it may refer to powerful political rulers or to the descendants of Seth.
- In the New Testament, the term “sons of God” refers to all believers in Jesus and is often translated as “children of God” since it includes both males and females.
- This use of the term speaks of a relationship with God that is like the relationship between a human son and his father, with all the privileges associated with being sons.
- The title, “Son of God” is a different term, which refers to Jesus, who is God’s only Son.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “sons of God” refers to believers in Jesus, it could be translated as, “children of God.”
- Other ways to translate “sons of God” could include, “angels” or “spirit beings,” or “demons,” depending on the context.
- Also see the link for “son.”

(See also: [angel](#), [archangel](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [son](#), [son of](#), [Son of God](#), [the Son](#), [Son](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

soul

Definition:

The soul is the inner, invisible, and eternal part of a person. It refers to the non-physical part of a person.

- The terms “soul” and “spirit” may be two different concepts, or they may be two terms that refer to the same concept.
- When a person dies, his soul leaves his body.
- The word “soul” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to the whole person. For example, “the soul who sins” means, “the person who sins” and “my soul is tired” means, “I am tired.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “soul” could also be translated as “inner self” or “inner person.”
- In some contexts, “my soul” could be translated as, “I” or “me.”
- Usually the phrase “the soul” can be translated as “the person” or “he” or “him,” depending on the context.
- Some languages might only have one word for translating the terms “soul” and “spirit.”
- In Hebrews 4:12, the figurative phrase, “dividing soul and spirit” could mean, “deeply discerning or exposing the inner person.”

(See also: [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

spirit, spiritual

Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of people which cannot be seen. When a person dies, his spirit leaves his body. “Spirit” can also refer to an attitude or emotional state.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, especially an evil spirit.
- A person’s spirit is the part of him that can know God and believe in him.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes anything in the non-physical world.
- In the Bible, it especially refers to anything that relates to God, specifically to the Holy Spirit.
- For example, “spiritual food” refers to God’s teachings that give nourishment to a person’s spirit, “spiritual wisdom” refers to the knowledge and righteous behavior that come from the power of the Holy Spirit.
- God is a spirit and he created other spirit beings who do not have physical bodies.
- Angels are spirit beings, including those who rebelled against God and became evil spirits.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in, “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.”
- Examples of “spirit” as an attitude or emotion would include “spirit of fear” or “spirit of jealousy.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include, “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person as in, “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as, “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as, “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as, “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God’s” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The figurative expression “spiritual milk” could also be translated as, “basic teachings from God” or “God’s teachings that nourish the spirit (like milk does).”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- A “spiritual gift” could be translated as, “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives.”

(See also: [angel](#), [archangel](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [soul](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[13-03]** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **[40-07]** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands." Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **[45-05]** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, receive my **spirit**."
- **[48-07]** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

staff**Definition:**

A staff is a long wooden stick or rod, often used as a walking stick.

- When Jacob was old, he used a staff to help him walk.
- God turned Moses' staff into a snake to show his power to Pharaoh.
- Shepherds also used a staff to help guide their sheep, or to rescue the sheep when they fell or wandered.
- The shepherd's staff had a hook on the end, which was different from the shepherd's rod, which was straight and was used to kill wild animals trying to attack the sheep.

(See also: [Pharaoh](#), [king of Egypt](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#), [shepherd](#), [to shepherd](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

statute, statutes

Definition:

A statute is a specific written law that provides guidance for people to live by.

- The term “statute” is similar in meaning to “ordinance” or ” command” or “law” or “decree.” All these terms involve instructions and requirements that God gives to his people.
- King David said that he delighted himself in Yahweh’s statutes.
- The term “statute” could also be translated as “specific command” or “special decree.”

(See also: [command](#), [to command](#), [commandment](#), [decree](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [ordinance](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

storehouse

Definition:

A “storehouse” is a large building that is used for keeping food or other things, often for a long time.

- In the Bible a “storehouse” was usually used to store extra grain and other food to be used later when there was a shortage of food because of famine.
- This term is also used figuratively to refer to all the good things that God wants to give to his people.
- The storehouses of the temple contained valuable things, such as gold and silver, that had been dedicated to Yahweh. Some of these things were used to repair and maintain the temple.
- Other ways to translate “storehouse” could include, “a building for storing grain” or “place for keeping food” or “room for keeping valuable things safe.”

(See also: [consecrate](#), [dedicate](#), [dedication](#), [famine](#), [gold](#), [grain](#), [silver](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Succoth

Definition:

Succoth is the name of two Old Testament cities. The word, “succoth” (or “sukkoth”) means “shelters.”

- The first city called Succoth was located on the east side of the Jordan River.
- Jacob stayed at Succoth with his family and flocks, building shelters for them there.
- Hundreds of years later, Gideon and his exhausted men stopped at Succoth as they were chasing the Midanites, but the people there refused to give them any food.
- The second Succoth is located on the northern border of Egypt and was one place where the Israelites stopped after they crossed the Red Sea as they were escaping from slavery in Egypt.

Bible References:

Waiting

sulfur

Definition:

Sulfur is a yellow-colored substance that becomes a burning liquid when it is set on fire.

- Sulfur also has a very strong smell that is like the odor of rotten eggs.
- In the Bible, burning sulfur is a symbol of God's judgment on ungodly and rebellious people.
- During the time of Lot, God rained down fire and sulfur on the evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- In some English Bible versions, sulfur is referred to as "brimstone," which literally means "burning stone."

Translation Suggestions:

- Possible translations of this term could include, "yellow stone that burns" or "burning yellowish rock."

(See: [Gomorrah](#), [judge](#), [judgment](#), [Lot](#), [rebel](#), [rebellious](#), [rebellion](#), [Sodom](#), [ungodly](#), [godless](#), [ungodliness](#), [godlessness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sweep, swept

Facts:

The terms “sweep” and “swept” usually refer to a broad, quick movement to remove dirt using a broom or brush. These words are also used figuratively.

- The term “sweep” is used figuratively to describe how an army attacks with swift, decisive, wide-reaching movements.
- For example, Isaiah prophesied that the Assyrians would “sweep through” the Kingdom of Judah. This means they would destroy Judah and capture its people.
- The term “sweep” can also be used to describe the manner in which rapidly flowing water pushes things and forces them away.
- To have something “sweep over” a person means that overwhelming, difficult things are happening to him.

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Isaiah](#), [Judah](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sword

Definition:

A sword is a flat-bladed metal weapon used to cut or stab. It has a handle and a long, pointed blade with a very sharp cutting edge.

- The blade of a sword in ancient times was around 60 to 91 centimeters long.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called “double-edged” or “two-edged” swords.
- Jesus’ disciples had swords they planned to use to defend themselves. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

Translation Suggestions

- A sword is used as a metaphor for God’s word. God’s teachings in the Bible expose people’s innermost thoughts and convict them of their sin. In a similar way, a sword cuts deeply, causing pain. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- One way to translate this figurative use would be, “God’s word is like a sword, which cuts deeply and exposes sin.”
- Another figurative use of this term is in the book of Psalms where the tongue or speech of a person is compared to a sword, which can injure people. This could be translated as, “the tongue is like a sword that can badly injure someone.”
- If swords are not known in your culture, this word could be translated with the name of another long-bladed weapon that is used to cut or stab.
- A sword could also be described as a “sharp weapon” or “long knife.” Some translations may decide to include a picture of a sword.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [James \(brother of Jesus\)](#), [John \(the Baptist\)](#), [tongue](#), [word of God](#), [word of Yahweh](#), [word of the Lord](#), [scripture](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Tamar

Facts:

Tamar is the name of several women in the Old Testament. It is also the name of several cities or other places in the Old Testament.

- Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judah. She gave birth to Perez who was an ancestor of Jesus Christ.
- One of King David's daughters was also named Tamar; she was the sister of Absalom. Her half-brother Amnon raped her and left her desolate.
- Absalom also had a daughter named Tamar.
- A city called "Hazezon Tamar" is the same as the city of Engedi on the western shore of the Salt Sea. There is also a "Baal Tamar." There are also general references to a place called "Tamar" which may be different from the cities.

(See also: [Absalom](#), [ancestor](#), [father](#), [forefather](#), [Amnon](#), [David](#), [ancestor](#), [father](#), [forefather](#), [Judah](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#))

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Tarshish

Facts:

Tarshish was the name of two men in the Old Testament. It was also the name of a city.

- One of Japheth's grandsons was named Tarshish.
- Tarshish was also the name of one of the wise men of King Ahashuerus.
- The city of Tarshish was a very prosperous port city, whose ships carried valuable products to buy, sell, or trade.
- This city was associated with Tyre and is thought to have been a Phoenician city that was somewhat distant from Israel, perhaps on the southern coast of Spain.
- The Old Testament prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for the city of Tarshish instead of obeying God's command to go preach to Nineveh.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Esther](#), [Japheth](#), [Jonah](#), [Nineveh](#), [Ninevite](#), [Phoenicia](#), [wise men](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

tempt, temptation

Definition:

To tempt someone is to try to get that person to do something wrong.

- A temptation is something that causes a person to want to do something wrong.
- People are tempted by their own sinful nature and by other people.
- Satan also tempts people to disobey God and to sin against God by doing wrong things.
- Satan tempted Jesus and tried to get him to do something wrong, but Jesus resisted all of Satan's temptations and never sinned.
- The term "tempt" is also used to refer to tempting God, which means to stubbornly keep disobeying him to the point that he must respond by punishing the disobedient ones. This is also called "testing" God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "tempt" can be translated as, "try to cause to sin" or "entice" or "cause a desire to sin."
- Ways to translate "temptations" could include, "things that tempt" or "things that entice someone to sin" or "things that cause desire to do something wrong."
- In the context of tempting God, this could be translated as, "put God to the test" or "test God" or "try God's patience" or "cause God to have to punish" or "stubbornly keep disobeying God."

(See also: [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [test](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [25-01] Then Satan came to Jesus and **tempted** him to sin.
- [25-08] Jesus did not give in to Satan's **temptations**, so Satan left him.
- [38-11] Jesus told his disciples to pray that they would not enter into **temptation**.

tent

Definition:

A tent is a portable shelter made of sturdy fabric that is draped over a structure of poles and attached to them.

- Tents can be small, with just enough space for a few people to sleep in, or they can be very large, with space for an entire family to sleep, cook, and live in.
- For many people, tents are used as permanent dwelling places. For example, during most of the time that Abraham's family lived in the land of Canaan, they dwelled in large tents made of sturdy cloth made of goat hair.
- The Israelites also lived in tents during their forty-year wanderings through the desert of Sinai.
- The tabernacle building was a kind of very large tent, with thick walls made of cloth curtains.
- When the apostle Paul traveled to different cities to share the gospel, he made tents to earn money to support himself.
- The term "tents" is sometimes used figuratively to refer generally to where people live. This could also be translated as "homes" or "dwellings" or "houses." (See: [Synecdoche](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [curtain](#), [Paul](#), [Saul](#), [Sinai](#), [Mount Sinai](#), [tabernacle](#), [tent of meeting](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

tenth, tithe**Definition:**

The terms “tenth” and “tithe” refer to “ten percent” or “one-out-of-ten portion” of one’s money, crops, livestock, or other possessions that is given to God.

- In the Old Testament, God instructed the Israelites to set aside a tenth of their belongings to give as an offering of thanksgiving to him.
- This offering was used to support the Levite tribe of Israel who served the Israelites as priests and caretakers of the tabernacle and later, the temple.
- In the New Testament, God does not require giving a tithe, but instead he instructs believers to generously and cheerfully help people in need and support the work of Christian ministry.
- This could also be translated as “one-tenth” or “one out of ten.”

(See also: [believer](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Levite](#), [Levi](#), [livestock](#), [Melchizedek](#), [minister](#), [ministry](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

terror, terrify**Definition:**

The term “terror” refers to a feeling of extreme fear. To “terrify” someone means to cause that person to feel very afraid.

- A “terror” (or “terrors”) is something or someone that causes great fear or dread. An example of a terror could be an attacking enemy army or a plague or disease that is widespread, killing many people.
- These terrors can be described as “terrifying.” This term could be translated as, “fear-causing” or “terror-producing.”
- The judgment of God will someday cause terror in unrepentant people who reject his grace.
- The “terror of Yahweh” could be translated as, “the terrifying presence of Yahweh” or “the dreaded judgment of Yahweh” or “when Yahweh causes great fear.”
- Ways to translate “terror” could also include, “extreme fear” or “deep dread.”

(See also: [adversary](#), [enemy](#), [fear](#), [afraid](#), [fear of Yahweh](#), [judge](#), [judgment](#), [plague](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

test

Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to keep disobeying him, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to test” could also be translated as, “to challenge” or “to cause to experience difficulties” or “to prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as “to test” or “to set up a challenge” or “to force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as, “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: [tempt](#), [temptation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

testimony, testify

Definition:

The terms “testimony” and “testify” refer to making a statement about something that one knows to be true.

- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term is often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as, “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as, “to show them what is true” or “to prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as, “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”

(See: [ark of the covenant](#), [ark of the covenant decrees](#), [ark of the testimony](#), [ark of Yahweh](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [witness](#), [eyewitness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

thresh, threshing

Definition:

The terms “thresh” and “threshing” refer to the first part of the process of separating wheat grain from the rest of the wheat plant.

- Threshing the wheat plant loosens the grain from the straw and the chaff. Afterwards the grain is “winnowed” to completely separate the grain from all unwanted materials, leaving only the part the grain that can be eaten.
- In Bible times, a “threshing floor” was a large flat rock or an area of packed-down dirt, giving a hard, level surface to crush the grain stalks and remove the grain.
- A “threshing cart” or “threshing wheel” was sometimes used to crush the grain and help separate it from the straw and chaff.
- A “threshing sledge” or “threshing board” was also used for separating grain. It was made of wooden boards that had sharp metal spikes on the end.

(See also: [chaff](#), [grain](#), [winnow](#), [sift](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

throne

Definition:

A throne is a specially-designed chair where a king sits to decide important matters and to listen to requests from his people.

- A throne is also a symbol of the authority and power that a king has.
- The word “throne” is often used figuratively to refer to the king, his reign, or his power. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- In the Bible, God is often portrayed as a king who sits on his throne. Jesus is described as sitting on a throne at the right hand of God the Father.
- Jesus said that heaven is God’s throne. One way to translate this could be, “where God reigns as king.”

(See also: [authority](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [king](#), [reign](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

tomb, grave, burial place

Definition:

The terms “tomb” and “grave” refer to a place where people put the body of a person who has died. A “burial place” is a more general term that also refers to this.

- The Jews sometimes used natural caves as tombs, and sometimes they dug caves into rock in the side of a hill.
- In New Testament times, it was common to roll a large, heavy stone in front of the opening of a tomb in order to close it.
- If the word for a tomb or a grave can only refer to a hole in which the body is placed below the ground, other ways to translate this could include, “cave” or “hole in the side of a hill.”
- The phrase “the grave” is often used generally and figuratively to refer to the condition of being dead or a place where the souls of dead people are.

(See also: [bury](#), [buried](#), [burial](#), [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[32-04]** The man lived among the **tombs** in the area.
- **[37-06]** Jesus asked them, “Where have you put Lazarus?” They told him, “In the **tomb**. Come and see.”
- **[37-07]** The **tomb** was a cave with a stone rolled in front of its opening.
- **[40-09]** Then Joseph and Nicodemus, two Jewish leaders who believed Jesus was the Messiah, asked Pilate for Jesus’ body. They wrapped his body in cloth and placed it in a **tomb** cut out of rock. Then they rolled a large stone in front the **tomb** to block the opening.
- **[41-04]** He (the angel) rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the **tomb** and sat on it. The soldiers guarding the **tomb** were terrified and fell to the ground like dead men.
- **[41-05]** When the women arrived at the **tomb**, the angel told them, “Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would! Look in the **tomb** and see.” The women looked into the **tomb** and saw where Jesus’ body had been laid. His body was not there!

tribe**Definition:**

A tribe is a group of people who are descended from a common ancestor.

- People from the same tribe usually also share a common language and culture.
- In the Old Testament, God divided the people of Israel into twelve tribes. Each tribe was descended from a son or grandson of Jacob.
- A tribe is smaller than a nation, but larger than a clan.

(See also: [clan](#), [nation](#), [people group](#), [peoples](#), [the people](#), [a people](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness

Definition:

The term “trust” refers to believing that something or someone is true or dependable. A “trustworthy” person can be relied on to do and say what is right and true.

- Trust is closely related to faith. If we trust someone, we have faith in that person to do what they promised to do.
- Having trust in someone also means depending on that person.
- To “trust in” Jesus means to believe that he is God and that he died on the cross to pay for our sins, and to rely on him to save us.
- A “trustworthy saying” refers to something that is said that can be counted on to be true.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “trust” could include, “believe” or “have faith” or “have confidence” or “depend on.”
- The phrase “put your trust in” is very similar in meaning to “trust in.”
- The term “trustworthy” could be translated as, “dependable” or “reliable” or “can always be trusted.”

(See also: , [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [confidence](#), [confident](#), [faith](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [true](#), [truth](#), [come true](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [12-12] When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they **trusted** in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.
- [14-15] Joshua was a good leader because he **trusted** and obeyed God.
- [17-02] David was a humble and righteous man who **trusted** and obeyed God.
- [34-06] Then Jesus told a story about people who **trusted** in their own good deeds and despised other people.

Tubal

Facts:

There are several men in the Old Testament who had the name “Tubal.”

- One man named Tubal was one of the sons of Japheth.
- A man named “Tubal-Cain” was the son of Lamech and descendant of Cain.
- Tubal is also the name of a people group mentioned by the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Cain](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [Ezekiel](#), [Isaiah](#), [Japheth](#), [Lamech](#), [people group](#), [peoples](#), [the people](#), [a people](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

unbeliever, unbelief

Definition:

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include, “lack of faith” or “not believing.”
- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: [believer](#), [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [trust](#), [trustworthy](#), [trustworthiness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

uncircumcised, uncircumcision

Definition:

The terms “uncircumcised” and “uncircumcision” refer to a male who has not been physically circumcised. These terms are also used figuratively.

- Egypt was a nation that also required circumcision. So when God talks about Egypt being defeated by the “uncircumcised,” he is referring to people whom the Egyptians despised for not being circumcised.
- The Bible refers to people who have an “uncircumcised heart” or who are “uncircumcised in heart.” This is a figurative way of saying that these people are not God’s people, and are stubbornly disobedient to him.

