



Ruth

translationNotes

v6

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translationNotes

Introduction to Ruth

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ruth

1. Naomi and Elimelek leave Bethlehem and go to Moab (1:1–5)
2. Orpah leaves for Moab but Ruth chooses to stay with Naomi (1:6–18)
3. Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem (1:19–22)
4. Boaz helps Ruth (2:1–23)
5. Boaz begins to assume responsibility for Ruth, but seeks to follow the rules of the “kinsman-redeemer,” (3:1–18)
6. Boaz becomes the “kinsman-redeemer” by buying the field owned by Naomi and could take Ruth as his wife (4:1–16)
7. The birth of Ruth’s son with Boaz and the genealogy of Obed (4:17–22)

What is the Book of Ruth about?

This book tells how Ruth, a non-Israelite woman from the land of Moab, came to join the people of Yahweh. The book also explains how Ruth became an ancestor of King David.

In this account, the reader finds the blessings that came when God’s people faithfully followed his covenant. The story of Ruth has many lessons about faith, fidelity, self-sacrifice, and integrity.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators should use a self-explanatory title such as, “The Book about Ruth.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

When did the events in the Book of Ruth occur?

The story of Ruth is set during the time when there were “judges” in Israel. These were leaders over Israel or parts of Israel both in time of war and in time of peace.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why does Scripture include a book about a woman from the foreign land of Moab?

In a period when Israel is often unfaithful to Yahweh, Yahweh finds a woman from Moab who displays great faith in him. The Israelites’ frequent lack of faith in Yahweh is contrasted with the faith of one their enemies. (See: [unfaithful](#), [unfaithfulness](#))

What important marriage custom is found in the Book of Ruth?

Israelites practiced what is called “levirate marriage.” This was a custom for the closest male relative to provide for a childless widow by marrying her. Any children coming from this union were to be regarded as children of the dead man, so that his line of descendants would continue. If the closest relative did not marry the woman, another relative could.

What was a “kinsman-redeemer”?

A person’s close relative or relatives were expected to act as “kinsmen-redeemers” for him or her. They had the responsibility of providing for their relative who was in need, such as the widow Ruth. In other situations, they had the responsibility of taking revenge on anyone who dared to injure or kill one of their relatives. In the Book of Ruth, Boaz is one such kinsman-redeemer.

What was gleaning in the Book of Ruth?

There was a practice instituted in the law of Moses called gleaning. Gleaning occurred when very poor people were allowed to follow after the men who harvested a field. These “gleaners” picked up sheaves of grain that the harvesters missed or dropped by accident. In this way, poor people were able to find some food for themselves. Ruth became a gleaner in a field belonging to Boaz.

What is the concept of covenant faith or covenant loyalty?

This concept, which is very important in the Book of Ruth, is what parties in God’s covenant with Israel were expected to have for each other: faithfulness and therefore even mercy and love. God promised that he would act in faithfulness and love for the Israelites, and the Israelites were to do the same toward him and toward each other.

In the Book of Ruth, the obligations of kinsmen-redeemers to their relatives are shown to be part of the obligations in God’s covenant with Israel. The story of Boaz, Ruth and Naomi gives good examples to all of Israel of the good effects of covenant faithfulness.

What function did city gates have in the Ancient Near East?

City gates in the time of Boaz were natural meeting places for the city elders, honored men who decided business matters and legal matters together. Because city walls were very substantial, perhaps two to three meters in width, the gateway openings in them provided public spaces that were shady, spaces that were often much more comfortable to sit in, rather than in the hot sunshine. For this reason, although English Bible versions usually speak of Boaz sitting “at” the city gate to discuss who would marry Ruth, he and the other elders undoubtedly actually sat “in” the gateway itself. It may be best for the translator to make this clear.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues**How does Ruth shift from one topic to another topic?**

The book of Ruth has many transitions as it changes topics and marks new episodes in the story. The ULB uses various words for this purpose such as “so,” “then” and “now.” Translators should use the ways most natural in their own languages to signal these developments in the narrative.

List of translationAcademy Topics in Ruth

- * **Abstract Nouns** is found in: 02:19
- * **Active or Passive** is found in: 02:10
- * **Double Negatives** is found in: 02:19, 04:13
- * **Euphemism** is found in: 04:13
- * **Exclusive “We”** is found in: 01:08
- * **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** is found in: 01:01, 01:03, 01:06, 01:11, 01:14, 01:16, 01:22, 02:17, 03:01, 03:12, 03:16, 04:16
- * **Idiom** is found in: 01:03, 01:06, 01:08, 01:14, 01:16, 02:08, 02:13, 02:17, 03:03, 03:08, 03:10, 04:05, 04:13
- * **Metaphor** is found in: 02:01, 02:10, 03:01, 04:09, 04:11
- * **Metonymy** is found in: 01:08, 01:11, 01:19, 02:08, 02:10, 03:06
- * **Parallelism** is found in: 02:10, 02:19
- * **Rhetorical Question** is found in: 01:11, 02:08, 03:01
- * **Synecdoche** is found in: 04:09
- * **Forms of You** is found in: 01:08
- * **Forms of ‘You’ - Singular** is found in: 01:08
- * **Biblical Volume** is found in: 02:17
- * **How to Translate Names** is found in: 01:19, 04:18
- * **Symbolic Action** is found in: 03:03
- * **Background Information** is found in: 02:01, 04:07
- * **End of Story** is found in: 01:22
- * **Introduction of a New Event** is found in: 01:19

List of translationWords in Ruth

- * **Almighty** is found in: 01:19
- * **anoint, anointed** is found in: 03:03
- * **barley** is found in: 01:22, 02:23, 03:01, 03:14, 03:16

- * Bethlehem, Ephrathah is found in: 01:01, 01:19, 01:22, 02:03, 04:11
- * bless, blessed, blessing is found in: 02:03, 02:19, 03:10
- * Boaz is found in: 02:01, 02:03, 02:05, 02:08, 02:10, 02:14, 02:15, 02:19, 02:23, 03:01, 03:06, 04:01, 04:05, 04:07, 04:09, 04:13, 04:18
- * bread is found in: 02:14
- * brother is found in: 04:09
- * condemn, condemnation is found in: 01:19
- * David is found in: 04:16, 04:18
- * death, die, dead is found in: 01:03, 01:08, 02:10
- * descendant, descended from is found in: 04:18
- * elder is found in: 04:01, 04:03, 04:09, 04:11
- * false god, foreign god, god, goddess is found in: 01:14
- * famine is found in: 01:01
- * fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh is found in: 03:10
- * glean, gleaning is found in: 02:01, 02:03, 02:05, 02:08, 02:15, 02:17, 02:19, 02:23
- * God is found in: 01:16, 02:10
- * grain is found in: 02:01, 02:05, 02:14, 02:17, 03:06
- * harvest is found in: 01:22, 02:21, 02:23
- * inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir is found in: 04:05, 04:09
- * Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel is found in: 02:10, 04:07, 04:11, 04:13
- * Jesse is found in: 04:16, 04:18
- * Judah is found in: 01:01, 01:06, 04:11
- * judge is found in: 01:01
- * kin, kinsman is found in: 02:01, 02:19, 03:01, 03:08, 03:12, 04:01, 04:03, 04:05, 04:07, 04:13
- * kiss is found in: 01:08, 01:14
- * Leah is found in: 04:11
- * life, live, living, alive is found in: 01:03, 03:12
- * lord, master, sir is found in: 02:13
- * Moab, Moabite, Moabites is found in: 01:01, 01:03, 01:06, 01:22, 02:01, 02:05, 02:21, 04:03, 04:05, 04:09
- * name is found in: 04:05, 04:09, 04:13, 04:16
- * people group, peoples, the people, a people is found in: 01:16, 02:10, 03:10, 04:03, 04:11

- * Rachel is found in: 04:11
- * raise, rise, risen, arise, arose is found in: 01:08
- * reap, reaper is found in: 02:03, 02:08, 02:14
- * receive is found in: 02:10
- * redeem, redemption, redeemer is found in: 02:19, 04:03, 04:05, 04:07
- * report is found in: 02:10
- * Ruth is found in: 01:03, 01:14, 01:22, 02:01, 02:08, 02:14, 02:17, 02:19, 02:21, 03:03, 03:08, 04:05, 04:09, 04:13
- * servant, slave, slavery is found in: 02:05, 02:13, 03:08
- * son, son of is found in: 01:03, 01:11
- * thresh, threshing is found in: 03:01, 03:03, 03:14
- * true, truth, come true is found in: 03:12
- * wheat is found in: 02:23
- * wine, wineskin, new wine is found in: 02:14
- * winnow, sift is found in: 03:01
- * witness, eyewitness is found in: 04:09, 04:11
- * worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless is found in: 03:10
- * Yahweh is found in: 01:06, 01:08, 01:11, 01:16, 01:19, 02:03, 02:10, 02:19, 03:10, 03:12, 04:11, 04:13

Ruth 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

“It happened in the days when the judges ruled”

The events of this book occur during the period of Judges. The book is concurrent with the book of Judges. To understand the historical context of the book, the translator may wish to review the book of Judges.

Special concepts in this chapter

Women without a husband or children

In the ancient Near East, if a woman's lacked a husband or sons, she was considered to be in a dire circumstance. She would not have been able to provide for herself. This is why Naomi told her daughters to remarry.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Contrast

The actions of Ruth the Moabite are intended to contrast with the actions of Naomi the Jew. Ruth's shows great faith in Naomi's god, while Naomi does not trust in Yahweh. (See: [faith](#) and [trust, trustworthy, trustworthiness](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 1:1-2

UDB:

¹ During the time that judges ruled Israel, there was a famine in that country. There was a man who lived in Israel named Elimelech who left Israel and went to live for a while in the country of Moab. He went with his wife, Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. ² Elimelech was from the clan of Ephrath that was living in the town of Bethlehem, in the region of Judah. They came to Moab and stayed there.