Translation Suggestions:

- If a word for circumcision is used or known in the language, “uncircumcised” could be translated as “not circumcised.”
- The expression, “the uncircumcision” could be translated as “people who are not circumcised” or “people who do not belong to God,” depending on the context.
- Other ways to translate figurative senses of this term could include, “not God’s people” or “rebellious like those who don’t belong to God” or “people who have no sign of belonging to God.”
- The expression “uncircumcised in heart” could be translated as, “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to believe.” However, if possible it is best to keep the expression or a similar one since spiritual circumcision is an important concept.

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [circumcise](#), [circumcision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

unclean

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “unclean” is used figuratively to refer to things that God declared to be unfit for his people to touch, eat, or sacrifice.

- God gave the Israelites instructions about which animals were “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” The unclean animals were not permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice.
- People with certain skin diseases were said to be “unclean” until they were healed.
- If the Israelites touched something “unclean,” they themselves would be considered unclean for a certain period of time.
- Obeying God’s commands about not touching or eating unclean things kept the Israelites set apart for God’s service.
- This physical and ritual uncleanness was also symbolic of moral uncleanness.
- In another figurative sense, an “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “unclean” could also be translated as “not clean” or “unfit in God’s eyes” or “physically unclean” or “defiled.”
- When referring to a demon as an unclean spirit, “unclean” could be translated as “evil” or “defiled.”
- The translation of this term should allow for spiritual uncleanness. It should be able to refer to anything that God declared as unfit for touching, eating, or sacrifice.

(See also: [clean](#), [cleanse](#), [defile](#), [be defiled](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [holy](#), [holiness](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [unholy](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

unleavened bread, Festival of Unleavened Bread

Definition:

The term “unleavened bread” refers to bread that is made without yeast or other leavening. This kind of bread is flat because it has no leaven to make it rise. The “Festival of Unleavened Bread” is part of the Passover celebration.

- When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, he told them to flee Egypt quickly without waiting for their bread to rise. So they ate unleavened bread with their meal. Since then unleavened bread is used in their yearly Passover celebrations to remind them of that time.
- For this reason, the week leading up to Passover is called the “Festival of Unleavened Bread.”
- Since leaven sometimes is used as a picture of sin, “unleavened bread” represents the removal of sin from a person’s life in order to live in a way that honors God.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include, “bread with no yeast” or “flat bread that did not rise.”
- Make sure the translation of this term is consistent with how you translate the term “yeast, leaven.”
- In some contexts, the term “unleavened bread” refers to the “Feast of Unleavened Bread” and can be translated that way.

(See also: [bread](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [feast](#), [Passover](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [yeast](#), [leaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

upright, uprightness

Definition:

The terms “upright” and “uprightness” refer to acting in a way that follows God’s laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is “upright” is someone who obeys God’s rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as “integrity” and “righteous” have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as “integrity and uprightness.” (See: [Parallelism](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “upright” could include, “acting rightly” or “one who acts rightly” or “following God’s laws” or “obedient to God” or “behaving in a way that is right.”
- The term “uprightness” could be translated as, “moral purity” or “good moral conduct” or “rightness.”
- The phrase “the upright” could be translated as “people who are upright” or “upright people.”

(See also: [integrity](#), [law](#), [principle](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [pure](#), [purify](#), [purification](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Ur

Facts:

Ur was an important city along the Euphrates River in the ancient region of Chaldea, which was part of Mesopotamia. This region was located in what is now the modern-day country of Iraq.

- Abraham was from the city of Ur and it was from there that God called him to leave to go to the land of Canaan.
- Haran, the brother of Abraham and father of Lot, died in Ur. This was probably a factor that influenced Lot to leave Ur with Abraham.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Abraham](#), [Abram](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Chaldea](#), [Chaldean](#), [Euphrates River](#), [Haran](#), [Lot](#), [Mesopotamia](#), [Aram Naharaim](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

vine

Definition:

The term “vine” refers to a plant that grows by trailing along the ground or by climbing trees and other structures. The word “vine” in the Bible is used only of fruit-bearing vines and usually refers to grape vines.

- In the Bible, the word “vine” almost always means, “grapevine.”
- The branches of the grapevine are attached to the main stem which gives them water and other nutrients so that they can grow.
- Jesus called himself the “vine” and called his people the “branches.” In this context, the word “vine” could also be translated as “grapevine stem” or “grape plant stem.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

(See also: [grape](#), [vineyard](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

vineyard

Definition:

A vineyard is a large garden area where grapevines are grown and grapes are cultivated.

- A vineyard often has a wall around it to protect the fruit from thieves and animals.
- God compared the people of Israel to a vineyard that did not bear good fruit. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- Vineyard could be also translated as, “grapevine garden” or “grape plantation.”

(See also: [grape](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [vine](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

virgin

Definition:

A virgin is a woman who has never had sexual relations.

- The prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- Mary was a virgin when she was pregnant with Jesus. He did not have a human father.
- Some languages may have a term that is a polite way of referring to a virgin. (See: [Euphemism](#))

(See also: [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [Isaiah](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [Mary](#), [the mother of Jesus](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[21-09]** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a **virgin**.
- **[22-04]** She (Mary) was a **virgin** and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.
- **[22-05]** Mary replied, "How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?"
- **[49-01]** An angel told a **virgin** named Mary that she would give birth to God's Son. So while she was still a **virgin**, she gave birth to a son and named him Jesus.

vision**Facts:**

The term “vision” refers to something that a person sees. It especially refers to something unusual or supernatural that God shows people in order to give them a message.

- Usually, visions are seen while the person is awake. However sometimes a vision is something a person sees in a dream while asleep.
- God sends visions to tell people something that is very important. For example, Peter was shown a vision to tell him that God wanted him to welcome Gentiles.

Translation Suggestion

- The phrase “saw a vision” could be translated as, “saw something unusual from God” or “God showed him something special.”
- Some languages may not have separate words for “vision” and “dream.” So a sentence such as, “Daniel had dreams and visions in his mind” could be translated as something like, “Daniel was dreaming while asleep and God caused him to see unusual things.”

(See also: [dream](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

voice

Definition:

The term “voice” is often used figuratively to refer to speaking or communicating something.

- God is said to use his voice, even though he doesn’t have a voice in the same way a human being does.
- This term can be used to refer to the whole person, as in the statement “A voice is heard in the desert saying, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’” This could be translated as, “A person is heard calling out in the desert...” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- To “hear someone’s voice” could also be translated as “hear someone speaking.”
- Sometimes the word “voice” may be used for objects that cannot literally speak, such as when David exclaims in the psalms that the “voice” of the heavens proclaims God’s mighty works. This could also be translated as “their splendor shows clearly how great God is.”

(See also: [call](#), [calling](#), [called](#), [call out](#), [proclaim](#), [proclamation](#), [splendor](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

VOW**Definition:**

A vow is a promise that a person makes to God. The person promises to do a certain thing in order to specially honor God or to show devotion to him.

- After a person makes a vow, he is obligated to fulfill that vow.
- The Bible teaches that a person may be judged by God if he doesn't keep his vow.
- Sometimes a person may ask God to protect him or provide for him in exchange for making the vow.
- But God is not required to fulfill a request that a person asks for in his vow.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "vow" could be translated as "solemn promise" or "promise made to God."
- This word should be translated differently than "oath."

(See also: [promise](#), [oath](#), [swear](#), [swear by](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

walk

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as, “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [honor](#), [to honor](#), [\[:en:obe:other:obey\]](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

well, cistern

Definition:

The terms “well” and “cistern” refer to two different kinds of sources for water in Bible times.

- A well is a deep hole dug into the ground so that underground water can flow into it.
- A cistern is a deep hole dug into rock that was used as a holding tank for collecting rain water.
- Cisterns were usually dug into rock and sealed with plaster to keep the water in. A “broken cistern” happened when the plaster became cracked so that the water leaked out.
- Cisterns were often located in the courtyard area of people’s homes to catch the rainwater that would run off the roof.
- Wells were often located where they could be accessed by several families or a whole community.
- Because water was very important for both people and livestock, the right to use a well was often a cause of strife and conflict.
- Both wells and cisterns were usually covered with a large stone to prevent anything falling in it. Often there was a rope with a bucket or pot attached to it to bring the water up to the surface.
- Sometimes a dry cistern was used as a place to imprison someone, such as happened to Joseph and Jeremiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “well” could include, “deep water hole” or “deep hole for spring water” or “deep hole for drawing water.”
- The term “cistern” could be translated as “stone water pit” or “deep and narrow pit for water” or “underground tank for holding water.”
- These terms are similar in meaning. The main difference is that a well continually receives water from underground springs, whereas a cistern is a holding tank for water that usually comes from rain.

(See also: [courtyard](#), [court](#), [Jeremiah](#), [Joseph \(OT\)](#), [prison](#), [prisoner](#), [imprison](#), [strife](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

wheat

Definition:

Wheat is a type of grain that people grow for food. When the Bible mentions “grain” or “seeds,” it is often talking about wheat grain or seeds.

- The wheat seeds or grains grow at the top of the wheat plant.
- After harvesting the wheat, the grain is separated from the stalk of the plant by threshing it. The stalk of the wheat plant is also called “straw” and is often placed on the ground for animals to sleep on.
- After threshing, the chaff surrounding the grain seed is separated from the grain by winnowing and is thrown away.
- People grind the wheat grain into flour, and use this for making bread.

(See also: [barley](#), [chaff](#), [grain](#), [seed](#), [thresh](#), [threshing](#), [winnow](#), [sift](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

wine, wineskin, new wine

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “wine” refers to a kind of fermented drink made from the juice of a fruit called grapes. Wine was stored in “wineskins,” which were containers made out of animal skin.

- The term “new wine” referred to grape juice that had just been taken from the grape and was not fermented yet. Sometimes the term “wine” also refer to unfermented grape juice.
- To make wine, grapes are crushed in a winepress so that the juice comes out. The juice eventually ferments and alcohol forms in it.
- In Bible times, wine was the normal drink with meals. It did not have as much alcohol as present-day wine has.
- Before wine was served for a meal, it was often mixed with water.
- A wineskin that was old and brittle would get cracks in it, which allowed the wine to leak out. New wineskins were soft and flexible, which meant they did not tear easily and could store the wine safely.
- If wine is unknown in your culture, it could be translated as, “fermented grape juice” or “fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes” or “fermented fruit juice.” (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- Ways to translate “wineskin” could include, “bag for wine” or “animal skin wine bag” or “animal skin container for wine.”

(See also: [grape](#), [vine](#), [vineyard](#), [winepress](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

smashed

wise, wisdom

Definition:

The term “wise” describes someone who understands what is the right and moral thing to do and then does that. “Wisdom” is the understanding and practice of what is true and morally right.

- Being wise includes the ability to make good decisions, especially choosing to do what pleases God.
- In the Bible, the term “worldly wisdom” is a figurative way of referring to what people in this world think is wise, but which is actually foolish.
- People become wise by listening to God and humbly obeying his will.
- A wise person will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life, such as joy, kindness, love and patience.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “wise” could include, “obedient to God” or “sensible and obedient” or “God-fearing.”
- “Wisdom” could be translated by a word or phrase that means, “wise living” or “sensible and obedient living” or “good judgment.”
- It is best to translate “wise” and “wisdom” in such a way that they are different terms from other key terms like righteous or obedient.

(See: [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [fruit](#), [fruitful](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02-05] She also wanted to be **wise**, so she picked some of the fruit and ate it.
- [18-01] When Solomon asked for **wisdom**, God was pleased and made him the **wisest** man in the world.
- [23-09] Some time later, **wise** men from countries far to the east saw an unusual star in the sky.
- [45-01] He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the Holy Spirit and of **wisdom**.

witness, eyewitness

Definition:

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- “To witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression, “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “person-seeing-it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as, “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as, “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- “To witness to” could be translated as, “to tell what was seen” or “to testify” or “to state what happened.”
- “To witness” something could be translated as “to see something” or “to experience something happen.”

(See also: [guilt](#), [guilty](#), [judge](#), [judgment](#), [true](#), [truth](#), [testimony](#), [testify](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[39-02]** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.

- [39-04] The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, "We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?"
- [42-08]"It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things."
- [43-07]"We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again."

womb**Definition:**

The term “womb” refers to where a baby grows inside its mother.

- This is an older term that is sometimes used in order to be polite and less direct. (See: [Euphemism](#))
- A more modern term for womb is “uterus.”
- Some languages use a word like “belly” to refer to a woman’s womb or uterus.
- Use a word for this in the project language that is well-known, natural, and acceptable.

Bible References:

Waiting

word**Definition:**

A “word” refers to something that someone has said.

- An example of this would be when the angel told Zechariah, “You did not believe my words,” which means, “You did not believe what I said.”
- This term almost always refers to an entire message, not just one word.
- Often in the Bible “the word” refers to everything God has said or commanded, as in “the word of God” or “the word of truth.”
- Sometimes “word” refers to speech in general, such as “powerful in word and deed” which means “powerful in speech and behavior.”
- A very special use of this term is when Jesus is called “the Word.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways of translating “word” or “words” include, “teaching” or “message” or “news” or “a saying” or “what was said.”
- When it refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Saying.”

(See also: [word of God](#), [God’s word](#), [scripture](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures or “Old Testament.” These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people can still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include, “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as, “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”
- When “word” occurs alone, it could be translated as “message” or “God’s word” or “teachings,” depending on the context. Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.

(See also: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [word](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[25-07]** In **God’s word** he commands his people, ‘Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.’”
- **[33-06]** So Jesus explained, ”The seed is the **word of God**.

- [42-03] Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- [42-07] Jesus said, "I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word**.
- [45-10] Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- [48-12] But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- [49-18] God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

worship

Definition:

“To worship” means to honor, praise and obey someone, especially God.

- This term often means literally, “bow down” or “prostrate oneself” to humbly honor someone.
- We worship God when we serve and honor him, by praising him and obeying him.
- When the Israelites worshiped God, it often included sacrificing an animal on an altar.
- Some people worship false gods.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “worship” could be translated as “bow down to” or “honor and serve” or “honor and obey.”
- In some contexts, it could also be translated as “humbly praise” or “give honor and praise.”

(See also: [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [praise](#), [honor](#), [to honor](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[13-04]** Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not **worship** other gods.”
- **[14-02]** The Canaanites did not **worship** or obey God. They **worshiped** false gods and did many evil things.
- **[17-06]** David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could **worship** God and offer him sacrifices.
- **[18-12]** All of the kings and most of the people of the kingdom of Israel **worshiped** idols.
- **[25-07]** Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, “**Worship** only the Lord your God and only serve him.””
- **[26-02]** On the Sabbath, he (Jesus) went to the place of **worship**.
- **[47-01]** There they met a woman named Lydia who was a merchant. She loved and **worshiped** God.
- **[49-18]** God tells you to pray, to study his word, to **worship** him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless

Definition:

The term “worthy” describes someone or something that deserves respect or honor. To “have worth” means to be valuable or important. The term “worthless” means to not have any value.

- Being worthy is related to being valuable or having importance
- To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any special notice.
- To not feel worthy means to feel less important than someone else or to not feel deserving of being treated with honor or kindness.
- The term “unworthy” and the term “worthless” have related, but different meanings. To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any honor or recognition. To be “worthless” means to not have any purpose or value.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Worthy” could be translated as “deserving” or “important” or “valuable.”
- The word “worth” could be translated as, “value” or “importance.”
- The phrase “to have worth” could also be translated as “to be valuable” or “to be important.”
- The phrase, “is worth more than” could be translated as, “is more valuable than.”
- Depending on the context, the term, “unworthy” could also be translated as “unimportant” or “dishonorable” or “undeserving.”
- The term “worthless” could be translated as, “with no value” or “with no purpose” or “worth nothing.”

(See: [honor, to honor](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

wrong, mistreat, hurt

Definition:

To “wrong” someone means to treat that person unjustly and dishonestly.

- The term “mistreat” means to act badly or roughly toward someone, causing physical or emotional harm to that person.
- The term “hurt” is more general and means “to cause someone harm in some way.” It often has the meaning of “physically injure.”
- Depending on the context, these terms could also be translated as, “do wrong to” or “treat unjustly” or “cause harm to” or “treat in a harmful way” or “injure.”

Bible References:

Waiting

Yahweh

Facts:

The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name that he revealed when he spoke to Moses at the burning bush.

- The name “Yahweh” comes from the word that means, “to be” or “to exist.”
- Possible meanings of “Yahweh” include, “he is” or “I am” or “the one who causes to be.”
- This name reveals that God has always lived and will continue to live forever. It also means that he is always present.
- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term “LORD” or “the LORD” to represent “Yahweh.” This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh’s name and started saying “Lord” every time the term “Yahweh” appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write “LORD” with all capital letters to show respect for God’s personal name and to distinguish it from “Lord” which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULB and UDB texts always translate this term as, “Yahweh,” as it literally occurs in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” does not ever occur in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even in quotes from the Old Testament.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Yahweh” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “I am” or “living one” or “the one who is” or “he who is alive.”
- This term could also be written in a way that is similar to how “Yahweh” is spelled.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term “Yahweh” and instead use the traditional rendering, “LORD.” An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title “Lord.” Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish “LORD” as a name (Yahweh) from “Lord” as a title.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [God](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [Lord](#), [Moses](#), [reveal](#), [revelation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[09-14]** God said, “I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ Also tell them, ‘I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.’”

- [13-04] Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- [13-05] "Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God."
- [16-01] The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- [19-10] Then Elijah prayed, "O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant."

yoke

Definition:

A yoke is a piece of wood or metal attached to two or more animals to connect them for the purpose of pulling a plow or a cart. There are also several figurative meanings for this term.

- The term “yoke” is used figuratively to refer to something that joins people for the purpose of working together, such as in serving Jesus.
- Paul used the term “yokefellow” to refer to someone who was serving Christ as he was. This could also be translated as “fellow worker” or “fellow servant” or “coworker.”
- The term “yoke” is also often used figuratively to refer to a heavy load that someone has to carry, such as when being oppressed by slavery or persecution.
- In most contexts, it is best to translate this term literally, using the local term for a yoke that is used for farming.
- Other ways to translate the figurative use of this term could be, “oppressive burden” or “heavy load” or “bond,” depending on the context.

(See also: [bind](#), [bond](#), [bound](#), [burden](#), [oppress](#), [oppression](#), [oppressor](#), [persecute](#), [persecution](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Zebulun

Facts:

Zebulun was the last son born to Jacob and Leah and is the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel

- The Israelite tribe of Zebulun was given the land directly west of the Salt Sea.
- Sometimes the name “Zebulun” is also used to refer to the land where this Israelite tribe lived.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Jacob](#), [Israel](#), [Leah](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Zoar

Facts:

Zoar was a small city where Lot fled when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

- It was formerly known as “Bela” but was renamed “Zoar” when Lot asked God to spare this “small” city.
- Zoar is thought to have been located in the plain of the Jordan River or at the southern end of the Dead Sea.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Lot](#), [Sodom](#), [Gomorrah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

translationAcademy

First, Second or Third Person

This answers the question: What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit*
- *Pronouns*

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker referred to himself or to the person he was speaking to with a phrase other than “I” or “you”.

Description

Definitions

- **First person** - This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we”. (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- **Second person** - This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- **Third person** - This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker used the third person to refer to himself or the people he was speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

Examples from the Bible

Sometimes people uses the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “*Your servant* used to keep *his* father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULB)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,
”... Do you have an arm like *God’s*? Can you thunder with a voice like *him*? (Job 40:6, 9 ULB)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “him.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful. Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look what I have done, taking it upon myself to speak to *my Lord*, even though I am only dust and ashes! (Genesis 18:27 ULB)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if *each of you* does not forgive *his* brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULB)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Use the the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
2. Simply use the first or second person.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

- **But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep.”** (1 Samuel 17:34)
 - But David said to Saul, “I, your servant, used to keep my father’s sheep.”

2. Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”).

- **Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like God’s? Can you thunder with a voice like him?”** (Job 40:6, 9 ULB)
 - Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like mine? Can you thunder with a voice like me?”
- **So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.** (Matthew 18:35 ULB)
 - So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if *each of you* does not forgive *your* brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Forms of You*

Abstract Nouns

This answers the question: What are abstract nouns and how do I deal with them in my translation?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Sentences*

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even to relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, injury, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it. For example, "What is its *weight*?" could be expressed as "How much does it *weigh*?" or "How *heavy* is it?"

Description

Remember that nouns are words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea. **ABSTRACT NOUNS** are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even to relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, and weight.

Abstract nouns allow us to express thoughts about ideas in fewer words than if we did not have those nouns. For example, we can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." But if English did not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," then we would have to make a longer sentence to express the same meaning. We would have to say, for example, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned."

Abstract nouns also allow us to refer to a situation without telling more details about it than we want to tell. For example, we can say "I got here late because there was an accident on the highway." "Accident" is an abstract noun. If it does not matter whose accident it was, or what kind of accident it was, then it can be better if I do not have to say these things about it.

Reason this is a translation issue: The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas; instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will have other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs, that express some of the meaning in the abstract noun.

Examples from the Bible

from *childhood* you have known the sacred writings (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)

The abstract noun "childhood" refers to when someone is a child.

But *godliness* with *contentment* is great *gain*. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)

The abstract nouns “godliness” and “contentment” refer to being godly and content. The abstract noun “gain” refers to something that benefits or helps someone.

Today *salvation* has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “salvation” here refers to being saved.

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider *slowness* to be (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “slowness” refers how slowly something is done.

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the *purposes* of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)

The abstract noun “purposes” refers to the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

Translation Strategies

If an abstract noun would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun.

- **from *childhood* you have known the sacred writings** (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)
 - ”Ever since *you were a child* you have known the sacred writings.”
- **But *godliness with contentment* is great *gain*.** (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)
 - ”But *being godly* and *content* is very *beneficial*.”
 - ”But we *benefit* greatly when we *are godly* and *content*.”
 - ”But we *benefit* greatly when we *honor and obey God* and when we are *happy with what we have*.
- **Today *salvation* has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.** (Luke 19:9 ULB)
 - ”Today the people in this house *have been saved*...”
 - ”Today God *has saved* the people in this house...”
- **The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider *slowness* to be** (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)

- "The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider *moving slowly* to be"
- **He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the *purposes* of the heart.**
(1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)
 - "He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal *the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.*"

Active or Passive

This answers the question: What do active and passive mean, and how do I translate passive sentences?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Sentence Structure*
- *Verbs*

Some languages have both active and passive sentences. In active sentences, the subject does the action. In passive sentences the subject is the one that the action is done to. Here are some examples with their subjects underlined:

- ACTIVE: *My father* built the house in 2010.
- PASSIVE: *The house* was built in 2010.

Translators whose languages do not have passive sentences will need to know how they can translate passive sentences that they find in the Bible. Other translators will need to decide when to use a passive sentence and when not to.

Description

Some languages have both active and passive forms of sentences.

- In the **ACTIVE** form, the subject does the action and is always mentioned.
- In the **PASSIVE** form, the action is done to the subject and the one who does the action is *not always* mentioned.

In the examples of active and passive sentences below, we have underlined the subject.

ACTIVE: *My father* built the house in 2010.

PASSIVE: *The house* was built by my father in 2010.

PASSIVE: *The house* was built in 2010. (This does not tell who did the action.)

All languages have active forms. Some languages have passive forms, and some do not. The passive form is not used for the same reasons in all of the languages that have it.

Purposes for the passive:

- The speaker is talking about the person or thing the action was done to, not about the person who did the action.
- The speaker does not want to tell who did the action.
- The speaker does not know who did the action.

Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

- Translators whose language does not use passive forms will need to find another way to express the idea.
- Translators whose language has passive forms will need to understand why the passive is used in a particular sentence in the Bible and decide whether or not to use a passive form for that purpose in his translation of the sentence.

Examples from the Bible

And their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants *were killed*, and your servant Uriah the Hittite *was killed* too. (2 Samuel 11:24 ULB)

This means that the enemies shooters shot and killed some of the king's servants, including Uriah. The point is what happened to the king's servants and Uriah, not who shot them.

In the morning when the men of the town got up, the altar of Baal *was broken down* ... (Judges 6:28 ULB)

The men of the town saw what had happened to the altar of Baal, but they did not know who broke it down.

No stonework *was seen* there. (1 Kings 6:18 ULB)

This means that no one saw stonework there. The point is that no stonework was done there.

Translation Strategies

If you decide that it is better to translate without a passive form, here are some strategies you might consider.

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who or what did the action.
2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who or what did the action.
3. Use a different verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who did the action.

- **A loaf of bread *was given* him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)
 - *The king's servants gave* Jeremiah a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who did the action. Instead use a generic expression like "they," or "people," or "someone."

- **It would be better for him if a millstone *were put* around his neck and he *were thrown* into the sea** (Luke 17:2 ULB)
 - It would be better for him if *they were to put* a millstone around his neck and *throw* him into the sea.
 - It would be better for him if *someone were to put* a heavy stone around his neck and *throw* him into the sea.

3. Use a different verb in an active sentence.

- **A loaf of bread *was given* him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)
 - He *received* a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Abstract Nouns*
- *Word Order*

Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding

This answers the question: When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Sentences*

In some languages, phrases can be used with a noun for two different things. They can either distinguish one item from another or they can give more information or a reminder about an item. Other languages use phrases with a noun only for distinguishing. When people who speak these languages hear a phrase with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another.

Description

In some languages, phrases can be used with a noun for two different things. They can either distinguish one item from other possible items, or they can give more information about an item. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know or assume.

- "Mary gave some of the food to *her sister who was very thankful*.
 - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase "who was thankful" could distinguish this sister of Mary's from another sister who was not usually thankful.
- "Mary gave some of the food to her sister, *who was very thankful*."
 - This same phrase can be used to inform us about how Mary's sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages use phrases with a noun only for distinguishing one item from another. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, people who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish one item from other possible items.

Examples from the Bible

1. Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items: These usually do not cause a problem in translation.

... The curtain is to separate *the holy place* from *the most holy place*. (Exodus 26:33 ULB)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to *the woman who bore him*.
(Proverbs 17:25 ULB)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

2. Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item: These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these. (See: [Phrases that Inform or Remind](#))

for *your righteous judgments* are good. (Psalm 119:39 ULB)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgement from his unrighteous judgement, because all of his judgments are righteous.

Can *Sarah, who is ninety years old*, bear a son? - (Genesis 17:17-18 ULB)

The phrase “who is ninety years old” is the reason that Abraham did not think that Sarah could bear a son. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah, and he was not telling anyone something new about her age. He simply did not think that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, see [Phrases that Inform or Remind](#) for translation strategies.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

See [Phrases that Inform or Remind](#) for how to translate phrases that inform or remind.

Double Negatives

This answers the question: What are double negatives?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Sentences*

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that express the meaning of “not.”

It is *not* that we do *not* have authority (2 Thessalonians 3:9)

Be sure of this—wicked people will *not* go *unpunished* (Proverbs 11:21)

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

Description

Most languages express the negative near the verb or at the beginning or end of the sentence. Some languages also have prefixes or suffixes that express the negative as in “*unhappy*,” “*impossible*,” and “*useless*.” Some languages can also express the negative with pronouns like “none,” “nothing,” and “no one,” with adverbs like “nowhere,” and with prepositions like “without.”

A double negative occurs when a sentence has two words that express the meaning of “not.”

It is *not* that we do *not* have authority (2 Thessalonians 3:9 ULB)

And this better confidence did *not* happen *without* the taking of an oath, (Hebrews 7:20 ULB)

Be sure of this—wicked people will *not* go *unpunished* (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The following Spanish sentence *No ví a nadie* is literally “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” It emphasizes the negative, and means “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages a double negative simply means a positive. So “She is not unattractive” means “She is attractive.”
- In some language the double negative weakens the adjective. So “She is not unattractive” means “She is a little bit attractive.”
- In some languages, such as the languages of the Bible, the double negative often strengthens the adjective. So “She is not unattractive” means “She is very attractive.”

To translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples from the Bible

so that they may *not* be *unfruitful*. (Titus 3:14 ULB)

This means “so that they will be fruitful.”

All things were made through him and *without* him there was *not* one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULB)

By using a double negative John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything.

Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

1. If the double negative simply expresses the positive, remove the two negatives.
2. If the double negative emphasizes the positive, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the double negative simply expresses the positive, remove the two negatives.
 - **For we do *not* have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses** (Hebrews 4:15 ULB)
 - “For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses”
 - **so that they may *not* be *unfruitful*** (Titus 3:14 ULB)
 - “so that they may be fruitful”
2. If the double negative emphasizes the positive, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “certainly.”
 - **Be sure of this—wicked people will *not* go *unpunished*** (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)
 - “Be sure of this—wicked people will *certainly* be punished”
 - **All things were made through him and *without* him there was *not* one thing made that has been made.** (John 1:3 ULB)

- "All things were made through him. He made *absolutely* everything that has been made."

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Verbs*

Doublet

This answers the question: What are doublets and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

A doublet is a pair of words used together that mean nearly the same nearly thing. In some languages people do not use doublets, or they may use them only in certain situations. Translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning.

King David was *old* and *advanced in years*. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

The underlined words mean the same thing. Together they mean “very old.”

Description

We are using the word doublet to refer to two words or very short phrases that mean the same thing and that are used in the same phrase. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Often they are used to emphasize or intensify the idea expressed by the two words.

Reason this is a translation issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but they may do it for a reason that would not fit in a particular verse.

Examples from the Bible

King David was *old* and *advanced in years*. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

This means that he was “very old.”

he attacked two men *more righteous* and *better* than himself (1 Kings 2:32 ULB)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare *false* and *deceptive* words (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

This means that they had prepared “many false things to say.”

as of a lamb *without blemish* and *without spot*. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any blemish—not even one.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using one. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use your culture’s way of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate only one of the words.

- **You have decided to prepare *false* and *deceptive* words** (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

- ”You have decided to prepare *false* things to say.”

2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”

- **King David was *old* and *advanced in years***. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

- ”King David was *very old*.”

3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

- **a lamb *without blemish* and *without spot***. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB) - English can emphasize this with “any” and “at all.”

- ”a lamb *without any blemish at all*”

Ellipsis

This answers the question: What is ellipsis?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*
- *Sentences*

Ellipsis is where a speaker or writer leaves one or more words out of a sentence because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and fill in the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there.

Description

Ellipsis is where one or more words are left out of the sentence because the sentence can be understood without them. The information that is omitted has usually already been stated in a preceding sentence or phrase.

the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous
(Psalm 1:5)

This is ellipsis because “sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous.

Reason this is a translation issue: Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know what the missing information is.

Examples from the Bible

when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”
He said, “Lord, *that I might receive my sight.*” (Luke 18:40-41 ULB)

The man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite by giving Jesus only as much information as necessary. He did not say that he wanted Jesus to heal him, because he knew that Jesus would understand that if he wanted to receive his sight, Jesus would have to heal him.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf *and Sirion like a young ox.* (Psalm 29:6 ULB)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. He did not say that Yahweh makes Sirion skip like a young ox because he knew that his readers could fill in the information themselves.

Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

- **the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor *sinner*s in the assembly of the righteous** (Psalm 1:5)
 - "the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and *sinner*s will not stand in the assembly of the righteous"
- **when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, *that I might receive my sight.*"** (Luke 18:40-41)
 - "when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, I want you to heal me that I might receive my sight.'"
- **He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6)
 - "He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and he makes Sirion skip like a young ox."

Euphemism

This answers the question: What is a Euphemism?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private. Its purpose is to avoid offending the people who hear or read it.

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable. Its purpose is to avoid offending the people who hear or read it.

they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8 ULB)

This means that Saul and his sons were dead. It is euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

Reason this is a translation issue: Readers may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples from the Bible

where there was a cave. Saul went inside to relieve himself (1 Samuel 24:3 ULB)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so he does not say specifically what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

whether we are awake or asleep (1 Thessalonians 5:10 ULB)

Paul refers to being dead as being “asleep” so that instead of thinking that they will never see their loved ones again in this life, his readers will remember that they will see them again when Jesus establishes his kingdom.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Use a euphemism from your own culture.
2. State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use a euphemism from your own culture.

- **where there was a cave. Saul went inside to relieve himself** (1 Samuel 24:3 ULB) - Some languages might use euphemisms like these:
 - “where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet”
 - “where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to dig a hole”
 - “where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to have some time alone”

2. State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

- **whether we are awake or asleep** (1 Thessalonians 5:10 ULB)
 - “whether we are alive or dead”

Order of Events

This answers the question: Why are the events not listed in the order they happened, and how do I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Writing Styles*
- *Verbs*

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just wrote about. This can be confusing to the reader.

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

Reason this is a translation issue: Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples from the Bible

But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. Now it came about, while all the people were being baptized by John, that Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULB)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets... But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." (Joshua 6:8-10 ULB)

This sounds like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2 ULB)

The seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

1. If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.

2. If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See: the section on Aspect on [Verbs](#))
3. If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See: [Verse Bridges](#))

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

- **²⁰ But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. ²¹ Now it came about, while all the people were being baptized by John, that Jesus also was baptized.** (Luke 3:20-21 ULB)
 - ²⁰ "But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. ²¹ *Before John was put in prison, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.*"
- **Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?** (Revelation 5:2 ULB)
 - "Who is worthy to open the scroll *after* breaking its seals?"

2. If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

- **⁸ Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...¹⁰ But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."** (Joshua 6:8-10 ULB)
 - ⁸ "Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...¹⁰ But Joshua *had commanded* the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

3. If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

- **⁸ Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...¹⁰ But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."** (Joshua 6:8-10 ULB)
 - ⁸⁻¹⁰ "Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets..."
- **Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?** (Revelation 5:2 ULB)

- “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”

You may also want to watch the 6 minute video for computer (see <http://youtu.be/Fp9qgVoTwss>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/AljK2GUdXxc>).

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Background Information*
- *Connecting Words*
- *Introduction of a New Event*
- *Verse Bridges*

Exclusive “We”

This answers the question: What is exclusive “we”?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Pronouns*

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an inclusive form that means “I and you” and an exclusive form that means “I and someone else but not you.” Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we” will need to understand what the speaker meant so they can decide which form of “we” to use.

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an **inclusive** form that means “I and you” and an **exclusive** form that means “I and someone else but *not* you.” The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. This is also true for “us,” “our,” “ours,” and “ourselves.” Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these.

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow



highlight shows who the inclusive “we” and the exclusive “we” refer to.



Reason this is a translation issue - The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we”. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we” will need to understand what the speaker meant so they can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples from the Bible

Forgive *us our* sins (Luke 11:4 ULB)

God has no sins to forgive; so languages that have exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the exclusive forms in this verse.

we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us (1 John 1:2 ULB)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the exclusive forms in this verse.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Inclusive “We”*

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

This answers the question: What are assumed knowledge, implicit information, and explicit information?

Assumed knowledge is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. There are two types information.

- **Explicit information** is what the speaker states directly.
- **Implicit information** is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from what he says.

Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know. He normally states this directly. This is **explicit information**.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, although what he says may remind them. This is called **assumed knowledge**.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly is **implicit information**.

Examples from the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes *have holes*, and the birds of the sky *have nests*, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULB)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**. Jesus did not directly say here "I am the Son of Man" but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. (Matthew 11:21, 22 ULB)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the

people he was talking to believed that they were good and did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that because the people he was speaking to did not repent, they would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For *they do not wash their hands when they eat*. (Matthew 15:2 ULB)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. They were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit*

When Masculine Words Include Women

This answers the question: How do I translate “brother” or “he” when it could refer to anyone, male or female?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Pronouns*
- *Generic Noun Phrases*

In some parts of the Bible, the words “men,” “brothers” and “sons” refer only to men. In other parts of the Bible, those words include both men and women. When the writer meant both men and women, translators need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can be used to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says ‘brothers’ when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or women. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

A wise child makes *his* father rejoice
but a foolish child brings grief to *his* mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that.

Examples from the Bible

The wise *man* dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16 ULB)

This verse does not contrast men and women. What it says is true of both men and women.

Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, *he* must deny *himself*, take up *his* cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24-26 ULB)

Jesus was not talking about only men. What he said was true of both men and women.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The underlined words below are specifically about men.