ULB:

1 ¹ It happened in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem of Judah went to the country of Moab with his wife and his two sons. ² The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion, who were Ephrathites of Bethlehem of Judah. They arrived at the country of Moab and lived there.

translationWords:

- [judge](#)
- [famine](#)
- [Bethlehem, Ephrathah](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)

translationNotes:

- **It happened** - “It was” or “This is what happened.” This is a common way of beginning a historical story.
- **in the days when the judges ruled** - “during the time when judges led and governed Israel”
- **in the land** - “in the land of Israel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **a certain man** - “a man.” This is a common way of introducing a character into a story.
- **Ephrathites of Bethlehem of Judah** - They were people from the tribe of Ephraim who settled at Bethlehem in the region of Judea.

Links:

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

Ruth 1:3-5

UDB:

³ Then Elimelech died, and Naomi had only her two sons with her. ⁴ They married women from Moab. One of them was named Orpah and the other one was named Ruth. But after they had lived in that area for about ten years, ⁵ Mahlon and Chilion also died. So then Naomi was left alone without her sons or husband.

ULB:

³ Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ These sons took wives from the women of Moab; the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. They lived there for about ten years. ⁵ Then both Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving Naomi without her husband and without her two children.

translationWords:

- death, die, dead
- son, son of
- Moab, Moabite, Moabites
- Ruth
- life, live, living, alive

translationNotes:

- **she was left with her two sons** - “Naomi had only her two sons with her” (UDB)
- **took wives** - “married women.” This is an idiom for marrying women. They did not take women who were already married. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **from the women of Moab** - Naomi's sons married women who were from the tribe of Moab. The Moabites worshiped other gods.
- **the name of one** - “the name of one of the women” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **the name of the other** - “the name of the other woman” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **ten years** - Ten years after Elimelech and Naomi came to the country of Moab, their sons Mahlon and Chilion died.
- **leaving Naomi** - Naomi was widowed.

Links:

- [Introduction to Ruth](#)

- Ruth 01 General Notes
- **Ruth 1 Translation Questions**

Ruth 1:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ Then Naomi heard while still in Moab that Yahweh had helped his people and that now there was plenty of food in Israel. So she got ready to return to Bethlehem with her two daughters-in-law. ⁷ They left the place where they had been living and started to travel back to the land of Judah.

ULB:

⁶ Then Naomi decided to leave Moab with her daughters-in-law and return to Judah because she had heard in the region of Moab that Yahweh had helped his people in need and had given them food. ⁷ So she left the place where she had been with her two daughters-in-law, and they walked down the road to return to the land of Judah.

translationWords:

- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **she had heard in the region of Moab** - “while Naomi was living in Moab she heard.” It is implied that the news came from Israel. AT: “she heard from Israel while in the region of Moab” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **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.
- **had helped his people in need** - God saw their need and provided good harvests for them.
- **daughters-in-law** - the women who married Naomi’s sons
- **they walked down the road** - “they walked along the road.” To walk down a road is an expression for walking away. (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 1:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ As they were walking, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Each of you should turn around and go back to your mother's home. May Yahweh be as kind to you as you have been to me and our loved ones who have died. ⁹ I hope that he will allow each of you to have another husband in whose home you will be secure." Then she kissed each of them, and they cried aloud. ¹⁰ They each said, "No, we want to return with you to your relatives."

ULB:

⁸ Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return, each of you, to your mother's house. May Yahweh show kindness toward you, as you have shown kindness toward the dead and toward me. ⁹ May the Lord grant you that you find rest, each of you in the house of another husband." Then she kissed them, and they raised their voices and cried. ¹⁰ They said to her, "No! We will return with you to your people."

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- death, die, dead
- kiss
- raise, rise, risen, arise, arose

translationNotes:

- **daughters-in-law** - "sons' wives" or "sons' widows"
- **each of you** - Naomi was talking to two people, so languages that have a dual form of "you" would use that throughout her talk. (See: **Forms of You**)
- **your mother's house** - "to the home of each of your mothers"
- **shown kindness** - "demonstrated that you are loyal"
- **kindness** - "kindness" includes the ideas of love, kindness, and faithfulness.
- **toward the dead** - "to your husbands, who died." Naomi was referring to her two sons that died. (See: **Idiom**)
- **grant you** - "give you" or "allow you to have"
- **rest** - "Rest" here includes security in marriage.
- **in the house of another husband** - with their new husbands, not someone else's husband. This refers to both a physical house that belongs to the husband, and to the protection from shame by being married. (See: **Metonymy**)
- **they raised their voices and cried** - This means that the daughters cried out loud or wept bitterly. (See: **Idiom**)

- **We will return** - When Orpah and Ruth said “we,” they were referring to themselves and not Naomi. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive “we” would use the exclusive form here. (See: [Exclusive “We”](#))
- **with you** - Here “you” is the singular form referring to Naomi. (See: [Forms of ‘You’ - Singular](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 1:11-13**UDB:**

¹¹ But Naomi said, "No, my daughters, return home. It will not do any good for you to come with me! It is not possible for me to have more sons who could become your husbands. ¹² You should go back. It is too late for me to have another husband. Even if I got married today and had more sons, ¹³ would you remain unmarried until they grew up? No, my daughters! It makes me even more sad than you are, because Yahweh has sent me so much trouble."

ULB:

¹¹ But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters! Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb for you, so that they may become your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go your own way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said, 'I hope I get a husband tonight,' and then give birth to sons, ¹³ would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you wait and not marry men now? No, my daughters! It greatly grieves me, much more than it grieves you, because the hand of Yahweh has turned against me."

translationWords:

- son, son of
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **Why will you go with me?** - This is a rhetorical question. AT: "It does not make sense for you to go with me." or "You should not go with me." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Do I still have sons in my womb for you, so that they may become your husbands?** - Naomi uses this question to say she cannot have other sons for them to marry. AT: "Obviously it is not possible for me to have any more sons who could become your husbands." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **too old to have a husband** - The reason a husband would be important can be stated clearly. AT: "too old to marry again and bear more children" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **give birth to sons** - "bear children" or "deliver baby boys"
- **would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you wait and not marry men now?** - These are rhetorical questions, which do not expect an answer. AT: "you would not wait until they were grown up so that you could marry them. You would want to marry men now." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **It greatly grieves me** - What grieves her can be stated clearly. AT: "It greatly grieves me that you have no husbands" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

- **the hand of Yahweh has turned against me** - The word “hand” refers to Yahweh’s power or influence. AT: “Yahweh has caused terrible things to happen to me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Ruth](#)
- [Ruth 01 General Notes](#)
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Ruth 1:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Then Ruth and Orpah started crying again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye and left, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi. ¹⁵ Naomi said to her, “Look! Your sister-in-law is going back to her relatives and to her gods! Go back with her!”

ULB:

¹⁴ Then her daughters-in-law lifted up their voices and cried again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell, but Ruth held on to her.

¹⁵ Naomi said, “Listen, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Go back with your sister-in-law.”

translationWords:

- [kiss](#)
- [Ruth](#)
- [false god, foreign god, god, goddess](#)

translationNotes:

- **lifted up their voices and cried** - This means that they cried out loud or wept bitterly. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Listen** - “Listen” here means “Please take notice.”
- **Ruth held on to her** - “Ruth clung to her.” AT: “Ruth refused to leave her” or “Ruth would not leave her” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **your sister-in-law** - “the wife of your husband’s brother” or “Orpah”
- **her gods** - Before Orpah and Ruth married Naomi’s sons, they worshiped the gods of Moab. During their marriage, they began to worship Naomi’s God.

Links:

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

Ruth 1:16-18

UDB:

¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "No! Please do not ask me to go back and leave you! Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your relatives will be my relatives, and I will worship the God you worship. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die. Where they bury you, they will bury me. May Yahweh punish me severely if I ever leave you. We will never be separated until one of us dies." ¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was very determined to go with her, she stopped urging her to return home.

ULB:

¹⁶ But Ruth said, "Do not make me go away from you, for where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me, and even more, if anything but death ever separates us." ¹⁸ When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped arguing with her.

translationWords:

- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [God](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

translationNotes:

- **where you stay** - "where you live"
- **your people will be my people** - Ruth is referring to Naomi's people, the Israelites. AT: "I will consider the people of your country as being my own people" or "I will consider your relatives as my own relatives" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **Where you die, I will die** - This refers to Ruth's desire to spend the rest of her life living in the same place and town as Naomi. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **May Yahweh punish me, and even more, if** - This refers to Ruth asking God to punish her if she does not do what she said like the english idiom "God forbid, if". (See: [Idiom](#))
- **she stopped arguing with her** - "Naomi stopped arguing with Ruth"

Links:

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

Ruth 1:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ So the two women continued walking until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived there, everyone in the town was very happy to see them. The women of the town exclaimed, “It is hard to believe that this is Naomi!” ²⁰ Naomi said to them, “You should not call me Naomi any more, because it means ‘pleasant.’ Instead, call me Mara, because it means ‘bitter.’ God Almighty has made my life very bitter. ²¹ When I left here my life was full because I had a family. But Yahweh has brought me back here empty, without my family. Do not call me Naomi. Yahweh has punished me. Almighty God has caused a great tragedy to happen to me.”

ULB:

¹⁹ So the two traveled until they came to the town of Bethlehem. It happened that when they arrived in Bethlehem, the entire town was very excited about them. The women said, “Is this Naomi?” ²⁰ But she said to them, “Do not call me Naomi. Call me Bitter, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me home again empty. So why do you call me Naomi, seeing Yahweh has condemned me, that the Almighty has afflicted me?”

translationWords:

- Bethlehem, Ephrathah
- Almighty
- Yahweh
- condemn, condemnation

translationNotes:

- **It happened** - “It came about.” This is marking a new storyline. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))
- **the entire town** - “everyone in the town” (UDB) (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Is this Naomi?** - Since it has been many years since Naomi lived in Bethlehem and no longer has her husband and two sons, it is likely the women were expressing doubt as to if this woman was actually Naomi. Treat as a real question, not rhetorical.
- **Do not call me Naomi** - The name “Naomi” means “my delight.” Since Naomi lost her husband and sons, she no longer feels her life matches her name.
- **Bitter** - This is a translation of the meaning of the name. It is also often translated according to its sound as “Mara.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))
- **I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me home again empty** - When Naomi left Bethlehem, her husband and two sons were living, and she was happy. Naomi blames Yahweh for the death of her husband and sons, saying that he has caused her to return to Bethlehem without them, and now she is bitter and unhappy.