Moses said, 'If a *man* dies, having no children, *his brother* must marry *his* wife and have a child for *his brother*.' (Matthew 22:24 ULB)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

1. Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
2. Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
3. Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

- **The wise *man* dies just like the fool dies.** (Ecclesiastes 2:16 ULB)
 - "The wise *person* dies just like the fool dies."
 - "Wise *people* die just like fools die."

2. Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

- **For we do not want you to be ignorant, *brothers*, about the troubles we had in Asia** (2 Corinthians 1:8) - Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.
 - "For we do not want you to be ignorant, *brothers and sisters*, about the troubles we had in Asia" (2 Corinthians 1:8)

3. Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

- **If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.** (Matthew 16:24 ULB) - English speakers can change the singular pronouns “he” “himself” and “his” to plural pronouns “they” “themselves” and “their” in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.
 - "If people want to follow me, *they* must deny *themselves*, take up *their* cross, and follow me."

Go and Come

This answers the question: What do I do if the word “go” or “come” is confusing in a certain sentence?

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words “go” or “come.” For example when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say “I’m coming”, while Spanish speakers say “I’m going.” You will need to translate the words “go” and “come” (and also “take” and “bring”) in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

Description

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words “go” or “come” and whether to use the words “take” or “bring.” For example when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say “I’m coming”, while Spanish speakers say “I’m going.”

Reason this is a translation issue: If the words “go” and “come” or “take” and “bring” are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving in.

Examples from the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, “*Come*, you and all your household, into the ark (Genesis 7:1 ULB)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you *come* to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULB)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham’s relatives lived far away and he wanted his servant to go to them.

When you have *come* to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULB)

Moses and the people were in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them.

Behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was one of the leaders of the synagogue. Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet and implored him to *come* to his house, (Luke 8:41 ULB)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to go with him to his house.

Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULB would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option.

1. Use the word “go”, “come”, “take” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.
2. Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the words that would be natural in your language.

- **But you will be free from my oath if you *come* to my relatives and they will not give her to you.** (Genesis 24:41 ULB)
 - But you will be free from my oath if you *go* to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

2. Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

- **When you have *come* to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it** (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULB)
 - “When you have *arrived* in the land that Yahweh your God gives you possess it and live in it,”
- **Yahweh said to Noah, “*Come*, you and all your household, into the ark** (Genesis 7:1 ULB)
 - “Yahweh said to Noah, “*Enter*, you and all your household, into the ark”

Hendiadys

This answers the question: What is hendiadys and how can I translate phrases that have it?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*
- *Parts of Speech*

Hendiadys is when a speaker makes a single idea more forceful by connecting two nouns or adjectives with “and” when one of the words actually describes the other.

Description

Hendiadys is when a speaker expresses a single idea by connecting two words with “and” when one of the words actually describes the other.

his own *kingdom and glory* (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)

Though “kingdom” and “glory” are both nouns, “glory” actually tells what kind of kingdom it is: it is a kingdom of glory or a glorious kingdom.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Often hendiadys has an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Some languages do not use hendiadys, so people may not understand that one word describes the other.

Examples from the Bible

for I will give you *words and wisdom* (Luke 21:15 ULB)

“Words” and “wisdom” are nouns, but in this figure of speech “wisdom” describes “words.”

if you are willing and obedient (Isaiah 1:19 ULB)

“Willing” and “obedient” are adjectives, but “willing” describes “obedient.”

Translation Strategies

If the hendiadys would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Substitute one noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
2. Substitute one noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
3. Substitute one adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

4. Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word describes the other.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Substitute one noun with an adjective that means the same thing.

- **for I will give you *words and wisdom*** (Luke 21:15 ULB)
 - "For I will give you *wise words*"
- **that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to *his own kingdom and glory***. (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)
 - "that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to *his own glorious kingdom*."

2. Substitute one noun with a phrase that means the same thing.

- **for I will give you *words and wisdom*** (Luke 21:15 ULB)
 - "For I will give you *words of wisdom*"
- **that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to *his own kingdom and glory***. (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)
 - "that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to *his own kingdom of glory*."

3. Substitute one adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

- **if you are *willing and obedient*** (Isaiah 1:19 ULB)
 - "if you are *willingly obedient*"

4. Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word describes the other.

- **if you are *willing and obedient*** (Isaiah 1:19 ULB) - The adjective "obedient" can be substituted with the verb "obey."
 - "if you *obey willingly*"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Doublet*

Hyperbole

This answers the question: What is hyperbole?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the speaker shows that something is very important by describing it as larger or greater than it really is. He may greatly exaggerate something in order to show his strong feeling or opinion about it, or he may generalize the situation by using words like “every” or “all” to mean “many.”

Description

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the speaker shows that something is very important by describing it as larger or greater than it really is. There are two kinds of hyperbole:

1. Exaggeration: This is when a speaker deliberately describes something by an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it.

Whoever does not *carry his own cross* and come after me cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:27 ULB) - This is an exaggeration. It means that whoever wants to be Jesus’ disciple must be determined to follow him faithfully, even if his enemies were to kill that person.

2. Generalization: This is when a speaker uses words like “every” or “all” to mean something like “very many,” but not “every one.” (Some people may not call generalization like this “hyperbole.”)

Moses was educated in *all the learning of the Egyptians* (Acts 7:22 ULB) - This is a generalization. It means that he had learned much of what the Egyptians knew and taught.

Reason this is a translation issue

If readers do not understand that a statement is a hyperbole, they may either think that something happened that did not happen, or they may think that the speaker or writer was saying something that is not true.

Examples from the Bible

Examples of Exaggeration

If your hand causes you to stumble, *cut it off*. It is better for you to enter into life maimed... (Mark 9:43 ULB)

When Jesus said to cut off your hand, he meant that we should do whatever extreme things we need to do in order not to sin. He used this hyperbole to show how extremely important it is to try to stop sinning.

If anyone comes to me and does not *hate* his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26 ULB)

Because of many other things that Jesus said, we know that his use of the word “hate” here is hyperbole. He meant that we must not love even our own family members more than we love him. We must love him more than we love ourselves or anyone else.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops *as numerous as the sand on the seashore*. (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)

The underlined phrase is an exaggeration. It means that there were many, many soldiers in the Philistine army.

Examples of Generalization

They found him, and they said to him, “*Everyone* is looking for you.” (Mark 1:37 ULB)

The disciples told Jesus that everyone was looking looking for him. They probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for him, but that many people were looking for him, or that all of Jesus closest friends there were looking for him.

But as his anointing teaches you about *all things* and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27 ULB)

This is a generalization. God’s Spirit teaches us about all things that we need to know.

Caution

Do not assume that something is hyperbole just because it seems to be impossible. God does miraculous things.

... they saw Jesus *walking on the sea* and coming near the boat ... (John 6:19 ULB)

This is not hyperbole. Jesus really walked on the water. It is a literal statement.

... for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23 ULB)

The word “all” here is not hyperbole. All humans have sinned. The only human who has never sinned is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here is another option.

1. Express the meaning without the hyperbole. For example “all the people” could be translated as “large crowds of people.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Express the meaning without the hyperbole.

- **If anyone comes to me and does not *hate* his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple.** (Luke 14:26 ULB)
 - “If anyone comes to me and does not *love me much more than* he loves his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple.”
- **The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops *as numerous as the sand on the seashore*.** (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)
 - “The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and *a great number of troops*.”

Hypothetical Situations

This answers the question: What is a hypothetical situation?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Writing Styles*

“If the sun stopped shining...” “What if the sun stopped shining...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining...” “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. These occur often in the Bible. We need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen, and that they’ll understand why the event was imagined.

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions are the phrase that start with “if.”)

- If he had known about the party, he would have come to it. (But he did not come.)
- If he knew about the party, he would be here. (But he is not here.)
- If he knew about the party, he would come to it. (But he probably will not come.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Translators need recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples from the Bible

1. Hypothetical situation in the past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULB)

Here in Matthew 11:21 Jesus said that if the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles yet did not repent. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles and repent.

2. Hypothetical situations in the present

Also, no man puts new wine into old wineskins. If he did that, the new wine would burst the skins, and the wine would be spilled, and the wineskins would be destroyed. (Luke 5:37 ULB)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that people do not mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, *if* he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out? (Matthew 12:11 ULB)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

3. Hypothetical situation in the future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULB)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show about bad those days will be - so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble, so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

4. Expressing emotion about a hypothetical situation

Regrets and wishes are very similar.

The Israelites said to them, “*If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.* For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULB)

Here the Israelites were afraid they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. *I wish that you were either cold or hot!* (Revelation 3:15 ULB)

Jesus' wished that the people were either hot or cold. He was rebuking them.

Translation Strategies

Know how people speaking your language show

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

Also watch the video for computer (see <http://youtu.be/GfFX1wWjJhA>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/jlbY2ikNtHU>).

Idiom

This answers the question: What are idioms and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

An idiom is a certain kind of figure of speech, the kind that usually cannot be correctly understood without being told its true meaning. Every language has them. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg (This means, “You are telling me a lie”)
- Do not push the envelope (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme”)
- This house is under water (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value”)
- We are painting the town red (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely”)

Description

An idiom is a phrase that has a special meaning to the people of the language or culture that uses it. Its meaning may be different from what a person would understand from the meanings of the individual words that form the phrase.

he resolutely *set his face* to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51 ULB)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

I am not worthy that you should *enter under my roof*. (Luke 7:6 ULB)

The words “enter under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

Let these words go deeply into your ears (Luke 9:44 ULB)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is created in a culture probably somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that originally wrote the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.

Examples from the Bible

“Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, ”Look, we are your flesh and bone.”
(1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)

This means, “We and you belong to the same race, the same family.”

The kings of the earth take their stand together (Psalm 2:2 ULB)

This means, “The kings on earth plan together.”

the one who lifts up my head” (Psalm 3:3 ULB)

This means, “the one who helps me.”

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
2. Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.

- **Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your flesh and bone.”** (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)
 - “...Look, we all belong to the same nation.”
- **he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem.** (Luke 9:51 ULB)
 - “He started to travel to Jerusalem, determined to reach it.”
- **I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof.** (Luke 7:6 ULB)
 - “I am not worthy that you should enter my house.”

2. Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

- **Let these words go deeply into your ears** (Luke 9:44 ULB)
 - “Be all ears when I say these words to you.”
- **”My eyes grow dim from grief** (Psalm 6:7ULB)
 - “I am crying my eyes out”

Imperatives - Other Uses

This answers the question: What other uses are there for imperative sentences in the Bible?

In order to understand this, it would be good to read

- [Sentence Types](#)

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Reason this is a translation issue: Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples from the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 2, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land that I tell you to live in. (Genesis 26:2 ULB)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. ("Be clean" means "Be healed.")

"I am willing. *Be clean.*" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3 ULB)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist.

God said, "*Let there be light,*" and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULB)

Imperatives that Function as Conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the *condition* under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen *if* they love wisdom.

do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you;
love her and she will keep you safe. (Proverbs 4:6 ULB)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6 below is teach what people can expect to happen *if* they teach their children the way they should go.

Teach a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULB)

Translation Strategies

1. If people would not use an imperative sentence to cause something to happen, try using a statement instead.
2. If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
3. If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the word “if.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If people would not use an imperative sentence to cause something to happen, try using a statement instead.

- **Be clean.** (Matthew 8:3 ULB)
 - “You are now clean.”
 - “I now cleanse you.”
- **God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.** (Genesis 1:3 ULB)
 - “God said, “There is now light” and there was light.

2. If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

- **God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.** (Genesis 1:3 ULB)
 - “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ so there was light.”

3. If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the word “if.”

**Teach a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.** (Proverbs 22:6 ULB)

”If you teach a child the way he should go,
when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”

Inclusive “We”

This answers the question: What is inclusive “we”?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Pronouns*

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an **inclusive** form that means “I and you” and an **exclusive** form that means “I and someone else but not you.”

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an **inclusive** form that means “I and you” and an **exclusive** form that means “I and someone else but not you.” The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for “us,” “our,” “ours,” and “ourselves.” Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these.

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive “we” and the exclusive “we” refer to.



Reason this is a translation issue - The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we.” Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we” will need understand what the speaker meant so they can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples from the Bible

... the shepherds said one to each other, “Let *us* now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to *us*.” (Luke 2:15 ULB)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said “us”, they were including the people they were speaking to - one another.

Now it happened on one of those days that Jesus and his disciples entered into a boat, and he said to them, “Let *us* go over to the other side of the lake.” Then they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULB)

When Jesus said “us,” he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to.

Watch the video for computer (see <http://youtu.be/PrMC2jdqY0A>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/2K2gFIPMFVk>).

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Exclusive “We”*

Irony

This answers the question: What is irony and how can I translate it?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which a person pretends to say what he really believes, when in fact he is saying what someone else believes, and he does it in a way that shows that other belief is wrong. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief is foolish. It is often humorous.

Jesus answered them, "People who are in good health do not need a physician, only people who are sick need one. I did not come to call righteous people to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31-32 ULB)

When Jesus spoke of "righteous people," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous. He was speaking to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous and who were criticizing him for welcoming sinners. Jesus implied that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

Reason this is a translation issue

- If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will not realize that the speaker is ridiculing the idea.

Examples from the Bible

After blindfolding him, they asked him, saying, "*Prophecy! Who is the one who hit you?*" (Luke 22:64ULB)

The fact that the soldiers were beating Jesus shows us that they did not believe that he was a prophet. They knew that other people thought that Jesus was a prophet, and they may have also thought that Jesus himself claimed to be a prophet. When they told him to prophesy, they were using irony. They were mocking him and implying that if he really was a prophet, then he should be able to tell who hit him without seeing them.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. "Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled." (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had any knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not even speak, but he did this to mock the idols and rebuke the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
 Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
"the number of your days is so large!" (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two underlined phrase above emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many many years later.

Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here is another strategy.

1. Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
2. Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. The actual meaning of the irony is *not* found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

- **After blindfolding him, they asked him, saying, "Prophesy! Who is the one who hit you?"** (Luke 22:64 ULB)
 - "After blindfolding him, they asked him, saying, "You call yourself a prophet. Then prophesy! Who hit you?"
 - "After blindfolding him, they said to him, "Prophesy! If you were really a prophet, you would be able to tell us who hit you."
- **I did not come to call *righteous people* to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.** (Luke 5:32 ULB)
 - "I did not come to call *people who think that they are righteous* to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance."

2. Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

- **After blindfolding him, they asked him, saying, "Prophesy! Who is the one who hit you?"** (Luke 22:64 ULB)

- “After blindfolding him, they said to him, *”You are not a prophet because you cannot even tell us who struck you!”* ”
- **“Present your case,” says Yahweh; “present your best arguments for your idols,” says the King of Jacob. “Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.”** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)
 - ” ‘Present your case,’ says Yahweh; ‘present your best arguments for your idols,’ says the King of Jacob. Your idols *cannot bring us their own arguments or even come forward to declare to us what will happen*. We cannot hear them because *they cannot speak* to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.”

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?

Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;

the number of your days is so large!” (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)

- ”Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? *You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation!*”

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Litotes*

Litotes

This answers the question: What is litotes?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Litotes is a strong statement made by negative phrases to strengthen a positive meaning. It is used to show that the opposite idea is not true.

Description

Litotes is a strong statement made by negative phrases to strengthen a positive meaning. It is used to show that the opposite idea is not true.

Reason this is a translation issue

People who speak some languages do not use litotes and would fail to understand that the statement is strengthened. They might think that it is weakened or even canceled.

Examples from the Bible

For you yourselves know, brothers, our coming to you was *not useless*, (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULB)

By using litotes, Paul emphasized that his visit with them was very worthwhile.

All things were made through him. *Without him was not one thing* made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULB)

By using litotes John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything.

Now when it became day, there was *no small excitement* among the soldiers, regarding what had happened to Peter. (Acts 12:18 ULB)

By using litotes, Luke emphasized that there was a lot of excitement or anxiety among the soldiers about what happened to Peter. (Peter had been in prison, and even though there were soldiers guarding him, he escaped when an angel let him out. So they were very concerned.)

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are *not the least* among the leaders of Judah,
for from you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel. (Matthew 2:6 ULB)

By using litotes, the prophet emphasized that Bethlehem would be a very important city.

Translation Strategies

If the litotes would be understood correctly, consider using it.

1. If the meaning would not be clear, say in a strong way what *is* true.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the meaning would not be clear, say in a strong way what *is* true.

- **For you yourselves know, brothers, our coming to you was *not useless*,** (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULB)
 - "For you yourselves know, brothers, our visit to you *did much good*."
- **Now when it became day, there was *no small excitement* among the soldiers, regarding what had happened to Peter.** (Acts 12:18 ULB)
 - "Now when it became day, there was *great excitement* among the soldiers, regarding what had happened to Peter."
 - "Now when it became day, the soldiers were *very concerned* because of what had happened to Peter."

Merism

This answers the question: What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it.

Description

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8, ULB)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (Revelation 22:13, ULB)

“Alpha and Omega” is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

I praise you, Father, Lord of *heaven and earth*, (Matthew 11:25 ULB)

“Heaven and earth” is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some readers may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples from the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULB)

This underlined phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

He will bless those who honor him, both *young and old*. (Psalm 115:13)

The underlined phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
2. Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

- **I praise you, Father, Lord of *heaven and earth*** (Matthew 11:25 ULB)
 - "I praise you, Father, Lord of *everything*"
- ***From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised.*** (Psalm 113:3 ULB)
 - "*In all places*, people should praise Yahweh."

2. Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

- **I praise you, Father, Lord of *heaven and earth*** (Matthew 11:25 ULB)
 - "I praise you, Father, Lord of *everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth*"
- **He will bless those who honor him, both *young and old*.** (Psalm 115:13 ULB)
 - "He will bless *all those* who honor him, regardless of whether they are *young or old*."

Metaphor

This answers the question: What is a metaphor and how can I translate a sentence that has one?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- [Figures of Speech](#)
- [Simile](#)

Description

A metaphor is the use of words to speak of one thing as if it were a different thing. Sometimes a speaker does this in ways that are very common in the language. At other times, a speaker does this in ways that are less common in the language and that might even be unique.

1. First we will discuss very common metaphors.

The metaphors that are very common in a language are usually not very vivid. They may even be “dead.” Examples in English are “table leg,” “family tree,” and “the price of food is going up.” Examples in biblical languages are “hand” to mean “power,” “face” to mean “presence,” and “clothing” to mean emotions or moral qualities.

Metaphors like these are in constant use in the world’s languages, because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, languages speak of abstract qualities, such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities, as if they were objects that can be seen or held, or as if they were body parts, or as if they were events that you can watch happen.

When these metaphors are used in their normal ways, the speaker and audience do not normally even regard them as figurative language. This is why, for example, it would be wrong to translate the English expression, “The price of petrol is going up” into another language in a way that would draw undeserved attention to it, because English speakers do not view it as a vivid expression, that is, as an unusual expression that carries meaning in an unusual manner.

For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor, please see [Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns](#) and the pages it will direct you to.

2. Next we will discuss the less common metaphors, metaphors that are sometimes even unique in a language.

The speaker usually produces metaphors of this kind in order to emphasize the importance of what he is talking about. For example,

For you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.
(Malachi 4:2 ULB)

Here God speaks about his salvation as if it were the sun rising to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. And he speaks of the sun’s rays as if they were wings. Also, he speaks of these wings as if they were bringing medicine that would heal his people.

We call this kind of metaphor “live.” It is unique in the biblical languages, which means that it is very memorable.

Parts of a Metaphor

When talking about metaphors, it can be helpful to talk about their parts. The thing someone speaks of is called the **topic**. The thing he calls it is the **image**. The way that they are similar is the **point of comparison**.

In the metaphor below, the speaker describes the woman he loves as a rose. The woman (his “love”) is the topic and the red rose is the image. Both are beautiful and delicate.

- My love is a red, red rose.

1. Sometimes the **topic** and the **image** are both stated clearly.

Jesus said to them. *“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will not hunger, and he who believes on me will never thirst.”* (John 6:35 ULB)

Jesus called himself the bread of life. The topic is “I” and the image is “bread.” Bread is a food that people ate all the time. Just as people need to eat food in order to have physical life, people need to trust in Jesus in order to have spiritual life.

2. Sometimes only the **image** is stated clearly.

Produce *fruits* that are worthy of repentance (Luke 3:8 ULB)

The image here is “fruits”. The topic is not stated, but it is actions or behavior. Trees can produce good fruit or bad fruit, and people can produce good behavior or bad behavior. Fruits that are worthy of repentance are good behavior that is appropriate for people who have repented.

Purposes of this second kind of metaphor

- One purpose of metaphor is to teach people about something that they do not know (the **topic**) by showing that it is like something that they already know (the **image**).
- Another purpose is to emphasize that something has a particular quality or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about one thing as they would feel toward another.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not realize that a word is being used as an image in a metaphor.
- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know how the topic and the image are alike.

Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of a metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.

- Do not make the meaning of a metaphor more clear to the target audience than it was to the original audience.

Examples from the Bible

And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the *clay*. You are our *potter*; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)

The example above has two metaphors. The topics are “we” and “you” and the images are “clay and ”potter.” Just as a potter takes clay and forms a jar or dish out of it, God makes us into what he wants us to be.

Jesus said to them, ”Take heed and beware of *the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*” The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, “It is because we took no bread.” (Matthew 16:6-7 ULB)

Jesus used a metaphor, but his disciples did not realize it. When he said “yeast,” they thought he was talking about bread, but “yeast” was the image in his metaphor about the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples did not understand what Jesus meant, it would not be good to state clearly here what Jesus meant.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the metaphor in the same way that the original readers would have understood it, go ahead and use it. If not, here are some other strategies.

1. If the metaphor is common and seems to be a normal way to say something in the biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.
2. If the target audience would think that the phrase should be understood literally, change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.”
3. If the target audience would not know the **image**, see [Translate Unknowns](#) for ideas on how to translate that image.
4. If the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
5. Or, if the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, simply state the truth that the metaphor was used to communicate.
6. If the target audience would not know what the **topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)
7. If the target audience would not know how the topic is like the image, state it clearly.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the metaphor is common and seems to be a normal way to say something in the biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.

- **For after David had in his own generation served the desires of God, *he fell asleep*, was laid with his fathers, and saw decay,** (Acts 13:36 ULB)

- "For after David had in his own generation served the desires of God, *he died*, was laid with his fathers, and saw decay."

2. If the target audience would think that the phrase should be understood literally, change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding "like" or "as."

- **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the *clay*. You are our *potter*; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)

- "And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are *like* clay. You are *like* a potter; and we all are the work of your hand."

3. If the target audience would not know the **image**, see [Translate Unknowns](#) for ideas on how to translate that image.

- **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to *kick a goad*.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)

- "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against a pointed stick."

4. If the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.

- **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the *clay*. You are our *potter*; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)

- "And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the *wood*. You are our *carver*; and we all are the work of your hand."

- "And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the *string*. You are the *weaver*; and we all are the work of your hand."

5. Or, if the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, simply state the truth that the metaphor was used to communicate.

- **I will make you become *fishers of men*.** (Mark 1:17 ULB)

- "I will make you become *people who gather men*."

- "Now you gather fish. I will make you *gather people*."

6. If the target audience would not know what the **topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)

- **Yahweh lives; may *my rock* be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)

- "Yahweh lives; *He is my rock*. May he be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.

7. If the target audience would not know how the topic is like the image, state it clearly.

- **Yahweh lives; may *my rock* be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)
 - "Yahweh lives; may he be praised because like a huge rock, *he shields me from my enemies*. May the God of my salvation be exalted."
- **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you *to kick a goad*.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)
 - "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? You *fight against me and hurt yourself* like an ox that kicks against its owner's pointed stick."

To learn more about common metaphors read:

- [Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns](#)

Metonymy

This answers the question: What is a metonymy?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Many times the Bible uses metonymy. If you do not recognize it as a metonymy you will not understand the passage or worse yet, get the wrong understanding of the passage.

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing or idea is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A **metonym** is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something it is associated with.

and *the blood* of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 ULB)

The blood represents Christ's death.

He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "*This cup* is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. (Luke 22:20 ULB)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

- as a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a concrete object associated with it.

Reason this is a translation issue

- If a metonym is used, people need to be able to understand what it represents.

Examples from the Bible

The Lord God will give him *the throne* of his father, David. (Luke 1:32 ULB)

A throne represents the authority of a king. Throne is a metonym for "kingly authority," "kingship" or, "reign." This means that God would make him become the king who was to follow King David.

Immediately his mouth was opened (Luke 1:64 ULB)

The mouth here represents the power to speak. This means that he was able to talk again.

who warned you to flee from *the wrath* that is coming? (Luke 3:7 ULB)

The word “wrath” or “anger” is a metonym for “punishment.” God was extremely angry with the people and, as a result, he would punish them.

Translation Strategies

If people would easily understand the metonym, consider using it. Otherwise, here is an option.

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
2. Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.

- **He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, “*This cup* is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.** (Luke 22:20 ULB)
 - “He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, “*The wine in this cup* is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

2. Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.

- **The Lord God will give him *the throne* of his father, David.** (Luke 1:32 ULB)
 - “The Lord God will give him *the kingly authority* of his father, David.”
 - “The Lord God will *make him king* like his ancestor, King David.”
- **who warned you to flee from *the wrath* to come?** (Luke 3:7 ULB)
 - “who warned you to flee from God’s coming *punishment*?”

To learn about some common metonymies, we suggest you read:

- [Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies](#)

Nominal Adjectives

This answers the question: How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*

Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds, (2 Samuel 12:2 ULB)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last; (Job 15:29 ULB)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

...the rich must not give more than the half shekel, and *the poor* must not give less.
(Exodus 30:15 ULB)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use adjectives this way.
- Readers may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about many people whom the adjective describes.

Examples from the Bible

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of *the righteous*. (Psalms 125:3 ULB)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are *the meek* (Matthew 5:5 ULB)

“The meek” here are people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

1. Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.
 - **The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of *the righteous*.** (Psalms 125:3 ULB)
 - "The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of *righteous people*."
 - **Blessed are *the meek*** (Matthew 5:5 ULB)
 - "Blessed are *people who are meek*"

Parallelism

This answers the question: What is parallelism?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Description

In **parallelism** two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. There are different kinds of parallelism. Some of them are the following:

1. The second clause or phrase means the same as the first.
2. The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
3. The second completes what is said in the first.
4. The second says something that contrasts with the first.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages would not use the kind of parallelism in which the two phrases mean the same thing. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or they think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning.

Examples from the Bible

1. The second clause or phrase means the same as the first.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULB)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything.

2. The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.

The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
keeping watch over the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3 ULB)

The second line tells more specifically what Yahweh watches.

3. The second completes what is said in the first.

I lift up my voice to Yahweh,
and he answers me from his holy hill. (Psalm 3:4 ULB)

The second line tells what Yahweh does in response to what the person does in the first clause.

4. The second says something that contrasts with the first.

For Yahweh approves of the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish. (Psalm 1:6 ULB)

This contrasts what happens to righteous people with what happens to wicked people.

A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1 ULB)

This contrasts what happens when someone gives a gentle answer with what happens when someone says something harsh.

Translation Strategies

1. For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases.
2. When the two clauses or phrases mean the same thing, some languages would not translate them both. (See [Parallelism with the Same Meaning](#))

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(See [Parallelism with the Same Meaning](#))

Next we recommend you learn about:

- [Parallelism with the Same Meaning](#)

Predictive Past

This page answers the question: What is the predictive past?

In order to understand this page, it would be good to read

- [Figures of Speech](#)
- [Verbs](#)

Description

The predictive past is a figure of speech that uses the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is sometimes done in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is also called the prophetic perfect.

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding;
their leaders go hungry, and their masses have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULB)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason this is a translation issue: Readers who are not aware of the past tense being used in prophecy to refer to future events may find it confusing.

Examples from the Bible

Now all the entrances to Jericho were closed because of the army of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have handed over to you Jericho, its king, and its trained soldiers." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULB)

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given;
and the rule will be on his shoulder; (Isaiah 9:6 ULB)

In the examples above God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

And about these people also Enoch, the seventh in line from Adam, foretold, saying,
"Look, the Lord came with tens of thousands of his holy ones, (Jude 1:14 ULB)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen in the future, but he used the past tense when he said "the Lord came."

Translation Strategies

If the past tense would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option.

1. Use the future tense to refer to future events.
2. If it refers to something in the immediate future use a form that would show that.
3. Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the future tense to refer to future events.

- **For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given;** (Isaiah 9:6a ULB)

- "For to us a child will be born, to us a son will be given;

2. If it refers to something that would happen very soon, use a form that shows that.

- **Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have handed over to you Jericho, its king, and its trained soldiers."** (Joshua 6:2 ULB)

- Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I am about to hand over to you Jericho, its king, and its trained soldiers."

3. Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

- **Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have handed over to you Jericho, its king, and its trained soldiers."** (Joshua 6:2 ULB)

- Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I am handing over to you Jericho, its king, and its trained soldiers."

Personification

This answers the question: What is personification?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often speak this way because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see, such as wisdom and sin.

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

sin crouches at the door (Genesis 4:7 ULB)

Some languages do not use personification, and some languages use it only in certain situations.

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see, such as wisdom, sin, and wind. For example:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

sin crouches at the door (Genesis 4:7 ULB)

People also do this because it is sometimes easier to talk about relationships between people and other people than about relationships between people and non-human things, such as wealth.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples from the Bible

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom call out? Does not Understanding raise her voice? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they are a woman who calls out to teach people. They are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would not be understood clearly, here are some strategies for dealing with it.

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.
2. Use the words “like” or “as” to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.
3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.

- **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - God speaks of sin as a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

- “sin is at your door, waiting to attack you”

2. Use the words “like” or “as” to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.

- **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - This can be translated with the word “as.”

- “sin is about to destroy you, just *as* a wild animal could harm a person.”

3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

- **even the winds and the sea obey him** (Matthew 8:27 ULB) - The men speak of the wind and the sea as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

- “He even controls the winds and the sea.”

Note: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had human characteristics).

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Apostrophe*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns*

Pronouns

This answers the question: What are pronouns and what kinds of pronouns are in some languages?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*

Pronouns are words that people use instead of a noun to refer to someone or something. Some examples are I, you, he, it, this, that, himself, someone.

Description

Pronouns are words that people use instead of a noun to refer to someone or something. There are six different types of pronouns.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people or things and show if the speaker is referring to himself, the person he is speaking to, or someone or something else. The following are kinds of information that personal pronouns may give.

Person

- First Person - The speaker and possibly others (I, we)
 - Inclusive “We”
 - Exclusive “We”
- Second Person - The person or people that the speaker is talking to and possibly others (you)
 - Forms of You
- Third Person - Someone or something other than the speaker and those he is talking to (he, she, it, they)

Number

- Singular - one (I, you, he, she, it)
- Plural - more than one (we, you, they)
- Dual - two (Some languages have pronouns for specifically two people or two things.)

Gender

- Masculine - he
- Feminine - she
- Neuter - it

Relationship to other words in the sentence

- Subject of the verb: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
- Object of the verb or preposition: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
- Possessor with a noun: my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Possessor without a noun: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs

Other Types of pronouns

Reflexive Pronouns refer to another noun or pronoun in the same sentence: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

- **John saw *himself* in the mirror.** - The word “himself” refers to John.

Interrogative Pronouns are used to make a question that needs more than just a yes or no for an answer: who, whom, whose, what, where, when, why, how

- ***Who* built the house?**

Relative Pronouns mark a relative clause: that, which, who, whom, where, when

- **I saw the house *that* John built.** The clause “that John built” tells which house I saw.
- **I saw the man *who* built the house.** The clause “who built the house” tells which man I saw.

Demonstrative Pronouns are used to draw attention to someone or something and to show distance from the speaker or something else: this, these, that, those.

- **Have you seen *this* here?**
- **Who is *that* over there?**

Indefinite pronouns are used when no particular noun is being referred to: any, anyone, someone, anything, something, some. Sometimes a personal pronoun is used: you, they, he or it.

- **He does not want to talk to *anyone*.**
- ***Someone* fixed it, but I do not know *who*.**

Direct and Indirect Quotations

This answers the question: What are direct and indirect quotations?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Pronouns*
- *Verbs*
- *Quotations and Quote Margins*

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotation and indirect quotation.

- Direct Quotation: John said, “I do not know at what time I will arrive.”
- Indirect Quotation: John said that he did not know what time he would arrive.

When translating a quotation, translators need to decide whether to translate it as a direct quotation or an indirect quotation.

Watch the video for computer (see <http://youtu.be/oe9Pbk8pFTw>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/9ZKDMCWuCiw>).

Description

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by direct or indirect quotations.

A **direct quotation** occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker’s exact words. In the example below, John would have said “I” when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is telling about John John saying this, uses the word in the quotation “I” to refer to John.

- John said, “*I* do not know at what time *I* will arrive.”

An **indirect quotation** occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead of from the original person’s point of view. This kind of quotation usually features changes in pronouns, and it often features changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as “he” in the quotation and uses the word “would,” which is the past tense of “will.”

- John said that *he* did not know what time *he* would arrive.

Examples from the Bible

The verses in the examples below have both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have underlined the quotations.

He instructed him to tell no one, but told him, “Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULB)

- Indirect quote: He instructed him *to tell no one*,
- Direct quote: but told him, *”Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest...”*

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them and said, “The kingdom of God is not something that can be observed. Neither will they say, ‘Look here!’ or, ‘Look there!’ because the kingdom of God is among you.” (Luke 17:20-21 ULB)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees *when the kingdom of God would come*,
- Direct quote: Jesus answered them and said, *”The kingdom of God is not something that can be observed. Neither will they say, ‘Look here!’ or, ‘Look there!’ because the kingdom of God is among you.”*
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, *’Look here!’* or, *’Look there!’*

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it.

1. If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
2. If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

- **He instructed him to tell no one, but told him, *”Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”*** (Luke 5:14 ULB)
 - He instructed him to tell no one, but *to go on his way, and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”*

2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

- **He instructed him *to tell no one*, but told him, *“Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”*** (Luke 5:14 ULB)
 - He told him *”Tell no one. But go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”*

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Quotes within Quotes*

Quotes within Quotes

This answers the question: What is a quote within a quote, and how can I help the readers understand who is saying what?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Direct and Indirect Quotations*

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to understand who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

Description

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When a quote has quotes within it, we can talk about it having layers of quotation, and each of the quotes is a layer. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to know who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

Reasons this is a translation issue

1. When there is a quote within a quote, the listener needs to know who the pronouns refer to. For example if a quote that is inside a quote has the word “I,” the listener needs to know whether “I” refers to the speaker of the inner quote or the outer quote.
2. Some languages make this clear by using different kinds of quotes when there are quotes within quotes. They may use direct quotes for some and indirect quotes for others.
3. Some languages do not use indirect quotes.

Examples from the Bible

A quotation with only one layer

But Paul said, “I was born a Roman citizen.” (Acts 22:28 ULB)

Quotations with two layers

Jesus answered and said to them, “Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name. They will say, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will lead many astray.
Matthew 24:4-5 ULB

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to his disciples. The second layer is what other people will say.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king.” (John 18:37 ULB)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to Pilate. The second layer is what Pilate said about Jesus.

A quotation with three layers

Abraham said, “... I said to her, ‘You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, *“He is my brother.”*’ ” (Genesis 20:10-13 ULB)

The outermost layer is what Abraham said to Abimelech. The second layer is what Abraham had told his wife. The third layer is what he wanted his wife to say. (We have underlined the third layer.)

A quotation with four layers

They said to him, “A man came to meet us who said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Yahweh says this: *‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.’*” ’ ” (2 Kings 1:6 ULB)

The outermost layer is what the messengers said to the king. The second layer is what the man who had met the messengers told them. The third is what that man wanted the messengers to say to the king. The fourth is what Yahweh said. (We have underlined the fourth layer.)

Translation Strategies

Some languages use only direct quotes. Other languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes. In those languages it might sound strange and perhaps even be confusing if there are many layers of direct quotes.

1. Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes.
2. Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes. In the example below we have underlined the indirect quotes in the ULB and the quotes that we have changed to direct quotes below it.