- **condemned me** - “judged me guilty”
- **has afflicted me** - “has brought calamity on me” or “has brought tragedy to me”

Links:

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

Ruth 1:22**UDB:**

²² So that is how Naomi returned home along with her daughter-in-law Ruth, the woman from Moab. And it happened that when they arrived in Bethlehem, the barley harvest was just beginning.

ULB:

²² So Naomi and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, returned from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

translationWords:

- [Ruth](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)
- [Bethlehem, Ephrathah](#)
- [barley](#)
- [harvest](#)

translationNotes:

- **So Naomi and Ruth** - This begins a summary statement. English marks this by the word “so.” Determine how your language marks concluding or summary statements and do the same. (See: [End of Story](#))
- **at the beginning of the barley harvest** - “when the farmers were just beginning to harvest their barley crop” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 2 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“Do not go and glean in another field”

Boaz said this because he could not guarantee their safety in another person’s field. It is assumed that not everyone was as gracious and obedient to the law of Moses as Boaz. (See: [grace](#), [gracious](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Ruth 02:01 Notes](#)

Ruth 2:1-2**UDB:**

¹ There was a man named Boaz who lived in Bethlehem. He was a relative of Naomi's dead husband, Elimelech. He was also rich and influential.

² One day Ruth said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the stalks of grain that the harvesters leave behind. I will go behind any harvester who gives me permission." Naomi replied, "Go ahead, my daughter."

ULB:

² ¹ Now Naomi's husband, Elimelech, had a kinsman, Boaz, who was a wealthy, influential man.

² Ruth, the Moabite, said to Naomi, "Now let me go and glean what remains among the ears of grain in the fields. I will follow anyone in whose eyes I will find favor." So Naomi said to her, "Go, my daughter."

translationWords:

- kin, kinsman
- Boaz
- Ruth
- Moab, Moabite, Moabite
- glean, gleaning
- grain

translationNotes:

- **Now Naomi's husband** - This phrase introduces new information before the story continues. Your language may have a way to introduce new information. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **a wealthy, influential man** - "a prominent, wealthy man." This means that Boaz was prosperous and well known in his community, with a good reputation.
- **Ruth, the Moabite** - Here the story resumes. You need to see how your language restarts a story after a break.
- **the Moabite** - This is another way of saying the woman was from the country or tribe of Moab.
- **glean what remains among the ears of grain** - "gather kernels of grain left behind by the harvesters" or "pick up kernels of grain left behind by the harvesters"
- **ears** - "heads" or "stalks." The "ears" are the parts of a grain plant that contain the grain.

- **in whose eyes I will find favor** - Ruth speaks of being pleasing to look at as gaining permission or approval. AT: “who will grant me permission to glean” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))
- **daughter** - Ruth was caring for Naomi as if she were her own mother. Make sure it is possible in your language to use this word for someone who is not an actual daughter.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:3-4**UDB:**

³ So Ruth went out to the fields and began to pick up the grain left behind by the men who were harvesting. And it turned out that she was working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech!

⁴ Just then, Boaz returned from town. He greeted the harvesters, saying, “May Yahweh be with you!” They replied, “May Yahweh bless you!”

ULB:

³ Ruth went and gleaned what remained in the fields after they had harvested it. She happened to come to the portion of the fields belonging to Boaz, who was related to Elimelech. ⁴ Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, “May Yahweh be with you.” They answered him, “May Yahweh bless you.”

translationWords:

- glean, gleaning
- reap, reaper
- Boaz
- Bethlehem, Ephrathah
- Yahweh
- bless, blessed, blessing

translationNotes:

- **She happened to come** - Ruth was not aware that the field she picked to glean in belonged to Naomi’s relative Boaz.
- **Behold, Boaz** - The word “behold” alerts us to the important event of Boaz arriving at the field. Your language may also have a specific way of introducing important events or characters.
- **came from Bethlehem** - The fields were an unspecified distance outside of Bethlehem.
- **bless you** - “give you good things” or “make you happy”

Links:

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

Ruth 2:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ Then Boaz saw Ruth, and asked the foreman, “Who is that young woman related to?” ⁶ The foreman replied, “She is the woman from Moab who returned from there with her mother-in-law Naomi. ⁷ She said to me, ‘Please let me pick up some grain. I will only walk behind the men who are harvesting the grain and gather what they leave.’ I gave her permission, and she has been working in the field from this morning until now. She has only taken a short rest, when she rested in the shelter.”

ULB:

⁵ Then Boaz said to his servant who was supervising the reapers, “What man does this young woman belong to?” ⁶ The servant supervising the reapers answered and said, “It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the land of Moab. ⁷ She said to me, ‘Please let me glean what remains in the field after the workers harvest the crop.’ So she came here and has continued from the morning until now, except that she rested a little in the house.”^[1] Some modern versions read, *Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves of grain after the reapers.*

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabites](#)
- [glean, gleaning](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **What man does this young woman belong to?** - Possible meanings are 1) Boaz was asking about Ruth’s husband or 2) Boaz was asking about Ruth’s parents or current guardians.
- **supervising** - “in charge of” or “managing”
- **house** - “hut” or “shelter.” This was a temporary shelter or garden hut in the field that provided shade from the sun.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:8-9

UDB:

⁸ Then Boaz went over to Ruth and said to her, "Young lady, listen to me. You do not need to go to any other field to gather grain. You should stay here with my servant girls. ⁹ Watch where the men are harvesting, and follow along behind my servant girls. I have told the men who are harvesting not to bother you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get some water to drink from the jars that the men have filled."

ULB:

⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Are you listening to me, my daughter? Do not go and glean in another field; do not leave my field. Instead, stay here and work with my young female workers. ⁹ Keep your eyes only on the field where the men are reaping and follow behind the other women. Have I not instructed the men not to touch you? Whenever you are thirsty, you may go to the waterpots and drink the water that the men have drawn."

translationWords:

- Boaz
- Ruth
- glean, gleaning
- reap, reaper

translationNotes:

- **Are you listening to me, my daughter** - This can be reworded as a command. AT: "Listen to me, my daughter!" or "Note well what I am telling you, my daughter!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **my daughter** - This was a kind way of addressing a younger woman. Ruth was not the actual daughter of Boaz, so make sure the translation of this does not make it sound like she was. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **Keep your eyes only on the field** - The eyes represent watching something or paying attention to something. AT: "Watch only the field" or "Pay attention only to the field" (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **Have I not instructed the men ... you?** - Boaz used this question to emphasize what he had already done to help Ruth. AT: "I have given the men strict instructions ... you." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **men ... the other women** - "young male workers ... young female workers." The word "men" is used three times to refer to the young men who are harvesting in the field. Some languages can say this using one word, and they have a different word that means young women workers.

- **not to touch you** - Possible meanings are 1) the men were not to harm Ruth or 2) the men were not to stop her from gleaning in his field.
- **the water that the men have drawn** - To draw water means to pull up water from a well or to take it out of a storage vessel.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:10-12**UDB:**

¹⁰ When he said that, she knelt before him, with her face touching the ground. She exclaimed, “Why are you being so kind to me? I did not think you would pay any attention to me since I am a foreigner!” ¹¹ Boaz replied, “People have told me about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband died. They told me that you left your parents and your homeland, and you came here to live among people whom you did not know. ¹² I pray that Yahweh will repay you for what you have done. May you receive full payment for your actions from the God of Israel, because he is the one you have come to and he will protect you!”

ULB:

¹⁰ Then she bowed down before Boaz, touching her head to the ground. She said to him, “Why have I found favor in your sight, that you should be concerned about me, a foreigner?” ¹¹ Boaz answered and said to her, “It has been reported to me, all that you have done since the death of your husband. You have left your father, mother, and the land of your birth to follow your mother-in-law and to come to a people you do not know. ¹² May Yahweh reward you for your deed. May you receive full payment from Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have found refuge.”

translationWords:

- Boaz
- report
- death, die, dead
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- Yahweh
- receive
- God
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel

translationNotes:

- **she bowed down before Boaz, touching her head to the ground** - These are acts of respect and reverence. She was showing honor to Boaz out of gratefulness for what he had done for her. It was also a posture of humility.
- **Why have I found favor** - Ruth is asking a real question.
- **foreigner** - Ruth had pledged her loyalty to the God of Israel in private, but she was known publicly as “the Moabitess.”
- **It has been reported to me** - This can be stated in active form. AT: “People have reported to me” or “People have told me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

- **to come to a people** - Boaz is referring to Ruth coming to dwell with Naomi in a village and community, a country, and religion she did not know. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **reward you** - “repay you” or “pay you back”
- **for your deed** - This is an act of faith, choosing to live with Naomi in Bethlehem and trusting Naomi’s God.
- **May you receive full payment from Yahweh** - This is a poetic expression that is very similar to the previous sentence. AT: “May Yahweh give back to you even more than you have given” (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **under whose wings you have found refuge** - Boaz uses the picture of a mother bird gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them, in order to describe God’s protection for those who trust in him. AT: “in whose safe care you have placed yourself” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 2:13**UDB:**

¹³ She replied, “Sir, I hope I will continue to please you. You have comforted me with your kindness, even though I am not even one of your servant girls.”

ULB:

¹³ Then she said, “Let me find favor in your sight, my master, for you have comforted me, and you have spoken kindly to me, though I am not one of your female servants.”

translationWords:

- [lord, master, sir](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)

translationNotes:

- **Let me find favor in your sight** - This refers to asking for a blessing. AT: “Let me receive grace from you” or “Please accept me” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **I am not one of your female servants** - Possible meanings are 1) Ruth was not one of Boaz’s female servants or 2) Ruth did not think her marriage to Naomi’s son granted her any privilege in Bethlehem.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:14

UDB:

¹⁴ When it was time to eat, Boaz said to her, “Come over here and get some food. Take this bread and dip it in the vinegar and eat it.” Then when she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all that she wanted and had some left over.

ULB:

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to Ruth, “Come here, and eat some of the bread, and dip your morsel in the wine vinegar.” She sat beside the reapers, and he offered her some roasted grain. She ate until she was satisfied and left the rest of it.

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [Ruth](#)
- [bread](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [reap, reaper](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **At mealtime** - This refers to the noontime meal.
- **dip your morsel in the wine vinegar** - This was a simple meal eaten in the field. People would sit on the ground around a cloth that had a bowl of wine vinegar on it and plates of broken bread. They would dip their bread in the vinegar bowl to wet it and add flavor before they ate it.
- **wine vinegar** - a sauce that bread was dipped in. The Israelites further fermented some of their wine to make vinegar.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:15-16**UDB:**

¹⁵ As she stood up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his workers, "Even if she gathers some grain near the bundles of grain that have been cut, do not try to stop her. ¹⁶ Instead, make sure that you pull out some stalks of grain from the bundles and leave them on the ground for her to pick up, and do not scold her."

ULB:

¹⁵ As she got up to gather up grain, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her gather up the grain even among the bundles, and do not tell her not to. ¹⁶ Also pull out for her some ears of grain from the bundles, and leave them for her to gather up, and do not rebuke her."

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [glean, gleaning](#)

translationNotes:

- **As she got up to gather up grain, Boaz commanded his young men** - In the context of the commands, it is likely that Ruth was far enough away not to hear Boaz's instructions. AT: "And when Ruth got up to gather up grain, Boaz privately told his young men"
- **As she got up** - "As she stood up"
- **even among the bundles** - Here "even" denotes "above and beyond what one normally does." Boaz instructs his workers to let Ruth glean around the bundles of grain. People who were gleaning were normally forbidden from working that close to the harvested grain.
- **pull out for her some ears of grain from the bundles** - "take some stalks of grain out of the bundles and leave them for her" or "leave behind stalks of grain for her to collect"
- **do not rebuke her** - "do not cause her shame" or "do not dishonor her"

Links:

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

Ruth 2:17-18

UDB:

¹⁷ So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley that she had gathered, to separate the kernels from the stalks, and the barley filled a large basket. ¹⁸ She carried it back to town and showed her mother-in-law how much she had gathered. She also gave her mother-in-law the grain that was left over from her lunch.

ULB:

¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out the ears of grain that she had gathered, and the grain was about an ephah of barley. ¹⁸ She lifted it up and went into the city. Then her mother-in-law saw what she had gathered. Ruth also brought out the roasted grain left from her meal and gave it to her.

translationWords:

- [glean, gleaning](#)
- [grain](#)
- [Ruth](#)

translationNotes:

- **beat out** - She separated the edible part of the grain from the hull and stalk, which is thrown away.
- **ears of grain** - This refers to the eatable part of the grain. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **about an ephah of barley** - “about 13 kilos of barley” (See: [Biblical Volume](#))
- **She lifted it up and went into the city** - It is implied that Ruth carried the grain home. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **her mother-in-law saw** - “Naomi saw”

Links:

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

Ruth 2:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you gather all this grain today? In whose field exactly did you work? May God do good to the man who was so kind to you.” Then Ruth told her about where she had been working. She said, “The name of that field’s owner is Boaz.” ²⁰ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May Yahweh bless him! He has not stopped acting kindly toward us, who are still living, and to our husbands who have died.” Then she added, “That man is a close relative of Elimelech; in fact, he is one of those responsible for taking care of us.”

ULB:

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law said to her, “Where have you gleaned today? Where did you go to work? May the man who helped you be blessed.” Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man who owned the field where she had worked. She said, “The name of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz.” ²⁰ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by Yahweh, who has not left off his loyalty to the living and to the dead.” Naomi said to her, “That man is near of kin to us, one of our kinsman-redeemers.”

translationWords:

- glean, gleaning
- bless, blessed, blessing
- Ruth
- Boaz
- Yahweh
- kin, kinsman
- redeem, redemption, redeemer

translationNotes:

- **Where have you gleaned today? Where did you go to work?** - Naomi said almost the same thing in two different ways to show that she was very interested in knowing what had happened to Ruth that day. (See: **Parallelism**)
- **he be blessed by Yahweh** - Naomi is asking God to reward Boaz for his kindness to Ruth and herself.
- **who has not left off his loyalty** - “who has continued to be loyal.” Possible meanings are 1) Boaz remembered his obligations to Naomi as a family member or 2) Naomi is referring to Yahweh, who was acting through Boaz or 3) Yahweh has continued to be faithful to the living and the dead. (See: **Double Negatives**)

- **to the living** - “to the people who are still living.” Naomi and Ruth were the “living.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **the dead** - “the people who have already died.” Naomi’s husband and sons were the “dead.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))
- **near of kin to us, one of our kinsman-redeemers** - The second phrase repeats and expands the first. This is a Hebrew style of emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **kinsman-redeemers** - A kinsman-redeemer was a close male relative who could rescue a childless widow from financial ruin by marrying her and having a child with her. He would also reacquire the land his relatives had lost due to poverty and redeem family members who had sold themselves into slavery. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 2:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ Then Ruth said, “He also said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they have completed bringing in all my grain from the field.’”

²² Naomi replied, “My daughter, it will be good for you to go to his field with his servant girls, because if you go to someone else’s field, someone might harm you.”

ULB:

²¹ Ruth the Moabite said, “Indeed, he said to me, ‘You should keep close to my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’” ²² Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young female workers, so that you do not come to harm in any other field.”

translationWords:

- [Ruth](#)
- [Moab, Moabite, Moabite](#)
- [harvest](#)

translationNotes:

- **Indeed, he said to me** - “He even said to me.” This indicates that what follows is the most important part of Boaz’s words to Ruth.
- **keep close to my young men** - Boaz was referring to the physical protection his men can provide her.
- **go out with** - “work with”
- **come to harm** - Possible meanings are 1) other workers might abuse Ruth or try to seize her and sleep with her or 2) in another field, the owner might interfere or stop her from gleaning until the end of the harvest.

Links:

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

Ruth 2:23**UDB:**

²³ So Ruth worked alongside of Boaz's servant girls. She gathered stalks of grain until the workers had finished harvesting both the barley and the wheat. During that time she continued to live with Naomi.

ULB:

²³ So she stayed close to Boaz's female workers in order to glean to the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest. She lived with her mother-in-law.

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [glean, gleaning](#)
- [barley](#)
- [harvest](#)
- [wheat](#)

translationNotes:

- **she stayed close** - Ruth worked in Boaz's fields with his workers during the day, so she would be safe.
- **She lived with her mother-in-law** - Ruth went to Naomi's home to sleep at night.

Links:

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

Ruth 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Boaz's integrity

Boaz showed great integrity in this chapter by not having sexual relations with Ruth. He was also concerned with how people would see Ruth if they caught her in this position. Boaz's character is important for this story.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"So that things may go well for you"

Naomi attempted to make Ruth desirable to Boaz so that he would want to marry her. Even though she was a Gentile by birth, Boaz could marry her because she was Naomi's daughter. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

- [Ruth 03:01 Notes](#)

Ruth 3:1-2**UDB:**

¹ One day, Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, I think that I should try to arrange for you to have a home and a husband who will provide for you. ² Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he has been very kind by letting you gather grain with his servant girls. Listen carefully. Tonight he will be at the place where they thresh the barley. He will be separating the grain from the chaff.

ULB:

3 ¹ Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek a place for you to rest, so that things may go well for you? ² Now Boaz, the man whose young female workers you have been with, is he not our kinsman? Look, he will be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

translationWords:

- Boaz
- kin, kinsman
- winnow, sift
- barley
- thresh, threshing

translationNotes:

- **mother-in-law** - Naomi is the mother of Ruth's dead husband.
- **My daughter** - Ruth became Naomi's daughter by marrying her son and further by her actions in caring for Naomi after returning to Bethlehem.
- **should I not seek a place for you?** - Naomi used this question to tell Ruth what she planned to do. AT: "I must look for a place for you!" or "I must find a husband to care for you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **a place for you to rest** - Possible meanings are 1) literally in finding a house for her to live in or 2) figuratively in finding a husband to care for her. Naomi probably had both senses in mind. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **female workers you have been with** - "female workers you have been working with" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **is he not our kinsman?** - Naomi probably used this question to remind Ruth of something she had already told her. AT: "he is our relative." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Look** - This term indicates that the following statement is very important.
- **winnowing** - To winnow means to separate grain from the unwanted chaff by tossing both the grain and chaff into the air, allowing the wind to blow the chaff away.

Links:

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

Ruth 3:3-5

UDB:

³ Bathe yourself and put on some perfume. Put on your best clothes. Then go down to the place where they thresh the grain. But do not let him know that you are there until he is finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he has finished eating, notice where he lies down to sleep. Then when he is asleep, go over to him, uncover his feet, and lie close to his feet. When he wakes up, he will tell you what to do.”

⁵ Ruth replied, “I will do everything that you have told me to do.”

ULB:

³ Therefore, wash yourself, anoint yourself, put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not make yourself known to the man until he finishes eating and drinking.[1]The Hebrew text has, *Put on your best piece of clothing*. However, a marginal note instructs readers to read, *Put on your best clothes*. Translators are free to choose for themselves. ⁴ But when he lies down, take notice of the place where he lies down so that later you can go to him, uncover his feet, and lie down there. Then he will tell you what to do.” ⁵ Ruth said to Naomi, “I will do everything you say.”

translationWords:

- anoint, anointed
- thresh, threshing
- Ruth

translationNotes:

- **anoint yourself** - This is probably a reference to rubbing sweet-smelling oil on oneself, much as women put on perfume today.
- **go down to the threshing floor** - This refers to leaving the city and heading to the threshing area. (See: **Idiom**)
- **uncover his feet** - This means to remove the cloak or blanket covering his feet so that they would be exposed to the cold. (See: **Symbolic Action**)
- **lie down there** - “lie down at his feet”
- **Then he will tell you what to do** - The specific custom of that time is unclear, but this is usually understood as a culturally acceptable way for a woman to tell a man that she was willing to marry him. Boaz would understand the custom and accept or reject her offer.
- **Then he will** - “When he wakes up, he will”

Links:

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

Ruth 3:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ So she went down to the place where they thresh the grain. There she did everything that her mother-in-law had told her to do.

⁷ When Boaz finished eating and drinking, he was feeling good. Then he went over to the far end of the pile of grain. He lay down there and went to sleep. Then Ruth approached him quietly. She took the covering off his feet and lay down there.