- **Festus presented Paul’s case to the king; he said, “A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. ...I was puzzled about how to investigate this matter, and I asked him *if he would go to Jerusalem to be judged there about these things.* But when Paul called *to be kept under guard for the Emperor’s decision, I ordered him to be kept until I send him to Caesar.*”** (Acts 25:14-21 ULB)

- Festus presented Paul's case to the king; he said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. ...I was puzzled about how to investigate this matter, and I asked him *'Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged there about these things?'* But when Paul said *'I want to be kept under guard for the Emperor's decision,'* I told the guard *'Keep him under guard until I send him to Caesar.'*"

2. Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. In English the word "that" can come before indirect quotes. It is underlined in the examples below. The pronouns that changed because of the indirect quote are also underlined.

- **Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.' " (Exodus 16:11-12 ULB)

 - Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them *that* at twilight *they* will eat meat, and in the morning *they* will be filled with bread. Then *they* will know that I am the Lord their God."**
- **They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.' " ' ' " (2 Kings 1:6 ULB)**
 - They told him *that* a man had come to meet *them* who said to *them*, "Go back to the king who sent you, and tell him *that* Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.' "

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Quote Markings*

Reflexive Pronouns

This answers the question: What are reflexive pronouns?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Pronouns*
- *Sentences*

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. This page will help you understand how English shows this and will help you to see how your language handles this.

Description

Reflexive pronouns are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, and themselves.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Languages have different ways of referring to someone or something more than once in a sentence.
- The reflexive pronouns in English have other functions.

Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- to show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- to show that someone did something alone
- to show that someone or something was alone

Examples from the Bible

1. Reflexive pronouns used to that show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence

If *I* should testify about *myself* alone, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31 ULB)

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and *many* went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover in order to purify *themselves*. (John 11:55 ULB)

2. Reflexive pronouns used to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were (John 4:2 ULB)

So they left the crowd, taking *Jesus* with them, since he was already in the boat. Other boats were also with him. And a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full. But *Jesus himself* was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. (Mark 4:36-38 ULB)

3. Reflexive pronouns used to show that someone did something alone

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain *by himself*. (John 6:15 ULB)

4. Reflexive pronouns used to show that someone or something was alone

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. *It* was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up in its place *by itself*. (John 20:6-7 ULB)

Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

1. In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.
2. In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.
3. In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.
4. In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”
5. In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

- **If I should testify about *myself* alone, my testimony would not be true.** (John 5:31)
 - “If I should *self-testify* alone, my testimony would not be true.”
- **Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover in order to *purify themselves*.** (John 11:55)
 - “Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover in order to *self-purify*.”

2. In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

- **He himself took our sickness and bore our diseases.** (Matthew 8:17 ULB)

- "It was *he who* took our sickness and bore our diseases."

- **Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were.** (John 4:2)

- "It was *not Jesus who* was baptizing, but his disciples were."

3. In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. English adds the reflexive pronoun.

- **Now Jesus said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do.** (John 6:6)

4. In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like "alone."

- **When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain by himself.** (John 6:15)

- "When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again *alone* up the mountain."

5. In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

- **He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up in its place by itself.** (John 20:6-7 ULB)

- "He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up and lying *in a different place*."

Rhetorical Question

This answers the question: What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*
- *Sentences*

A rhetorical question is a question to which the speaker does not expect an answer because he is not looking for information. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express sarcasm or to rebuke or scold the hearer. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other reasons as well.

Description

A rhetorical question is a question to which the speaker does not expect an answer because he is not looking for information. Speakers often use rhetorical questions to rebuke or scold people.

Those who stood by said, *Is this how you insult God's high priest?*" (Acts 23:4 ULB) The people did not ask this question in order to get information. Rather they used it to scold Paul because they did not think he should have spoken as he did to the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. Some of the purposes of these rhetorical questions are to remind people of something that they already know, to express strong emotion, to say something in a strong way, or to introduce something they want to talk about.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some readers may think that a question is a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions only for scolding.
- Some readers might think that the purpose of a question is something other than what it really is.

Examples from the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that since he was the king of Israel he should feel free to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a woman would never forget her jewelry and veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him, who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11 ULB)

Job used the question above to show how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULB)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat.

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULB)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed which a man took and threw into his garden... (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was going to compare the kingdom of God to something.

Translation Strategies

Be sure you know that you are dealing with a rhetorical question and not an information question. Then be sure you know what the purpose of the rhetorical question is. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

1. Add the answer after the question.
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the answer after the question.

- **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
 - *Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Of course not! Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!*
- **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
 - *”Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? None of you would do that!”*

2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.

- **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed...** (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)
 - *“This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed...”*
- **Is this how you insult God’s high priest?** (Acts 23:4 ULB)
 - *You should not insult God’s high priest!”*
- **Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?** (Job 3:11 ULB)
 - *I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!”*
- **And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** (Luke 1:43 ULB)
 - *“How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!”*

3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.

- **Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?** (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)
 - *”You still rule the kingdom of Israel, don’t you?”*

Sentence Structure

This answers the question: What are the parts of a sentence?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*

Description

The simplest sentence structure in English includes a **subject** and an **action** word:

- The boy ran.

Subject

The **subject** is who or what the sentence is about. In these examples, the subject is underlined:

- The boy is running.
- He is running.

Subjects are typically noun phrases or pronouns. (See: [Parts of Speech](#)) In the examples above, “the boy” is a noun phrase that has the noun ‘boy,’ and “he” is a pronoun.

When the sentence is a command, it usually does not have a subject pronoun. People understand that the subject is “you.”

- Close the door.

Predicate

The predicate is the part of a sentence that tells something about the subject. It usually has a verb. (See: [Verbs](#)) In the sentences below, the subjects are “the man” and “he.” The predicates are underlined and the verbs are in bold.

- The man is **strong**.
- He worked **hard**.
- He made **a garden**.

Compound Sentences

A sentence can be made up of more than one sentence. Each of the two lines below has a subject and a predicate and is a full sentence.

- He planted the yams.
- His wife planted the corn.

The compound sentence below has the two sentences above. In English, compound sentences are joined with a conjunction such as “and,” “but,” or “or”.

- He planted the yams *and* his wife planted the corn.

Clauses

Sentences can also have clauses and other phrases. Clauses are like sentences because they have a subject and a predicate, but they do not normally occur by themselves. Here are some examples of clauses. The subjects are in bold, and the predicates are underlined.

- when **the corn** was ready
- after **she** picked it
- because **it** tasted so good

Clauses are usually only part of a sentence. The clauses are underlined in the sentences below.

- When the corn was ready, she picked it.
- After she picked it, she carried it home and cooked it.
- Then she and her husband ate it all, because it tasted so good.

The following phrases can be a whole sentence.

- She picked it.
- She carried it home and cooked it.
- Then she and her husband ate it all.

Note: We are using the word **clause** for ‘dependent clause’ and **sentence** for ‘independent clause.’

Relative Clauses

In some languages, clauses can be used with a noun that is part of a sentence. These are called **relative clauses**.

In the sentence below, “the corn that was ready” is part of the predicate of the whole sentence. The relative clause “that he had planted” is used with the noun “corn” to tell which corn she picked.

- His wife picked **the corn** *that was ready*.

In the sentence below “his mother, who was very annoyed” is part of the predicate of the whole sentence. The relative clause “who was very annoyed” is used with the noun “mother” to tell how her mother felt when she did not get any corn.

- She did not give any corn to **her mother**, *who was very annoyed*.

Translation Issues

- Languages have different orders for the parts of a sentence.
- Some languages do not have relative clauses, or they use them in a limited way. (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Next we suggest you read

- [Word Order](#)
- [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#)

Simile

This answers the question: What is a simile?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. One is said to be “like” the other. It focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as” or “than.”

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. It focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as” or “than.”

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were worried and confused, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36 ULB)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves*, so be as wise *as serpents* and harmless *as doves*. (Matthew 10:16 ULB)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep. Jesus’ enemies would attack his disciples.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper *than any two-edged sword*. (Hebrews 4:12 ULB)

God’s word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person’s flesh. God’s word is very effective in showing what is in a person’s heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people’s attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with the item that something is compared to.

Examples from the Bible

Suffer hardship with me, *as a good soldier of Christ Jesus*. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULB)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

for as the lightning appears when it flashes from one part of the sky to another part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in his day. (Luke 17:24 ULB)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But from the context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lightning flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

1. If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.
2. If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible.
3. Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1 If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves***, (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.
 - "See, I send you out among wicked people and you will be in danger from them as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves."
- **For the word of God is living and active and sharper *than any two-edged sword***. (Hebrews 4:12 ULB)
 - "For the word of God is living and active and *more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword*"

2. If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves***, (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.
 - "See, I send you out *as chickens in the midst of wild dogs*,"
- **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a mother closely watches over her infants, but you refused!
- **If you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard**, (Matthew 17:20 ULB)
 - "If you have faith even as small as a tiny seed"

3. Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves***, (Matthew 10:16 ULB)
 - "See, I send you out and people will want to harm you."
- **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - "How often I wanted to protect you, but you refused!"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Metaphor*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns*

Synecdoche

This answers the question: What does the word synecdoche mean?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*

Synecdoche is when a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole or uses the whole to refer to a part.

Description

Synecdoche is when a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole or uses the whole to refer to a part.

My soul exalts the Lord. (Luke 1:46 ULB)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul”, the part of herself that has emotions, to refer to her whole self.

the Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful ...?”
(Mark 2:24 ULB)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some readers may understand the words literally.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example from the Bible

I looked on all the deeds that *my hands* had accomplished (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person, because clearly the legs and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

- **My soul exalts the Lord.** (Luke 1:46 ULB)
 - "I exalt the Lord."
- **the Pharisees said to him** (Mark 2:24 ULB)
 - "a representative of the Pharisees said to him"
- **I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished** (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)
 - "I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Metonymy*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies*

Forms of You

This answers the question: What are the different forms of you?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Forms of 'You' - Singular*
- *Forms of 'You' - Dual/Plural*

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some have other forms that refer to three or four people.

Watch the video for Singular, Dual, and Plural “you” for computer (see <http://youtu.be/cPtjzJ2Advk>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/AVITfDEk8nc>).

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

- *Forms of 'You' - Singular to a Crowd*

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the **formal** form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend. Watch the video on Formal and Informal ‘You’ on the **computer** or on the **tablet/phone**. For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- *Forms of “You” - Formal or Informal*

Biblical Distance

This answers the question: How can I translate the lengths and distances that are in the Bible?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Decimal Numbers*
- *Fractions*

Description

The following terms are the most common measures for distance or length that were originally used in the Bible. Most of these are based on the sizes of the hand and forearm.

- The **handbreadth** was the width of the palm of a man's hand.
- The **span** or handspan was the width of a man's hand with the fingers spread out.
- The **cubit** was the length of a man's forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.
- The **"long" cubit** is used only in Ezekiel 40-48. It is the length of a normal cubit plus a span.
- The **stadium** (plural, **stadia**) referred to a certain footrace that was about 185 meters in length. Some older English versions translated this word as "furlong", which referred to the average length of a plowed field.

Original Measure	Centimeters	Meters
handbreadth	8 centimeters	.08 meters
span	23 centimeters	.23 meters
cubit	46 centimeters	.46 meters
"long" cubit	54 centimeters	.54 meters
stadia	-	185 meters

Translation Principles

1. The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
2. Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
3. Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

Translation Strategies

1. Use the measurements from the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))

2. Use the metric measurements given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 25:10 below.

- **They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half.** (Exodus 25:10 ULB)

1. Use the measurements given in the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))

- "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be *two and a half kubits*; its width will be *one kubit and a half*; and its height will be *one kubit and a half*."

2. Use the metric measurements given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

- "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be *one meter*; its width will be *0.7 meter*; and its height will be *0.7 meter*."

3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement. For example, if you measure things using the standard foot length, you could translate it as below.

- "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be *3 3/4 feet*; its width will be *2 1/4 feet*; and its height will be *2 1/4 feet*."

4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

- "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be *two and a half cubits (one meter)*; its width will be *one cubit and a half (0.7 meter)*; and its height will be *one cubit and a half (0.7 meter)*."

5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULB measurements in notes.

- "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be *one meter*¹; its width will be *0.7 meter*²; and its height will be *0.7 meter*." The footnotes would look like:
 - ^[1] one meter two and a half cubits
 - ^[2] one cubit and a half

Biblical Volume

This answers the question: How can I translate the measures of volume that are in the Bible?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Decimal Numbers*

Description

The following terms are the most common units of volume used in the Bible to state how much a certain container could hold. The containers and measurements are given for both liquids (such as wine) and dry solids (such as grain).

Type	Original Measure	Liters
Dry	omer	2 liters
Dry	ephah	22 liters
Dry	homer	220 liters
Dry	kor	220 liters
Dry	seah	7.7 liters
Dry	letheke	114.8 liters
Liquid	metrete	40 liters
Liquid	bath	22 liters
Liquid	hin	3.7 liters
Liquid	kab	1.23 liters
Liquid	log	0.31 liters

Translation Principles

- The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
- Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
- Whatever measures you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kinds of measures in the text or a footnote.

Translation Strategies

1. Use the measurements from the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))
2. Use the metric measurements given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Isaiah 5:10 below.

- **For four hectares of vineyard will yield only one bath, and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah.** (Isaiah 5:10 ULB)

1. Use the measurements from the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))

- "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only one *bat*, and one *homer* of seed will yield only an *efa*."

2. Use the measurements given in the UDB. Usually they are metric measurements. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

- "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only *twenty-two liters*, and *ten baskets* of seed will yield only *one basket*."
 - "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only *twenty-two liters* and *220 liters* of seed will yield only *twenty-two liters*."

3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

- "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only six gallons, and *six and a half bushels* of seed will yield only twenty quarts."

4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

- "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only *one bath (six gallons)*, and *one homer (six and a half bushels)* of seed will yield only *an ephah (twenty quarts)*."

5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULB measurements in footnotes.

- "For four hectares of vineyard will yield only twenty-two liters¹, and 220 liters² of seed will yield only twenty-two liters²." The footnotes would look like:

- ^[1]one bath
- ^[2]one home
- ^[3]one ephah

When the unit of measure is implied

Sometimes the Hebrew does not specify a particular unit of volume but only uses a number. In these cases, many English versions, including the ULB and UDB, add the word “measure.”

- **whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty measures* of grain, there were only *ten*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty measures* of wine, there were only *twenty*.** (Haggai 2:16 ULB)

Translation Strategies

1. Translate literally by using the number without a unit.
2. Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount.”
3. Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.
4. Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Haggai 2:16 below.

- **whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty measures* of grain, there were only *ten*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty measures* of wine, there were only *twenty*.** (Haggai 2:16 ULB)

1. Translate literally by using the number without a unit.
 - “whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty* of grain, there were only *ten*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty* of wine, there were only *twenty*.”
2. Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount.”
 - “whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty amounts* of grain, there were only *ten*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty amounts* of wine, there were only *twenty*.”
3. Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.
 - “whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty baskets* of grain, there were only *ten*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty jars* of wine, there were only *twenty*.”
4. Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

- "whenever anyone came to the grainery for *twenty liters* of grain, there were only *ten liters*, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out *fifty liters* of wine, there were only *twenty liters*."

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Fractions*
- *Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit*

Biblical Weight

This answers the question: How can I translate the values of weight in the Bible?

Description

The following terms are the most common units of weight in the Bible. The term “shekel” means “weight” and many other weights are described in terms of the shekel. Some of these weights were used for money. The exact weights are uncertain, but the approximate amounts are:

Original Measure	Shekels	Grams	Kilograms
shekel	1 shekel	11 grams	-
bekah	1/2 shekel	5.7 grams	-
pim	2/3 shekel	7.6 grams	-
gerah	1/20 shekel	-	0.57 kilograms
mina	50 shekels	570 grams	0.57 kilograms
talent	3,000 shekels	-	34 kilograms

Translation Principles

1. The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
2. Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
3. Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

Translation Strategies

1. Use the measurements from the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))
2. Use the metric measurements given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 38:29 below.

- **The bronze from the offering weighed *seventy talents and 2,400 shekels*.** (Exodus 38:29 ULB)

1. Use the measurements from the ULB. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULB. (See: [Copy or Borrow Words](#))

- "The bronze from the offering weighed *seventy talents and 2,400 sekels*."

2. Use the metric measurements given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

- "The bronze from the offering weighed *2,400 kilograms*."

3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

- "The bronze from the offering weighed *5,300 pounds*"

4. Use the measurements from the ULB and include measurements that your people know in the text or a footnote. The following shows both measurements in the text.

- "The bronze from the offering weighed *seventy talents (2,380 kilograms) and 2,400 shekels (26.4 kilograms)*."

5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULB in the text or in a footnote. The following shows the ULB measurements in notes.

- "The bronze from the offering weighed *seventy talents and 2,400 shekels*.¹" The footnote would look like:
 - ^[1] This was a total of about 2,400 kilograms.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- [Decimal Numbers](#)
- [Fractions](#)

Fractions

This answers the question: What are fractions and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Numbers*

Fractions are a kind of number that refer to parts of a thing or to groups within a larger group of people or things. Some languages do not have this kind of number.

Description

Fractions are a kind of number that refer to equal parts of a thing or to equal groups within a larger group of people or things. An item or a group of items is divided into two or more parts or groups, and a fraction refers to one or more of those parts or groups.

For the drink offering, you must offer *a third* of a hin of wine. (Numbers 15:7 ULB)

A hin is a container used for measuring wine and other liquids. They were to divide a hin container into three parts and fill up only one part and offer that.

a third of the ships were destroyed. (Revelation 8:9 ULB)

There were many ships. If all those ships were divided into three equal groups of ships, one group of ships was destroyed.

Most fractions in English simply have “-th” added to the end of the number.

Number of parts the whole is divided into	Fraction
four	fourth
ten	tenth
one hundred	one hundredth
one thousand	one thousandth

Some fractions in English do not follow that pattern.

Number of parts the whole is divided into	Fraction
two	half
three	third
five	fifth

Reason this is a translation issue: Some languages do not have fractions. They may simply talk about parts or groups, but they don’t use fractions to tell how big a part is or how many are included in a group.

Examples From the Bible

Now to *one half* of the tribe of Manasseh, Moses had given them an inheritance in Bashan, but to the other *half*, Joshua gave an inheritance beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. (Joshua 22:7 ULB)

The tribe of Manasseh divided into two groups. The phrase “one half of the tribe of Manasseh” refers one of those groups. The phrase “the other half” refers to the other group.