ULB:

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor, and she followed the instructions her mother-in-law had given her. ⁷ When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. Then she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [grain](#)

translationNotes:

- **his heart was merry** - “he was satisfied” or “he was in a good mood.” It does not imply Boaz was overly drunk. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **she came softly** - “she sneaked in” or “she came in quietly so no one would hear her”
- **uncovered his feet** - “removed his blanket from his feet”
- **lay down** - “lay down at his feet”

Links:

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

Ruth 3:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ In the middle of the night, he woke up suddenly. He sat up and realized that a woman was lying at his feet. ⁹ He asked her, “Who are you?” She replied, “I am your servant, Ruth. Since you are the one responsible for my dead husband’s family, spread the corner of your cloak over me.”

ULB:

⁸ It came about at midnight that the man was startled. He turned over, and right there a woman was lying at his feet! ⁹ He said, “Who are you?” She answered, “I am Ruth, your female servant. Spread your cloak over your female servant, for you are a near kinsman.”

translationWords:

- [Ruth](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [kin, kinsman](#)

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.
- **at midnight** - “in the middle of the night”
- **was startled** - It is not clear what startled Boaz. Perhaps he suddenly felt the cold air on his feet.
- **He turned over** - He looked to see what startled him. (See: [Idiom](#))
- **a woman was lying at his feet** - The woman was Ruth, but Boaz could not recognize her in the darkness.
- **your female servant** - Ruth spoke with humility to Boaz.
- **Spread your cloak over your female servant** - This was a cultural idiom for marriage. AT: “Marry me” (See: [Idiom](#))
- **near kinsman** - a close relative with special responsibilities toward their extended family

Links:

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

Ruth 3:10-11**UDB:**

¹⁰ Boaz replied, "May Yahweh bless you, my dear! You acted kindly toward your mother-in-law previously, and now you are acting even more kindly toward me by not chasing after a young man to marry, whether rich or poor. ¹¹ Now, my dear, I will do everything that you ask. Do not be afraid, because all the people in this town know that you are an honorable woman.

ULB:

¹⁰ Boaz said, "My daughter, may you be blessed by Yahweh. You have showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, because you have not gone after any of the young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ Now, my daughter, do not be afraid! I will do for you all that you say, because all the city of my people knows that you are a worthy woman.

translationWords:

- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless](#)

translationNotes:

- **my daughter** - Boaz used this expression as a sign of respect toward Ruth as a younger woman.
- **more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning** - "even more kindness now than before"
- **more kindness in the latter end** - This refers to Ruth asking Boaz to marry her. By marrying Naomi's relative, Ruth would provide for Naomi and demonstrate great kindness to Naomi.
- **at the beginning** - This refers to the way Ruth had earlier provided for her mother-in-law by staying with her and gleaning grain for food for them.
- **because you have not gone after** - "you have not pursued marriage with." Ruth could have ignored Naomi's need and looked for a husband for herself outside of Naomi's relatives. (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Ruth](#)
- [Ruth 03 General Notes](#)

- Ruth 3 Translation Questions

Ruth 3:12-13

UDB:

¹² But there is one problem. Although it is true that I am a close relative of yours, there is another man who is an even closer relative than I am, one who stands closer to your mother-in-law than I do, and therefore he is really the one who is responsible for you. ¹³ You stay here for the rest of the night. Tomorrow morning I will tell this man about you. If he says that he will take responsibility for you, fine, we will let him marry you. But if he is not willing to do that, I solemnly promise that as surely as Yahweh lives, I will marry you and take care of you. So stay here until it is morning.”

ULB:

¹² It is true that I am a kinsman, but there is a kinsman nearer than I. ¹³ Stay here tonight, and in the morning, if he will perform for you the duty of a kinsman, good, let him do the kinsman’s duty. But if he will not do the duty of a kinsman for you, then I will do it, by the life of Yahweh. Lie down until the morning.”

translationWords:

- true, truth, come true
- kin, kinsman
- life, live, living, alive
- Yahweh

translationNotes:

- **kinsman nearer than I** - It was the duty of the closest male relative to help the widow.
- **if he will not do the duty of a kinsman** - “if he will not marry his kinsman’s widow and father children for his dead relative” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **by the life of Yahweh** - “as surely as Yahweh lives.” This was a common Hebrew vow.

Links:

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

Ruth 3:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until morning. But she got up and left before it was light enough that people would be able to recognize her, because Boaz said, “It would be best if no one knows that a woman was here.” ¹⁵ He also said to her, “Bring to me your cloak and spread it out.” When she did that, he poured into it a generous amount of barley and put it on her back. Then he went into town.

ULB:

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning. But she rose up before anyone could recognize another person. For Boaz had said, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” ¹⁵ Then Boaz said, “Bring your shawl and hold it out.” When she did so, he measured six large measures of barley into it and put the load on her. Then he went into the city.

translationWords:

- [thresh, threshing](#)
- [barley](#)

translationNotes:

- **she lay at his feet** - Ruth slept at Boaz’ feet. They did not have sex.
- **before anyone could recognize another person** - This time of day can be spoken of in terms of darkness. AT: “while it was still dark”
- **shawl** - a piece of cloth worn over the shoulders
- **six large measures of barley** - The actual amount is not stated. It was enough to be considered generous, yet small enough for Ruth to carry alone. Some think it was about 30 kilograms.
- **put the load on her** - The amount of grain was so great that Ruth needed help picking it up to carry it.
- **Then he went into the city** - Most ancient copies have “he went,” but some have “she went.” There are English versions with both. The better choice is “he went.”

Links:

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

Ruth 3:16-18

UDB:

¹⁶ When Ruth arrived home, her mother-in-law asked her, “Is that you, my daughter?” Then Ruth told her everything that Boaz had done for her and what he had said. ¹⁷ She also said to Naomi, “He gave me all this barley, saying, ‘I do not want you to return to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’” ¹⁸ Then Naomi said, “My daughter, just wait here until we see what happens. I am sure that Boaz will surely take care of this matter today.”

ULB:

¹⁶ When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did you do, my daughter?” Then Ruth told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷ She said, “These six measures of barley are what he gave me, for he said, ‘Do not go empty to your mother-in-law.’” ¹⁸ Then Naomi said, “Stay here, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out, for the man will not rest until he has finished this thing today.”

translationWords:

- [barley](#)

translationNotes:

- **How did you do, my daughter?** - What Ruth meant by this question can be made more clear. AT: “What happened, my daughter?” or “How did Boaz act toward you?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))
- **all that the man had done** - “all that Boaz had done”
- **Do not go empty** - “Do not go empty-handed” or “Do not go with nothing” or “Be sure to take something”
- **finished this thing** - This refers to the decision about who will buy Naomi’s property and marry Ruth.

Links:

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

Ruth 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

King David

Despite being a Moabitess, Ruth became an ancestor of David. David was Israel's greatest king. It is shocking a Gentile would become a part of such an important lineage. She had great faith in Yahweh. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [faith](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You must also take Ruth the Moabitess"

Because Naomi had no son, her daughter-in-law Ruth needed to be provided for. Therefore, the relative who wanted to use her land had to help also Ruth have a son who would come to provide for her.

"This was the custom in former times"

This is a comment made by the writer of the text. He functions as a narrator in this instance. It indicates that there was a considerable period of time between when the events occurred and when they were written.

Links:

- [Ruth 04:01 Notes](#)

Ruth 4:1-2

UDB:

¹ Meanwhile, Boaz went up to the meeting place at the gate leading into the town and sat down there. Before long, the close relative that Boaz had mentioned came along. Boaz said to him, “My cousin, come over here and sit down.” So the man went and sat down. ² Boaz then gathered ten of the elders of the town and asked them to join them. So they sat down.

ULB:

4 ¹ Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. Soon, the near kinsman of whom Boaz had spoken came by. Boaz said to him, “My friend, come over and sit down here.” The man came over and sat down. ² Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down.

translationWords:

- [Boaz](#)
- [kin, kinsman](#)
- [elder](#)

translationNotes:

- **gate** - “gate of the city” or “gate of Bethlehem.” This was the main entrance to the walled town of Bethlehem. There was an open area by the gate that was used as a meeting place to discuss community matters.
- **the near kinsman** - This was the closest living relative to Elimelech.
- **elders of the city** - “leaders of the city”

Links:

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

Ruth 4:3-4**UDB:**

³ Then Boaz said to his relative, "As you know, Naomi has returned from Moab. Now she wants to sell her right to the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ I thought that I should tell you about that, and suggest that you buy it, while these elders who are sitting here are listening. If you are willing to buy the property, do that. But if you do not want to buy it, tell me, so that I will know. I am suggesting this to you because you are the one who has the first right to buy it, and if you do not buy it, I am next in line." The man replied, "I will buy it!"

ULB:

³ Boaz said to the near kinsman, "Naomi, who has returned from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that was our brother Elimelech's. ⁴ I thought to inform you and say to you, 'Buy it in the presence of those who are sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you wish to redeem it, redeem it. But if you do not wish to redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you." Then the other man said, "I will redeem it."

translationWords:

- kin, kinsman
- Moab, Moabite, Moabites
- elder
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- redeem, redemption, redeemer

translationNotes:

- **Naomi ... is selling the parcel of land** - It was the responsibility of the kinsman to buy back his relative's land and to care for his family. In this case, it meant the man must buy Naomi's land, marry Ruth, and care for Naomi.
- **in the presence of** - This would make the transaction legal and binding.
- **redeem it** - This meant to buy the land to keep it within their family.
- **I am after you** - Boaz was the next kinsman in line to redeem the land.

Links:

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

Ruth 4:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ Then Boaz told him, “When you buy the land from Naomi, you will also need to marry Ruth, our relative’s widow from Moab, in order that she may have a son to inherit the property and carry on the name of her dead husband.” ⁶ Then the nearer relative said, “If that is so, I do not want to buy the property, because then my own children would not inherit the property. I give you the right to buy the property instead of me!”