The four angels who had been prepared for that very hour, that day, that month, and that year, were released to kill *a third* of humanity. (Revelation 9:15 ULB)

If all the people were to be divided into three equal groups, then the number of people in one group would be killed.

You must also prepare *a fourth* of a hin of wine as the drink offering. (Numbers 15:5 ULB)

They were to divide a hin of wine into four equal parts and prepare one of them.

Translation Strategies

If a fraction in your language would give the right meaning, consider using it. If not, you could consider these strategies.

1. Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.
2. For measurements such as for weight and length, use a unit that your people might know or the unit in the UDB.
3. For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

Examples of These Translation Strategies Applied

1. Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.

- ***A third of the ocean became red like blood*** (Revelation 8:8 ULB)
 - ”It was like they *divided* the ocean *into three parts*, and *one part* of the ocean became blood.”
- ***then you must offer with the bull a grain offering of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil.*** (Numbers 15:9 ULB)
 - ”then you must *divide* an ephah of fine flour *into ten parts* and mix *three of those parts* with half a hin of oil. Then you must offer that grain offering along with the bull.”

2. For measurements, use the measurements that are given in the UDB. The translators of the UDB have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

- ***two thirds of a shekel*** (1 Samuel 13:21 ULB)
 - *"eight grams of silver"* (1 Samuel 13:21 UDB)
- ***three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil.*** (Numbers 15:9, ULB)
 - *"6.5 liters of finely ground flour mixed with about two liters of olive oil."* (Numbers 15:9 UDB)

3. For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

- ***three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil.*** (Numbers 15:9, ULB)
 - *"six quarts of fine flour mixed with two quarts of oil."*

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Ordinal Numbers*
- *Decimal Numbers*

Hebrew Months

This page answers the question: What are the Hebrew months?

In order to understand this page, it would be good to read

- [Ordinal Numbers](#)

Description

The Hebrew calendar used in the Bible has twelve months. Unlike the western calendar, its first month begins in the spring of the northern hemisphere. Sometimes a month is called by its name (Abib, Ziv, Sivan), and sometimes it is called by its order in the Hebrew calendar year (first month, second month, third month).

Reasons this is a translation issue

1. Readers may be surprised to read of months that they have never heard of, and they may wonder how those months correspond to the months they use.
2. Readers may not realize that phrases such as “the first month” or “the second month” refer to the first or second month of the Hebrew calendar, not some other calendar.
3. Readers may not know when the first month of the Hebrew calendar begins.
4. The scripture may tell about something happening in a certain month, but readers will not be able to fully understand what is said about it if they do not know what season of the year that was.

List of Hebrew Months

This is a list of the Hebrew months with information about them that may be helpful in the translation.

Abib - (This month is called **Nisan** after the Babylonian exile) - This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is at the beginning of the spring season when the late rains come and people begin to harvest their crops. It is during the last part of March and the first part April on western calendars. The Passover celebration started on Abib 10, the Festival of Unleavened Bread was right after that, and the Festival of Harvest was a few weeks after that.

Ziv - This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the harvest season. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on western calendars.

Sivan - This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the dry season. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on western calendars. The Feast of Weeks is celebrated on Sivan 6.

Tammuz - This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of June and the first part of July on western calendars.

Ab - This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on western calendars.

Elul - This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season. It is during the last part of August and the first part of September on western calendars.

Ethanim - This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the early rain season which would soften the land for sowing. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on western calendars. The Feast of Ingathering and the Day of Atonement are celebrated in this month.

Bul - This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the rainy season when people plough their fields and sow seed. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on western calendars.

Kislev - This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. This is at the end of the sowing season and the beginning of the cold season. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on western calendars.

Tebeth - This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the cold season when there may be rain and snow. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on western calendars.

Shebat - This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is the coldest month of the year, and it has heavy rain fall. It is during the last part of January and the first part of February on western calendars.

Adar - This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the cold season. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on western calendars. The feast called Purim is celebrated in Adar.

Examples from the Bible

You are going out of Egypt on this day, in *the month of Abib*. (Exodus 13:4 ULB)

You must eat unleavened bread from twilight of the fourteenth day *in the first month of the year*, until twilight of the twenty-first day of the month. (Exodus 12:18 ULB)

Translation Strategies

You may need to make some information about the months explicit. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

1. Tell the the number of the Hebrew month.
2. Use the months that people know.
3. State clearly what season the month occurred in.
4. Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the month. (If possible, use a footnote to show the Hebrew month and day.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The examples below use these two verses.

- **At that time, you will appear before me in *the month of Abib*, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.** (Exodus 23:15 ULB)
- **It will always be a statute for you that in *the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month*, you must humble yourselves and do no work** (Leviticus 16:29 ULB)

1. Tell the number of the Hebrew month.

- "At that time, you will appear before me in *the first month of the year*, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt."

2. Use the months that people know.

- "At that time, you will appear before me in *the month of March*, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt."
- "It will always be a statute for you that *on the day I choose in late September* you must humble yourselves and do no work"

3. State clearly what season the month occurred.

- "It will always be a statute for you that *in the autumn, on the tenth day of the seventh month*, you must humble yourselves and do no work"

4. Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the month.

- "It will always be a statute for you that in *the day I choose in early autumn* you must humble yourselves and do no work"

How to Translate Names

This answers the question: How can I translate names that are new to my culture?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Translate Unknowns*

The Bible has names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

Description

The Bible has names of many people, groups of people, and places. All names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to. But sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

It was this *Melchizedek*, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1ULB)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” simply to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” simply to tell us something about Melchizedek.

His name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness,” and also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace. (Hebrews 7:2 ULB)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples from the Bible

You went over the *Jordan* and came to *Jericho*. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the *Amorites* (Joshua 24:11 ULB)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called *Beerlahairoi*; (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beerlahairoi” means “Well of the the Living One who sees me.”

She named him *Moses* and said, “Because I drew him from the water.” (Exodus 2:11 ULB)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name *Moses* sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his death (Acts 8:1 ULB)

It came about in Iconium that *Paul* and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULB)

Readers may not know that the names *Saul* and *Paul* refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name.
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name all of the time and write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
5. Or use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that explains who or what the name refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

- **You went over the *Jordan* and came to *Jericho*. The leaders of *Jericho* fought against you, along with the *Amorites*** (Joshua 24:11 ULB)
 - “You went over the *Jordan River* and came to the city of *Jericho*. The leaders of *Jericho* fought against you, along with *the tribe of the Amorites*”
- **Shortly after, some *Pharisees* came and said to him, “Go and leave here because *Herod* wants to kill you.”** (Luke 13:31 ULB)

- “Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, “Go and leave here because *King Herod* wants to kill you.”

2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.

- **She named him *Moses* and said, “Because I drew him from the water.”** (Exodus 2:11 ULB)
 - “She named him *Moses*, which sounds like ‘drawn out,’ and said, “Because I drew him from the water.”

3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name.

- **she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called *Beerlahairoi*;** (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)
 - “she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called *Well of the One who sees me*;”

4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text talks about that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.

For example, Paul is called “Saul” before Acts 13 and “Paul” after Acts 13. You could translate his name as “Paul” all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.

- **a young man named *Saul*** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - “a young man named *Paul*”¹ The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]Most versions say Saul here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called Paul.

- **But *Saul*, who is also called *Paul*, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9 ULB)
 - “But *Saul*, who is also called *Paul*, was filled with the Holy Spirit;”

5. Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that explains who or what the name refers to.

For example, you could write “Saul” where the source text has “Saul” and “Paul” where the source text has “Paul.”

- **a young man named *Saul*** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - “a young man named *Saul*”
- **But *Saul*, who is also called *Paul*, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9 ULB) *
 “But __Saul__, who is also called __Paul__, was filled with the Holy Spirit;” * **It came about in Iconium that __Paul__ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue**
 ([[en:bible:notes:act:14:01 | Acts 14:1 ULB)

- "It came about in Iconium that *Paul*¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue"
(Acts 14:1 ULB) The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]This is the man that was called Saul before Acts 13.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Copy or Borrow Words*

Numbers

This answers the question: How do I translate numbers?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Translate Unknowns*

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words, such as “five” or as numerals, such as “5”. Some numbers are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), “twenty-two thousand” (22,000) or “one hundred million” (100,000,000.) Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. Some are small, such as “five” (5) and “fifteen” (15). Others are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), twenty-two thousand (22,000) or “one hundred million” (100,000,000). Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

Abram was *eighty-six* years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULB)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

That day about *three thousand* men out of the people died. (Exodus 32:28 ULB)

Here the number three thousand is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word “about” shows that it is not an exact number.

Reason this is a translation issue: Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

Examples from the Bible

When Jared had lived *162* years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived *eight hundred* years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived *962* years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULB)

The numbers 162, eight hundred, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

Our sister, may you be the mother of *thousands of ten thousands*. (Genesis 24:60 ULB)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

Translation Strategies

1. Write numbers using numerals.
2. Write numbers using your language's words or the gateway language words for those numbers.
3. Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.
4. Combine words for large numbers.
5. Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- **Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house 100,000 talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.** (1 Chronicles 22:14 ULB)

1. Write numbers using numerals.

- "I have prepared for Yahweh's house 100,000 talents of gold, one 1,000,000 talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities."

2. Write numbers using your language's words or the gateway language words for those numbers.

- "I have prepared for Yahweh's house *one hundred thousand* talents of gold, *one million* talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. "

3. Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

- "I have prepared for Yahweh's house *one hundred thousand (100,000)* talents of gold, *one million (1,000,000)* talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

4. Combine words for large numbers.

- "I have prepared for Yahweh's house *one hundred thousand* talents of gold, *a thousand thousand* talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

5. Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

- "I have prepared for Yahweh's house *a great amount of gold (100,000 talents), ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents),* and bronze and iron in large quantities.

Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

Consistency in the ULB and UDB

The ULB (Unlocked Literal Bible) and the UDB (Unlocked Dynamic Bible) use words for numbers that have only one or two words (nine, sixteen, three hundred). They use numerals for numbers that have more than two words (the numerals “130” instead of “one hundred thirty”).

When Adam had lived *130* years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived *eight hundred* years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived *930* years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:3-5 ULB)

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Ordinal Numbers*
- *Fractions*

Ordinal Numbers

This answers the question: What are ordinal numbers and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Numbers*

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

He gave to the church *first* apostles, *second* prophets, *third* teachers, then those who do powerful deeds (1 Corinthians 12:28 ULB)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

Description

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

He gave to the church *first* apostles, *second* prophets, *third* teachers, then those who do powerful deeds (1 Corinthians 12:28 ULB)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

Ordinal Numbers in English

Most ordinal numbers in English simply have “-th” added to the end.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
4	four	fourth
10	ten	tenth
100	one hundred	one hundredth
1,000	one thousand	one thousandth

Some ordinal numbers in English do not follow that pattern.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
5	five	fifth
12	twelve	twelfth

Reason this is a translation issue: Some languages do not have special numbers for showing the

order of items in a list. There are different ways to deal with this.

Examples from the Bible

The *first* lot went to Jehoiarib, the *second* to Jedaiah, the *third* to Harim, the *fourth* to Seorim, ... the *twenty-third* to Delaiah, and the *twenty-fourth* to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULB)

People tossed lots and one went to each of these people in the order given.

You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The *first* row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet. The *second* row must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The *third* row must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. The *fourth* row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings. (Exodus 28:17-20 ULB)

This describes four rows of stones. The first row is probably be the top row, and the fourth row is probably the bottom row.

Translation Strategies

If your language has ordinal numbers and using them would give the right meaning, consider using them. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

1. Use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.
2. Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Tell the total number of items, and use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.

- **The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, ... the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.** (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULB)
 - ”There were *twenty-four* lots. *One lot* went to Jehoiarib, *another* to Jedaiah, *another* to Harim,... *another* to Delaiah, *and the last* went to Maaziah.”
 - ”There were *twenty-four* lots. *One lot* went to Jehoiarib, *the next* to Jedaiah, *the next* to Harim,... *the next* to Delaiah, *and the last* went to Maaziah.”
- **A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became *four* rivers. The name of *the first* is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of *the second* river is Gihon. This one flows**

throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of *the third* river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. *The fourth* river is the Euphrates.(Genesis 2:10-14 ULB)

- "A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became *four* rivers. The name of *one* is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of *the next* river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of *the next* river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. The *last* river is the Euphrates."

2. Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

- **The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, ... the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.** (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULB)

- "They cast *twenty-four* lots. The lots went to Jerhoiarib, Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim, ... Delaiah, and Maaziah."

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Fractions*

Symbolic Action

This answers the question: What is a symbolic action and how do I translate it?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Translate Unknowns*

A symbolic action is something that someone does in order to express a certain idea. For example, in some cultures people nod their head up and down to mean “Yes” or turn their head from side to side to mean “No”. Symbolic actions do not mean the same things in all cultures.

Translators need to understand what people in the Bible meant when they used symbolic actions. If an action does not mean the same thing in their own culture, they need to figure out how to translate what the action meant.

Description

A symbolic action is something that someone does in order to express a certain idea. An action does not have to actually be performed; it may simply be referred to.

Examples of symbolic actions

- In some cultures people shake hands when they meet to show that they are willing to be friendly.
- In some cultures people bow when they meet to show respect to each other.

Reason this is a translation issue

An action may have a meaning in one culture, and a different meaning or no meaning at all in another culture. For example, in some cultures raising the eyebrows means “I am surprised” or “What did you say?” In others cultures it means “Yes.”

In the Bible people did things that had certain meanings in their culture. When we read the Bible we might not understand what someone meant if we interpret the action based on what it means in our own culture.

Examples from the Bible

Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet. (Luke 8:41 ULB)

Meaning of symbolic action: He did this to show great respect to Jesus.

Look, I stand at the door and *knock*. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to his home, and have a meal with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 ULB)

Meaning of symbolic action: When people want someone to welcome them into their home, they stand at the door and knock on it.

Translation Strategies

If people would correctly understand what a symbolic action meant to the people in the Bible, consider using it. If not, here are some strategies for it.

1. Tell what the person did and why he did it.
2. Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.
3. Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning. Do this only in poetry, parables, and sermons. Do not do this when there actually was a person who did a specific action.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Tell what the person did and why he did it.

- **Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet.** (Luke 8:41 ULB)
 - "Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet in order to show that he greatly respected him."
- **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20 ULB)
 - "Look, I stand at the door and knock on it, asking you to let me in."

2. Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

- **Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet.** (Luke 8:41)
 - "Jairus showed Jesus great respect."
- **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20)
 - "Look, I stand at the door and ask you to let me in."

3. Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning.

- **Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet.** (Luke 8:41 ULB) - Since Jairus actually did this, we would not substitute an action from our own culture.
- **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20 ULB) - Jesus was not standing at a real door. Rather he was speaking about wanting to have a relationship with people. So in cultures where it is polite to clear one's throat when wanting to be let into a house, you could use that.

- “Look, I stand at the door and clear my throat.”

Translate Unknowns

This answers the question: How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Sentences*

How do I translate words like lion, fig tree, mountain, priest, or temple when people in my culture have never seen these things and we do not have a word for them?

Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The translationWords pages and the translationNotes will help you understand what they are. After you understand them, you will need to find ways to refer to those things so that people who read your translation will understand what they are.

We have here only five loaves of *bread* and two fish (Matthew 14:17 ULB)

Bread is a particular food made by mixing finely crushed grains with oil, and then cooking the mixture so that it is dry. (Grains are the seeds of a kind of grass.) In some cultures people do not have bread or know what it is.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the things that are in the Bible because those things are not part of their own culture.
- Readers may have difficulty understanding a text if they do not know some of the things that are mentioned in it.

Translation Principles

- Use words that are already part of your language if possible.
- Keep expressions short if possible.
- Represent God's commands and historical facts accurately.

Examples from the Bible

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for *jackals* (Jeremiah 9:11 ULB)

Jackals are wild animals like dogs that live in only a few parts of the world. So they are not known in many places.

Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are truly ravenous *wolves*. (Matthew 7:15 ULB)

If wolves do not live where the translation will be read, the readers may not understand that they are fierce, wild animals like dogs that attack and eat sheep.

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with *myrrh*. But he refused to drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULB)

People may not know what *myrrh* is and that it was used as a medicine.

to him who made *great lights* (Psalm 136:7ULB)

Some languages have terms for things that give light, like the sun and fire, but they have no general term for lights.

your sins ... will be white like *snow* (Isaiah 1:18 ULB)

People in many parts of the world have not seen snow, but they may have seen it in pictures.

Translation Strategies

Here are ways you might translate a term that is not known in your language:

1. Use a phrase that describes the part of the meaning that is important in the particular verse being translated.
2. Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.
3. Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.
4. Use a word that is more general in meaning.
5. Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use a phrase that describes the part of the meaning that is important in the particular verse being translated.

- **Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are truly *ravenous wolves*.** (Matthew 7:15 ULB)
 - "Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but *are truly hungry and dangerous animals*."
- **We have here only five *loaves of bread* and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB)
 - "We have here only five *loaves of baked grain seeds* and two fish"

2. Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.

- **your sins ... will be white like snow** (Isaiah 1:18 ULB) This verse is not about snow. It uses snow in a figure of speech to help people understand how white something will be.
 - "your sins ... will be white like *milk*"
 - "your sins ... will be white like *the moon*"

3. Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.

- **Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with myrrh. But he refused to drink it.** (Mark 15:23 ULB) - People may understand better what myrrh is if it is used with the general word "medicine."
 - "Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with *a medicine called myrrh*. But he refused to drink it."
- **We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB) - People may understand better what bread is if it is used with a phrase that tells what it is made of (seeds) and how it is prepared (crushed and baked).
 - "We have here only five loaves of *baked crushed seed bread* and two fish"

4. Use a word that is more general in meaning.

- **I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for jackals** (Jeremiah 9:11 ULB)
 - "I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for *wild dogs*"
- **We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB)
 - "We have here only five *loaves of baked food* and two fish"

5. Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

- **to him who made great lights** (Psalm 136:7 ULB)
 - "to him who made *the sun and the moon*"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Copy or Borrow Words*
- *How to Translate Names*

Background Information

This answers the question: What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Order of Events*
- *Writing Styles*

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. Sometimes a writer may give some background information to help his listeners understand the story. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story. The story teller and translator need to tell the story in a way that people will know whether an event is background information and will be able to understand what order the events happened in.

Description

Every story has a storyline. The storyline tells a series of events mostly in the time order that the events happened. It is full of action verbs that moves the reader along the storyline. Occasionally an author may take a break from the storyline to share something of interest. This break is called **background information**. The underlined sentences in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because their village was going to have a a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day! They walked for hours through low bushes until they found a wild pig. They shot the pig and killed it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope they had brought with them, and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were", rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "Peter was the best hunter in the village" and "it was his own pig."

Sometimes a storyteller makes a break in the story to tell about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a a feast the next day" and "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," "that they had brought with them," and "Peter had mistakenly killed his cousins's pig."

A writer may use background information

- to help their listeners be interested in the story.
- to help their listeners understand something in the story.
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story.

- to tell the setting of a story. Setting includes:
 - where the story takes place.
 - when the story takes place.
 - who is present when the story begins.
 - what is happening when the story begins.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Translators need to know whether or not the events in the Bible happened in the same order that they are told.
- Translators will need to translate the story in a way that their own readers will understand the order of events.

Examples from the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram *was* eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULB)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

Now Jesus himself, when he began to teach, *was* about thirty years of age. He *was* the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULB)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story starts up again in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Now it happened on a Sabbath that Jesus was going through the grain fields and his disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating the grain. But some of the Pharisees said... (Luke 6:1-2a ULB)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the sentence "But some of the Pharisees said."

Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study the grammar and punctuation of your language. Observe how your language presents background information in writings. Follow those same grammar rules when you translate.

1. Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.

2. Reorder the information so that that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

Examples of Translation Strategies applied

1. Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULB English translations.

- **Now Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli.** (Luke 3:23 ULB)- English uses the word “now” to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb “was” shows that it is background information.
- **With many other exhortations also, he preached good news to the people. John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch *for marrying his brother's wife, Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done.* But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.** (Luke 3:18-20 ULB) The underlined phrases happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb “had” in “had done” shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

2. Reorder the information so that that earlier events are mentioned first.

- **Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.** (Genesis 16:16 ULB)
 - “When Abram was eighty-six years old, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael.”
- **John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch *for marrying his brother's wife, Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done.* But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.** (Luke 3:18-20) - The translation below reorders John's rebuke and Herod's actions.
 - “Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, Herodias, and he did many other evil things, so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Connecting Words*
- *Introduction of a New Event*

Connecting Words

This answers the question: What are connecting words for, and how do I translate them?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Sentences*

Connecting words show how thoughts are related to other thoughts. They are also called **conjunctions**. This page is about connecting words that connect statements and groups of statements to others. Some examples are: and, but, for, so, therefore, now, if, if only, since, then, when, while, whenever, because, yet, unless.

Description

Connecting words show how thoughts are related to other thoughts. This page is about connecting words that connect statements and groups of statements to others. Some examples of connecting words are: and, but, for, so, therefore, now, if, if only, since, then, when, while, whenever, because, yet, unless.

- It was raining, *so* I opened my umbrella.
- It was raining, *but* I did not have an umbrella. *So* I got very wet.

Sometimes people do not use a connecting word because they expect the readers to understand the relationship between the thoughts because of the context.

- It was raining. I didn't have an umbrella. I got very wet.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Translators need to understand the meaning of a connecting word in the Bible and the relationship between the thoughts it is connecting.
- Each language has its own ways of showing how thoughts are related.
- Translators need to know how to help their readers understand the relationship between the thoughts.

Translation Principles

- Translators need to translate in a way that readers can understand the same relationship between thoughts that the original readers would have understood.
- Whether or not a connecting word is used is not as important as readers being able to understand the relationship between the ideas.

Examples from the Bible

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit, and ate it. *And* she gave some also to her husband who was with her, *and* he ate it. (Genesis 3:6 ULB)

The word “and” can connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. The underlined examples above show where it connects clauses and sentences. In this verse, the event that follows “and” happened after the event before “and”.

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me, *but* instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. *Then* after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days. (Galatians 1:16-18 ULB)

The word “but” introduces something that contrasts with what was said before. The contrast here is between what Paul did not do with what he did do. Here the word “then” introduces something Paul did after he returned to Damascus.

Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. *But* whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULB)

Here the word “But” contrasts what one group of people will be called in God’s kingdom with what another group of people will be called.

Translation Strategies

If the way the relationship between thoughts is shown in the ULB would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Use a connecting word (even if the ULB does not use one).
2. Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.
3. Use a different connecting word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use a connecting word (even if the ULB does not use one).
 - **Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” Immediately they left the nets and went after him.** (Mark 1:17-18 ULB) - They followed Jesus because he told them to. Some translators may want to mark this with “so.”
 - “Jesus said to them, ”Come after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” So immediately they left the nets and went after him.”

2. Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.

- **And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit, and ate it. And she gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.** (Genesis 3:6 ULB) - The word “and” here simply shows that something else happened. Some languages would not need to start the sentence with “and.”
 - “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit, and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.” (Genesis 3:6 ULB)
- **I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me, but instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days.** (Galatians 1:16-18 ULB) Some languages might not need the words “but” or “then” here.
 - “I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. Instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days.

3. Use a different connecting word.

- **Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.** (Matthew 5:19 ULB) - The word “but” is used here because of the contrast between the two groups of people. But in some languages, the word “but” would show that what comes after it is surprising because of what came before it. So “and” might be clearer for those languages.
 - “Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Since the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.** (Acts 21:34 ULB) - Instead of starting the first part of the sentence with “since”, some translators might prefer to start the second part of the sentence with “so”.
 - “The captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, so he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.”

Introduction of a New Event

This answers the question: How do we introduce a new event in a story?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Writing Styles*
- *Order of Events*

When people tell a story or when they start a new part of a story, they often put certain information at the beginning, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. They may have certain ways of telling these things. For your translation to sound natural you may need to follow those ways.

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. New events in a story might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? You may need to change how and in what order new information is introduced at the beginning of a new event in order for your translation to sound natural in your language.

Here are some examples of how some events are introduced in the books of Matthew and Luke.

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zechariah, from the division of Abijah. His wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULB)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first underlined phrase tells when it happened, and the next two underlined phrase introduce the main people.

One day while Zechariah was performing his duties as a priest before God in the order of his division, the priests followed their custom and chose him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULB)

Like 1:5-7 tell about Zechariah and Elizabeth being old and not having any children. The phrase *One day* helps to introduces the first event in this story.

The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way. His mother Mary was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULB)

The underlined sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying,... (Matthew 2:1 ULB)

The underlined phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened *after* Jesus was born.

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying, ... (Matthew 3:1-2 ULB)

The underlined phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. (Matthew 3:13 ULB)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

Examples from the Bible

Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Council. This man came to Jesus at night time (John 3:1-2 ULB)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did. In some languages it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

⁶Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. ⁷Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6,7 ULB)

Verse 6 is a summary of the events that happen in the rest of the chapter. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. This sentence introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this simply introduces the event. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULB or UDB. If not, consider one of these strategies.

1. Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
2. If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as: another time, someone.
3. If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.
4. If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

- **Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Council. This man came to Jesus at night time and said to him ...** (John 3:1,2)
 - “There was a man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council. One night he came to Jesus and said...”
 - “One night a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council, came to Jesus and said ...”
- **As he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, who was sitting at the tax collecting place, and he said to him ...** (Mark 2:14 ULB)
 - “As he passed by, *Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting* at the tax collecting place. Jesus saw him and and said to him ...”
 - “As he passed by, *there was a man sitting* at the tax collecting place. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...”
 - “As he passed by, *there was a tax collector* sitting at the tax collecting place. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...”

2. If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as: another time, someone.

- **Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth.** (Genesis 7:6 ULB) - If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase “after that” can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.
 - “*After that*, when Noah was six hundred years old, the flood came upon the earth.”
- **Again he began to teach beside the lake.** (Mark 4:1 ULB) - In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone’s house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the lake.
 - “*Another time* Jesus began to teach people again beside the lake.”
 - “Jesus went to the lake and began to teach people again there.”

3. If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary. This is one way that it can be done in English.

- **Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth.** (Genesis 7:6 ULB)
 - “*Now this is what happened when* Noah was six hundred years old and the flood came upon the earth.”

4. If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event would actually happen later in the story.

- **Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood.** (Genesis 7:6 ULB)
 - *"Now this is what happened when Noah was six hundred years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because God had said that the waters of the flood would come."*

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Background Information*
- *Introduction of New and Old Participants*

Introduction of New and Old Participants

This answers the question: Why cannot the readers of my translation understand who the author was writing about?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Writing Styles*

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are new participants. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are old participants. In order to make your translation clear and natural, you will need to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or ones that they have already read about.

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are *new participants*. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are *old participants*.

Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus... This man came to Jesus at night time... Jesus replied to *him* (John 3:1)

The first underlined phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. He is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he is an old participant.

Reason this is a translation issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to properly refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about.

Examples from the Bible

New Participants

Sometimes a new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man” in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that that author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who his family was, and what his name was.

There was a man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2 ULB)

Sometimes a new participant is simply mentioned in relation to another person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah’s wife is simply referred to as “his wife”. This phrase shows her relationship to him.

There was a man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. *His wife* was not able to become pregnant and so she had not given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULB)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the book of Judges, the first time that the angel of Yahweh is mentioned, he is referred to simply by his title.

The angel of Yahweh went up from Gilgal to Bochim, (Judges 2:1 ULB)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story, may then be referred to with a pronoun, with a noun phrase, or by name or title. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his,” and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she”.

His wife was not able to become pregnant and so *she* had not given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULB)

In the example below, Manoah’s wife is referred to with the noun phrase “the woman”.

The angel of Yahweh appeared to *the woman* and said to her, (Judges 13:3 ULB)

In the example below, Manoah is referred to with his name.

Then *Manoah* prayed to Yahweh

Some languages have something on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough of a clue for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See: [Verbs](#))

In some languages people do not always have to use a noun or noun phrase to refer to an old participant when that participant is the subject of a sentence. People can understand it from the context.

Translation Strategies

1. If it is a new participant, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.
2. If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.
3. If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If it is a new participant, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.

- **Joseph, a Levite, a man from Cyprus, was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of encouragement).** (Acts 4:36-37 ULB)- Starting the sentence with Joseph's name when he hasn't been introduced yet might be too quick in some languages.
 - "There was a man named Joseph, from Cyprus. He was a Levite and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of encouragement)."
 - "There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement."

2. If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

- **It happened when *he* finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."** (Luke 11:1 ULB) - Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who "he" refers to.
 - "It happened when *Jesus* finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

3. If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

- **Joseph's master took *Joseph* and put *him* in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and *Joseph* stayed there.** (Genesis 39:20 ULB) - Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might find it odd to use his name so much. They might prefer a pronoun.
 - "Joseph's master took *him* and put *him* in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and *he* stayed there in the prison."

Next we recommend you learn about:

- **Pronouns - When to Use Them**

Poetry

This answers the question: What is poetry and how do I translate it into my language?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Figures of Speech*
- *Writing Styles*

Poetry combines figures of speech with pleasant sounds and deep feelings to make a passage both beautiful and easier to remember.

Description

Poetry is one of various way in which to use words to make the writing more beautiful and to show the feeling. It is used to express a stronger emotional feeling than simple non-poetic forms would express. Poetry is easier to remember and tends to last longer than ordinary speech.

Some things commonly found in poetry

- Many figures of speech such as **Metaphor**, **Simile**, **Metonymy**, **Personification**, and **Apostrophe**.
- Parallel lines (See: **Parallelism** and **Parallelism with the Same Meaning**)
- Repetition of some or all of a line
 - **Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his angel armies. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.** (Psalm 148:2-3 ULB)
- Lines of similar length.
 - **Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude.** (1 Corinthians 13:4 ULB)
- The same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines
 - "Twinkle, twinkle little *star*. How I wonder what you *are*." (from an English rhyme)
- The same sound repeated many times
 - "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater" (from an English rhyme)
- Old words and expressions

Some places to look for poetry in your language

1. Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
2. Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors
3. Prayers, blessings, and curses
4. Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is the probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons this is a translation issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language you may need to write it without the poetry.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples from the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely poetry.

for you saw my affliction;
you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7 ULB)

This example of **Parallelism with the Same Meaning** has two lines that mean the same thing.

Yahweh, judge the nations;
vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High.

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (See: **Parallelism**)

Keep your servant also from arrogant sins;
let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13 ULB)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (See: **Personification**)

Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
Oh, give thanks to the God of gods, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
(Psalm 136:1-3 ULB)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

1. Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
2. Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
3. Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

**Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked,
or stand in the pathway with sinners,
or sit in the assembly of mockers.
But his delight is in the law of Yahweh,
and on his law he meditates day and night.** (Psalm 1:1,2 ULB)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1,2.

1. Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
(The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

”Happy is the person not encouraged *to sin*
Disrespect for God he will not *begin*
To those who laugh at God, he is *no kin*.
God is his constant *delight*
He does what God says *is right*
He thinks of it all day *and night*”

2. Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

- “This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people, or stop along the road to speak with sinners, or join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.”

3. Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

- “The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or with those who do not respect God. They love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Symbolic Language*

Proverbs

This page answers the question: What are proverbs, and how can I translate them?

In order to understand this page, it would be good to read:

- *writing styles*
- *Parallelism*
- *Metaphor*

People enjoy proverbs because they give a lot of wisdom in few words. When you follow your language's ways of saying proverbs, you will make your translation sparkle.

Description

Proverbs are a sentence or a few sentences that give wisdom or teach a truth. Proverbs in the Bible often use metaphor and parallelism.

Hatred stirs up conflicts,
but love covers over all offenses. (Proverbs 10:12 ULB)

Look at the ant, you lazy person, consider her ways, and be wise.
It has no commander, officer, or ruler,
yet it prepares its food in the summer,
and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat. (Proverbs 6:6-8 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue:

Each language has its own ways of saying proverbs. There are many proverbs in the Bible. They need to be translated in a way for people to recognize them as proverbs and understand what they teach.

Examples from the Bible

A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULB)

This means that it is better to be a good person and to have a good reputation than it is to have a lot of money.

Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes,
so is the sluggard to those who send him. (Proverbs 10:26 ULB)

This means that if a person is lazy and does not do what he was sent to do, he will be very annoying to those who send.

The way of Yahweh protects those who have integrity,
but it is destruction for the wicked. (Proverbs 10:29 ULB)

This means that Yahweh protects people who do what is right, but he destroys those who are wicked.

□

Translation Strategies

If translating a proverb literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

1. Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.
2. If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.
3. Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.
4. Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways. Here are some ideas for ways people might say a proverb in their language.

**A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
and favor is better than silver and gold.** (Proverbs 22:1 ULB)

- “It is better to have a good name than to have great riches, and to be favored by people than to have silver and gold.”
- “Wise people choose a good name over great riches and favor over silver and gold.”
- “Try to have a good reputation rather than great riches.”
- “Will riches really help you? I would rather have a good reputation.”

2. If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

**Like *snow in summer* or *rain in harvest*,
so a fool does not deserve honor.** (Proverbs 26:1 ULB)

- “It is not natural for *a cold wind to blow in the hot season* or for it to rain in the harvest season; And it is not natural to honor a foolish person.”

3. Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

Do not boast about tomorrow (Proverbs 27:1 ULB)

- “Do not count your chickens before they hatch.”

4. Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

**A generation that curses their father and does not bless their mother,
that is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,
but they are not washed of their filth.** (Proverbs 30:11-12 ULB)

- “People who do not respect their parents think that they are righteous, and they do not turn away from their sin.”

Symbolic Language

This answers the question: What is symbolic language and how do I translate it?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Writing Styles*

Symbolic language in speech and writing is the use of symbols to represent other things and events. In the Bible it occurs most in prophecy and poetry, especially in visions and dreams about things that will happen in the future. Though people may not immediately know the meaning of a symbol, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation.

Description

Symbolic language in speech and writing is the use of symbols to represent other things and events. In the Bible it occurs most in prophecy and poetry, especially in visions and dreams about things that will happen in the future.

Eat this scroll, then go speak to the house of Israel.” (Ezekiel 3:1 ULB) This was in a dream. Eating the scroll is a symbol of reading and understanding well what was written on the scroll.

One purpose of symbolism is to help people understand the importance or severity of an event by calling it another. Another purpose of symbolism is to tell people about something that they would be able to understand while hiding the true meaning from others.

Reason this is a translation issue: People who read the Bible today may find it hard to recognize that the language is symbolic, and they may not know what the symbol stands for.

Translation Principle: When symbolic language is used, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation. It is also important not to explain it more than the original speaker or writer did, since he may not have wanted everyone living then to be able to understand it easily.

Examples from the Bible

After this I saw in my dream at night *a fourth animal*, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had *large iron teeth*; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had *ten horns*. (Daniel 7:7 ULB)

The meaning of the underlined symbols is explained in Daniel 7:23-24 as shown below. The animals represent kingdoms, iron teeth represent a powerful army, and the horns represent powerful leaders.

This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal, it will be *a fourth kingdom* on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth,

and it will trample it down and break it into pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom *ten kings* will arise, and another will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones, and he will conquer the three kings. (Daniel 7:23-24 ULB)

I turned around to see whose voice was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw *seven golden lampstands*. In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a Son of Man, ... He had in his right hand *seven stars*, and coming out of his mouth was *a sharp two-edged sword*.... As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: *the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*, and *the seven lampstands are the seven churches*. (Revelation 1:12, 16, 20 ULB)

This passage explains the meaning of the seven lampstands and the seven stars. The two-edged sword represents God's word and judgment.

Translation Strategies

1. Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.
2. Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.

- **After this I saw in my dream at night a fourth animal, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns.** (Daniel 7:7 ULB) - People will be able to understand what the symbols mean when they read the explanation in Daniel 7:23-24.

2. Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

- **After this I saw in my dream at night a fourth animal, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns.** (Daniel 7:7 ULB)

- "After this I saw in my dream at night a fourth animal,¹ terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth;² it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns."³ The footnotes would look like:

- ◇ ^[1] The animal is a symbol for a kingdom.
- ◇ ^[2] The iron teeth is a symbol for the kingdom's powerful army.
- ◇ ^[3] The horns are a symbol of powerful kings.