ULB:

⁵ Then Boaz said, “On the day that you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also take Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the dead man, in order to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance.” ⁶ Then the near kinsman said, “I cannot redeem it for myself without damaging my own inheritance. You take my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

translationWords:

- Boaz
- Ruth
- Moab, Moabite, Moabite
- name
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir
- kin, kinsman
- redeem, redemption, redeemer

translationNotes:

- **On the day that you buy ... you must also** - Boaz uses this expression to inform his relative of the additional responsibility he will have if he buys the land.
- **from the hand of Naomi** - “from the ownership of Naomi” (See: **Idiom**)
- **you must also take Ruth** - “you must also marry Ruth” (See: **Idiom**)
- **Ruth ... the wife of the dead man** - “Ruth ... the widow of Elimelech’s son”
- **to raise up the name of the dead** - “that she may have a son to inherit the property and carry on the name of her dead husband” (UDB)
- **damaging my own inheritance** - He would have to give some of his own wealth to the children that Ruth might bear.
- **You take my right of redemption for yourself** - “You redeem it yourself” or “You yourself redeem it instead of me”

Links:

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

Ruth 4:7-8

UDB:

⁷ At that time, it was the custom in Israel that when two people agreed to redeem or exchange anything between them, one man would take off one of his sandals and give it to the other man. That was the way they finalized transactions in Israel. ⁸ So the relative said to Boaz, “You buy the field yourself!” And he took off one of his sandals and gave it to Boaz.

ULB:

⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and exchange of goods. To confirm all things, a man took off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor; this was the manner of making legal agreements in Israel. ⁸ So the near kinsman said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” and he took off his sandal.

translationWords:

- [redeem, redemption, redeemer](#)
- [Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel](#)
- [kin, kinsman](#)
- [Boaz](#)

translationNotes:

- **Now this was the custom** - The writer of the book explains of the custom of exchange during the time of Ruth. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **in former times** - “in earlier times.” This implies that the customs had changed from when the story took place until the book was written. (See: [Background Information](#))
- **shoe** - “sandal”
- **his neighbor** - This refers to the person with whom he was making the agreement. In this situation the near kinsman gave Boaz his shoe.

Links:

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

Ruth 4:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the other people who were there, "Today you have all seen that I have bought from Naomi all the property that belonged to Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion. ¹⁰ I am also taking Ruth, the woman from Moab, Mahlon's widow, to be my wife. This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will inherit the property. In this way he will carry on the family name among his relatives and here in his hometown. Today you all are witnesses of what I have done."

ULB:

⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's from the hand of Naomi. ¹⁰ Moreover about Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon: I have also acquired her to be my wife, in order that I might raise up the name of the dead man on his inheritance, so that his name will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today."

translationWords:

- Boaz
- elder
- witness, eyewitness
- Ruth
- Moab, Moabite, Moabite
- name
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir
- brother

translationNotes:

- **to the elders and to all the people** - This refers to all the people who were present at the meeting place, not to everyone in the town.
- **all that was Elimelech's and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's** - This refers to all the land and possessions of Naomi's dead husband and sons.
- **from the hand of Naomi** - The hand of Naomi represents Naomi. She was responsible for the money exchange. AT: "from Naomi" (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **in order that I might raise up the name of the dead man on his inheritance** - The first son that Ruth bore would be legally considered Mahlon's son and would inherit the land that Boaz bought from Naomi. AT: "so that I might give her a son who will inherit the dead man's property"

- **so that his name will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place** - Being forgotten is spoken of as if one's name were being cut off from a list of people who had lived earlier. AT: "so that he will not be forgotten by his brothers' descendants and the people of this town" (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **the gate of his place** - The gate of the town is where important legal decisions were made, such as decisions about who owns a piece of land.

Links:

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

Ruth 4:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ All the elders and the others who were sitting at the town gate agreed and said, “Yes, we are witnesses.” One of them added, “May Yahweh allow this woman, who will be coming into your home, to be like Rachel and Leah, the two who bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel. We hope that you will become rich in the clan of Ephrathah, and become famous here in Bethlehem. ¹² May your family be like the family of your ancestor Perez son of Judah, and Tamar, because of the many descendants that Yahweh will give to you and this young woman.”

ULB:

¹¹ All the people who were in the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May Yahweh make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem. ¹² May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring that Yahweh will give you with this young woman.”

translationWords:

- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- elder
- witness, eyewitness
- Yahweh
- Rachel
- Leah
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel
- Bethlehem, Ephrathah
- Judah

translationNotes:

- **people who were in the gate** - “people who were meeting together near the gate”
- **come into your house** - This has literal and figurative meaning. As Ruth marries Boaz, she will move into his house. House can also refer to becoming part of Boaz’s family by being his wife. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **like Rachel and Leah** - These were the two wives of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel.
- **built up the house of Israel** - “bore many children who became the nation of Israel”
- **and may you prosper in Ephrathah** - Ephrathah is the name of the clan to which Boaz belonged in Bethlehem.

- **May your house be like** - God abundantly blessed Judah through his son Perez. The people were asking God to bless Boaz in a similar way through Ruth's children. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Tamar bore to Judah** - Tamar was also a widow. Judah fathered a son with her, which continued the family name.
- **through the offspring that Yahweh will give you** - Yahweh would give Boaz children through Ruth.

Links:

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

Ruth 4:13-15**UDB:**

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth to be his wife and slept with her. Yahweh enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ The women of Bethlehem said to Naomi, "Praise Yahweh! Now he has given you a grandson who will be the one who will have the responsibility to take care of you. May he become famous throughout Israel. ¹⁵ He will make you feel young again, and he will take care of you when you become old, because your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given birth to him. She has been better to you than if you had seven sons."

ULB:

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. He slept with her, and Yahweh allowed her to become pregnant, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ The women said to Naomi, "May Yahweh be blessed, who has not left you today without a near kinsman, this baby. May his name be famous in Israel. ¹⁵ May he be for you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him."

translationWords:

- Boaz
- Ruth
- Yahweh
- kin, kinsman
- name
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel

translationNotes:

- **Boaz took Ruth** - "Boaz married Ruth" or "Boaz took Ruth as a wife"
- **He slept with her** - "He had sex with her" (See: [Euphemism](#))
- **who has not left you today without a near kinsman** - "who has provided you today with a very good near kinsman" (See: [Double Negatives](#))
- **May his name be famous** - This refers to the reputation and character of Naomi's grandson.
- **a restorer of life** - This phrase probably refers to how Naomi will again experience joy and hope in her life as a result of having a new grandson. AT: "one who brings joy to you again" or "one who will make you feel young again" (UDB)
- **a nourisher of your old age** - "he will take care of you when you become old" (UDB)
- **better to you than seven sons** - "Seven" was the Hebrew number of completeness. Naomi's sons both died before they produced any offspring, but Ruth bore a grandson to Naomi by Boaz. AT: "better to you than any son" (See: [Idiom](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 4:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the baby and put him on her lap, and became a second mother for him. ¹⁷ The women who were living nearby said, “It is as though Naomi now has a son!” And they named him Obed. Later, Obed became the father of Jesse, who became the father of King David.

ULB:

¹⁶ Naomi took the child, laid him in her bosom, and took care of him. ¹⁷ The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who became the father of David.

translationWords:

- [name](#)
- [Jesse](#)
- [David](#)

translationNotes:

- **Naomi took the child** - This refers to Naomi holding the child. Make sure it does not sound like she took him away from Ruth.
- **laid him in her bosom** - “held him close against her chest.” This is a statement of love and affection for the child.
- **A son has been born to Naomi** - “The child is like a son to Naomi.” It was understood that the child was Naomi’s grandson, not her physical son.
- **father of David** - “father of King David.” Though “king” is not stated, it was clear to the original audience that David was King David. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Links:

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

Ruth 4:18-22

UDB:

18-22 Here is a list of the descendants of Perez: Perez's son was Hezron. Hezron's son was Ram. Ram's son was Amminadab. Amminadab's son was Nahshon. Nahshon's son was Salmon. Salmon's son was Boaz. Boaz's son was Obed. Obed's son was Jesse. Jesse's son was King David.

ULB:

¹⁸ Now these were the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron became the father of Ram, Ram became the father of Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, Nahshon became the father of Salmon, ²¹ Salmon became the father of Boaz, Boaz became the father of Obed, ²² Obed became the father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of David.

translationWords:

- descendant, descended from
- Boaz
- Jesse
- David

translationNotes:

- **the descendants of Perez** - "the successive descendants." Because it was mentioned earlier that Perez was the son of Judah, the writer continues listing the family line that came from Perez.
- **Hezron ... Ram** - (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

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

translationQuestions

Ruth 1

Q? During what period of time in Jewish history did the story of Ruth occur?

A. It occurred in the days when the judges ruled. [1:1]

Q? Why did Elimelech move to Moab with his family?

A. He moved because there was a famine in Judah. [1:1-2]

Q? What happened to Naomi's family in Moab?

A. Her husband and two sons died, leaving behind two daughters-in-law. [1:3-5]

Q? Why did Naomi decide to return to Judah?

A. She heard that Yahweh had given the people of Judah food. [1:6]

Q? What did Naomi want her two daughters-in-law to do?

A. She wanted them to return to their mothers' houses and find other husbands. [1:8-9]

Q? Who did Naomi believe was the source of her trouble?

A. She believed that Yahweh was the source of her trouble. [1:13]

Q? When Ruth stayed with Naomi, what promise did Ruth make to Naomi?

A. She said, "Where you go, I will go; and where you stay, I will stay; your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God; where you die, I will die." [1:16-17]

Q? To which town did Naomi return?

A. She returned to Bethlehem. [1:19]

Q? What name did Naomi want to be called and why?

A. She asked to be called, "Bitter," because she believed that Yahweh had dealt bitterly with her. [1:20]

Q? What time of the year did Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem?

A. It was at the beginning of the barley harvest. [1:22]

Ruth 2

Q? What was the relationship between Naomi's dead husband and Boaz?

A. They were kinsmen. [02:1,3,20]

Q? As Ruth went out to glean for the first time, who did Ruth say she would follow while gleaning grain?

A. She would follow anyone in whose eyes she found favor. [2:2]

Q? What greeting did Boaz give to his workers?

A. He said, "May Yahweh be with you." [2:4]

Q? What did Boaz want to know about Ruth?

A. He wanted to know to what man she belonged. [2:5]

Q? What instructions did Boaz give Ruth concerning her gleaning?

A. He said, "Stay and work in my field with my women workers." [2:8-9]

Q? After receiving the favorable instructions, what question did Ruth ask Boaz?

A. She asked, "Why have I found favor in your sight?" [2:10]

Q? What good deed of Ruth had Boaz heard about?

A. He had heard that Ruth had left her home to follow Naomi. [2:11]

Q? Under whose wings did Boaz say Ruth had found protection?

A. Ruth had found protection under Yahweh's wings. [2:12]

Q? What additional favor did Boaz show to Ruth when they returned to work after mealtime?

A. He allowed Ruth to glean among the sheaves, and commanded the reapers to pull out sheaves for her from the bundles. [2:15-16]

Q? When Naomi saw the large amount of grain that Ruth brought back, what question did she ask Ruth?

A. She asked, "Where have you gleaned today?" [2:19]

Q? What did Naomi wish for Boaz when she heard that Boaz had helped Ruth?

A. She said, "May he be blessed by Yahweh" [2:20]

Q? To whom did Naomi attribute the good things that were now happening to her?

A. She attributed them to Yahweh. [2:20]

Q? Why did Naomi think it was good for Ruth to work with Boaz's women workers?

A. By doing that, Ruth would not come to harm in any other field. [2:22]

Q? What did Ruth do for the rest of the barley harvest?

A. She gleaned with Boaz's workers and lived with Naomi. [2:23]

Ruth 3

Q? What did Naomi say her desire was for Ruth?

A. She desired that Ruth have a place of rest, and that things would go well for her. [3:1]

Q? What did Naomi tell Ruth to do before going down to the threshing floor?

A. She told her to clean up, put on perfume, and change clothes. [3:3]

Q? What was Ruth to do when she went to where Boaz was sleeping?

A. She was to uncover his feet and to lie down there. [3:4]

Q? What was Ruth's attitude toward Naomi's instructions?

A. She was ready to follow all of Naomi's instructions. [3:5]

Q? At midnight, what was Boaz startled to find?

A. He was startled to find that a woman lay at his feet! [3:8]

Q? What was Ruth's request to Boaz?

A. She said, "Spread your cloak over your servant, for you are a near kinsman." [3:9]

Q? Why did Boaz ask a blessing from Yahweh for Ruth?

A. Because Ruth had pursued Boaz and not younger men. [3:10]

Q? What did Boaz say he would do about Ruth's request?

A. He said that he would do all that she asked. [3:11]

Q? What obstacle prevented Boaz from immediately performing the part of a kinsman for Ruth?

A. There was another kinsman nearer than Boaz. [3:12]

Q? How was Boaz going to determine who would act as kinsman for Ruth?

A. If the nearest kinsman was willing, then he would perform the part of the kinsman, but if he was not willing, then Boaz would be the kinsman. [3:13]

Q? Why did Ruth leave the threshing floor early before anyone could recognize her?

A. Because Boaz had said that it should not be known that she came to the threshing floor. [3:14]

Q? What gift did Boaz give Ruth before she left the threshing floor?

A. He gave her six large measures of barley. [3:15]

Q? Naomi was sure that Boaz would resolve the issue by what time?

A. He would resolve it by the end of that same day. [3:18]

Ruth 4

Q? Where did Boaz go to resolve the issue of who would be the kinsman for Ruth?

A. He went to the gate of the city. [4:1]

Q? Who did Boaz ask to sit as witnesses?

A. He asked ten men of the elders of the city. [4:2]

Q? What did Boaz first ask the other kinsman to redeem if he wished?

A. He asked him to redeem the parcel of land owned by Elimelech. [4:3-4]

Q? What was the other kinsman's answer?

A. He said, "I will redeem it." [4:4]

Q? About what additional requirement did Boaz then tell the other kinsman?

A. He told him that he would also have to take Ruth in order that Elimelech's name would continue with his inheritance. [4:5]

Q? After this, what was the other kinsman's answer?

A. He said, "I cannot redeem it." [4:6]

Q? Why did the other kinsman say he could not be the redeemer?

A. Because it would damage his own inheritance. [4:6]

Q? What did the other kinsman do to show that he agreed Boaz should be the redeemer?

A. He took off his shoe and gave it to Boaz. [4:8]

Q? Boaz reminded the elders that they had witnessed what two agreements?

A. They had witnessed that Boaz had bought all that was Elimelech's, and that he had acquired Ruth as his wife. [4:9-10]

Q? What blessing did the people desire for Boaz?

A. They desired for him offspring through Ruth. [4:12]

Q? Why did the women say that Ruth was better for Naomi than seven sons?

A. Because of Ruth's love for Naomi, and because Ruth had given birth to a grandson for Naomi. [4:15]

Q? What was Naomi's relationship with Ruth's son?

A. Naomi became his guardian. [4:16]

Q? What was Ruth's son's name?

A. His name was Obed. [4:17]

Q? Of whom was Obed the father and grandfather?

A. Obed was the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David. [4:17]

translationWords

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

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](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

barley

Definition:

The term “barley” refers to a kind of grain that is used to make bread.

- The barley plant has a long stalk with a head at the top where the seeds or grains grow.
- Barley does well in warmer weather so it is often harvested in spring or summer.
- When barley is threshed, the edible seeds are separated from the worthless chaff.
- Barley grain is ground up into flour, which is then mixed with water or oil to make bread.
- If barley is not known, this could be translated as “grain called barley” or “barley grain.”

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [grain](#), [thresh](#), [threshing](#), [wheat](#))

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!**”

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.

Boaz

Facts:

Boaz was an Israelite man who was the husband of Ruth, the great grandfather of King David, and an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

- Boaz lived during the time when there were judges in Israel.
- He was a relative of an Israelite woman named Naomi who had returned to Israel after her husband and sons died in Moab.
- Boaz “redeemed” Naomi’s widowed daughter-in-law, Ruth by marrying her and giving her a future with a husband and children.
- He is seen as a picture of how Jesus rescued and redeemed us from sin.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Moab](#), [Moabite](#), [Moabites](#), [redeem](#), [redemption](#), [redeemer](#), [Ruth](#))

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

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

condemn, condemnation

Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as, “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as, “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: [judge](#), [judgment](#), [punish](#), [punishment](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

David

Facts:

David was the second king of Israel and he loved and served God. He was the main writer of the book of Psalms.

- When David was still a young boy caring for his family's sheep, God chose him to become the next king of Israel.
- David became a great fighter and led the Israelite army in battles against their enemies. His defeat of Goliath the Philistine is well-known.
- King Saul tried to kill David, but God protected him, and made him king after Saul's death.
- David committed a terrible sin, but he repented and God forgave him.
- Jesus, the Messiah, is called the "Son of David" because he is a descendant of King David.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Goliath](#), [Philistines](#), [Saul \(OT\)](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[17-02]** God chose a young Israelite named **David** to be king after Saul. **David** was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. ... **David** was a humble and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **[17-03]** **David** was also a great soldier and leader. When **David** was still a young man, he fought against a giant named Goliath.
- **[17-04]** Saul became jealous of the people's love for **David**. Saul tried many times to kill him, so **David** hid from Saul.
- **[17-05]** God blessed **David** and made him successful. **David** fought many battles and God helped him defeat Israel's enemies.
- **[17-06]** **David** wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- **[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.
- **[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. **David** repented of his sin and God forgave him. For the rest of his life, **David** followed and obeyed God, even in difficult times.

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**.
-

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.

elder

Definition:

Elders are spiritually mature men who have responsibilities of spiritual and practical leadership among God's people.

- The term "elder" came from the fact that elders were originally older men who, because of their age and experience, had greater wisdom.
- In the Old Testament, the elders helped lead the Israelites in matters of social justice and the Law of Moses.
- In the New Testament, Jewish elders continued to be leaders in their communities and also were judges for the people.
- In the early Christian churches, Christian elders gave spiritual leadership to the local assemblies of believers.
- Elders in these churches included young men who were spiritually mature.
- This term could be translated as "older men" or "spiritually mature men leading the church."

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.

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

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

glean, gleaning

Definition:

The term “glean” means to go through a field or orchard to pick up whatever grain or fruit the harvesters have left behind.

- God told the Israelites to let the widows, poor people, and foreigners glean the leftover grain in order to provide food for themselves.
- Sometimes the owner of the field would allow the gleaners to go directly behind the harvesters to glean, which enabled them to glean much more of the grain.
- A clear example of how this worked is in the story of Ruth, who was generously allowed to glean among the harvesters in the fields of her relative Boaz.
- Other ways to translate “glean” can be, “pick up” or “gather” or “collect.”

(See also: [Boaz](#), [grain](#), [harvest](#), [Ruth](#))

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.

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

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

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."

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.”

Jesse

Facts:

Jesse was the father of King David, and the grandson of Ruth and Boaz.

- Jesse was from the tribe of Judah.
- He was an “Ephrathite,” which means he was from the town of Ephrathah (Bethlehem).
- The prophet Isaiah prophesied about a “shoot” or “branch” that would come from the “root of Jesse” and bear fruit. This refers to Jesus who was a descendant of Jesse.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethlehem](#), [Ephrathah](#), [Boaz](#), [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [fruit](#), [fruitful](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [king](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [Ruth](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

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

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

kin, kinsman**Definition:**

The term “kin” refers to a person’s blood relative. The word “kinsman” refers specifically to a male relative.

- These terms can refer to a close relative, such as a parent or brother, or to a more distant relative, such as an aunt, uncle, or cousin.
- In ancient Israel, if a man died, his nearest male relative was expected to marry his widow, manage his property, and help carry on his family name. This relative was called a “kinsman-redeemer.”
- This term could also be translated as, “relative” or “family member.”

Bible References:

Waiting

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

law, law of Moses, God's law, law of Yahweh

Definition:

All these terms refer to the commandments and instructions that God gave Moses for the Israelites to obey. The terms “law” and “God’s law” are also used more generally to refer to everything God wants his people to obey.

- Depending on the context, the “law” can refer to:
 - the Ten Commandments that God wrote on stone tablets for the Israelites.
 - all the laws given to Moses
 - the first five books of the Old Testament.
 - the entire Old Testament (also referred to as “scriptures” in the New Testament).
 - all of God’s instructions and will.
- The phrase “the law and the prophets” is used in the New Testament to refer to the Hebrew scriptures (or “Old Testament”).

Translation Suggestions:

- These terms could be translated using the plural, “laws” since they refer to many instructions.
- The “law of Moses” could be translated as “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Depending on the context, “the law of Moses” could also be translated as, “the law that God told to Moses” or “God’s laws that Moses wrote down” or “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Ways to translate “the law” or “law of God” or “God’s laws” could include: “laws from God” or “God’s commands” or “laws that God gave” or “everything that God commands” or “all of God’s instructions”
- The phrase, “law of Yahweh” could also be translated as, “Yahweh’s laws” or “laws that Yahweh said to obey” or “laws from Yahweh” or “things Yahweh commanded.”

(See also: [instruct](#), [instruction](#), [Moses](#), [Ten Commandments](#), [lawful](#), [lawfully](#), [unlawful](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

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.

- **[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.
- **[15-13]** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.
- **[16-01]** After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God's laws**.
- **[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.
- **[27-01]** Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"
- **[28-01]** Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."

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

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."

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.”
-

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

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

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!"

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

raise, rise, risen, arise, arose**Definition:****raise, raise up**

In general, the word “raise” means to “lift up” or “make higher.”

- The figurative phrase, “raise up” means to cause something to come into being or to appear. It can also mean to appoint someone to do something.
- Sometimes “raise up” means to “restore” or “rebuild.”
- “Raise” has a specialized meaning in the phrase, “raise from the dead.” It means to cause a dead person to become alive again.
- Sometimes “raise up” means to “exalt” someone or something.

rise, arise

To “rise” or “arise” means to “go up” or “get up.” The terms “risen,” “rose” and “arose” are used for expressing past action.

- When a person gets up to go somewhere, this is sometimes expressed as, “he arose and went” or “he rose up and went.”
- If something “arises” it means it “happens” or “begins to happen.”
- Jesus predicted that he would “rise from the dead.” Three days after Jesus died, the angel said, “He has risen”!

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “raise” or “raise up” can be translated as “to lift up” or “to make higher.”
- To “raise up” could also be translated as, “to cause to appear” or “to appoint” or “to bring into existence.”
- To “raise up the strength of your enemies” could be translated as, “cause your enemies to be very strong.”
- The phrase “raise someone from the dead,” could be translated as “cause someone to return from death to life” or “cause someone to come back to life.”
- Depending on the context, “raise up” could also be translated as, “provide” or “appoint” or “cause to have” or “build up” or “rebuild” or “repair.”
- The phrase “arose and went” could be translated as “got up and went” or “went.”
- Depending on the context, the term “arose” could also be translated as “began” or “started up” or “got up” or “stood up.”

(See also: [resurrection](#), [appoint](#), [appointed](#), [exalt](#), [exaltation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [21-14] The prophets foretold that the Messiah would die and that God would also **raise** him from the dead.
- [41-05] "Jesus is not here. He has **risen** from the dead, just like he said he would!"
- [43-07] "Although Jesus died, God **raised** him from the dead. This fulfills the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.' We are witnesses to the fact that God **raised** Jesus to life again."
- [44-05] "You killed the author of life, but God **raised** him from the dead. "
- [44-08] Peter answered them, "This man stands before you healed by the power of Jesus the Messiah. You crucified Jesus, but God **raised** him to life again!"
- [48-04] 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.
- [49-02] He (Jesus) 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.
- [49-12] You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on the cross instead of you, and that God **raised** him to life again.

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

receive

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and to treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” can be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression, “you will receive power” could be translated as, “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could also be translated as, “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “God healed him so that he was able to see.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [save](#), [safe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [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. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- [45-05] As Stephen was dying, he cried out, “Jesus, **receive** my spirit.”
- [49-06] He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- [49-10] When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- [49-13] God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

redeem, redemption, redeemer

Definition:

The terms “redeem” and “redemption” refer to buying back something that was previously owned or held captive. A “redeemer” is someone who redeems something or someone.

- God gave laws to the Israelites about how to redeem people or things.
- For example, someone could redeem a person who was in slavery by paying the price so that the slave could go free. The word “ransom” also refers to this practice.
- If someone’s land had been sold, a relative of that person could “redeem” or “buy back” that land so that it would stay in the family.
- These practices show how God redeems people who are in slavery to sin. When he died on the cross, Jesus paid the full payment for people’s sins and redeemed all those who trust in him for salvation. People who have been redeemed by God are set free from sin and its punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “redeem” could also be translated as “buy back” or “pay to free (someone)” or “ransom.”
- The term “redemption” could be translated as “ransom” or “freedom payment” or “the buying back.”
- The words, “ransom” and “redeem” have basically the same meaning, so some languages may only use one term to translate both these terms.

(See also: [free](#), [freedom](#), [liberty](#), [ransom](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

report**Definition:**

The term “to report” means to tell people about something that happened, often giving details about that event. A report can be spoken or written.

- “Report” could also be translated as “tell” or “explain” or “tell the details of.”
- The expression, “Report this to no one” could be translated as, “Don’t talk about this with anyone” or “Don’t tell anyone about this.”
- Ways to translate “a report” could include, “an explanation” or “a story” or “a detailed account,” depending on the context.

Bible References:

Waiting

shows the interruption of thought and

shows the interruption of thought and

Ruth

Facts:

Ruth was a Moabite woman who married an Israelite man who had moved to Moab with his family during the time when judges were leading Israel.

- Ruth's husband died and some time after that she left Moab to travel with her mother-in-law Naomi who was returning to her hometown Bethlehem in Israel.
- Ruth was loyal to Naomi and worked hard to provide food for her.
- She also committed herself to serving the one true God of Israel.
- Ruth married an Israelite man named Boaz and gave birth to a son who became the grandfather of King David and the ancestor of Jesus Christ.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [Bethlehem](#), [Ephrathah](#), [Boaz](#), [David](#), [judge](#), [Moab](#), [Moabite](#), [Moabites](#), [naomi](#))

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."

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.

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

true, truth, come true

Definition:

The terms “true” and “truth” refer to concepts that are facts, events that actually happened, and statements that were actually said.

- True things are real, genuine, actual, rightful, legitimate, and factual.
- The truth is an understanding, belief, fact, or statement that is true.
- The expression “come true” or “came true” is an expression that means that a prophecy actually happened as it was predicted that it would.
- Truth includes the concept of acting in a way that is reliable and faithful.
- Jesus revealed God’s truth in the words that he spoke.
- God’s word is truth. It tells about things that actually happened and teaches what is true about God and about everything he has made.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context and what is being described, the term “true” could also be translated by “real” or “factual” or “correct” or “right” or “certain” or “genuine.”
- Ways to translate the term “truth” could include, “what is true” or “fact” or “certainty” or “principle.”
- The expression “come true” could also be translated as, “actually happen” or “be fulfilled” or “happen as predicted.”
- The expression “tell the truth” or “speak the truth” could also be translated as, “say what is true” or “tell what really happened” or “say things that are reliable.”
- To “accept the truth” could be translated as, “believe what is true about God.”
- In an expression such as, “worship God in spirit and in truth,” the expression “in truth” could also be translated by, “faithfully obeying what God has taught us.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [fulfill](#), [obey](#), [obedient](#), [obedience](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [understand](#), [understanding](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[02-04]** The snake responded to the woman, “That is not **true**! You will not die.”
- **[14-06]** Immediately Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, said, “It is **true** that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!”
- **[16-01]** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the **true** God.

- [31-08] They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "**Truly**, you are the Son of God."
- [39-10] "I have come to earth to tell the **truth** about God. Everyone who loves the **truth** listens to me." Pilate said, "What is **truth**?"

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.

unfaithful, unfaithfulness

Definition:

The term “unfaithful” describes people who do not do what God has commanded them to do. The condition or practice of being unfaithful is “unfaithfulness.”

- The people of Israel were called “unfaithful” when they began to worship idols and when they disobeyed God in other ways.
- In marriage, someone who commits adultery is “unfaithful” to his or her spouse.
- God used the term “unfaithfulness” to describe Israel’s disobedient behavior. They were not obeying God or honoring him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “unfaithful” could be translated as, “not faithful” or “unbelieving” or “not obedient” or “not loyal.”
- The phrase “the unfaithful” could be translated as, “people who are not faithful (to God)” or “unfaithful people” or “those who disobey God” or “people who rebel against God.”
- The term “unfaithfulness” could be translated as, “disobedience” or “disloyalty” or “not believing or obeying.”
- In some languages, the term “unfaithful” is related to the word for “unbelief.”

(See also: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#))

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

winnow, sift

Definition:

The terms “winnow” and “sift” mean to separate grain from unwanted materials. In the Bible, both words are also used in a figurative sense to refer to separating or dividing people.

- To “winnow” means to separate grain from the unwanted parts of the plant by tossing both the grain and chaff into the air, allowing the wind to blow the chaff away.
- The word “sift” refers to shaking the winnowed grain in a sieve to get rid of any remaining unwanted materials, such as dirt or stones.
- In the Old Testament, “winnow” and “sift” are used figuratively to describe hardship that separates the righteous people from the unrighteous people.
- Jesus also used the term “sift” in this figurative way when he was telling Simon Peter about how he and the other disciples would be tested in their faith.
- To translate these terms, use the words or phrases in the project language that refer to these activities; possible translations might be, “shaking” or “fanning.” If winnowing or sifting are not known, then these terms could be translated by a term that refers to a different method of separating grain from chaff or dirt, or by describing this process.

(See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [chaff](#), [grain](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

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."

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

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."

translationAcademy

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*

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*

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”

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*

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”

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](#)

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](#)

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?”*

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*

Forms of 'You' - Singular

This answers the question: How do I know if the word 'you' is singular?

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

- *Parts of Speech*
- *Forms of You*
- *Pronouns*

Some languages have a **singular** form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.

Description

Some languages have a **singular** form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have both a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. When we read the Bible in a language that does not have different forms of you, we need to look at the context to see who the speaker was referring to.

Reason this is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you”, translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people who were being spoken to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used “you” singular even though they were speaking to a group of people. See [Forms of 'You' - Singular to a Crowd](#)

Examples from the Bible

The ruler said, “All these things I have obeyed from the time I was a youth.” When Jesus heard that, he said to him, “One thing *you* still lack. *You* must sell all that you

have and distribute it to the poor, and *you* will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me.” (Luke 18:21, 22 ULB)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said “I.” This shows us that when Jesus said “you” he was referring only to the ruler. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” would have the singular form here.

The angel said to him, “Dress *yourself* and put on *your* sandals.” Peter did so. The angel said to him, “Put on *your* outer garment and follow me.” So Peter followed the angel and went out. (Acts 12:8, ULB)

The context makes it clear that the angel was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” would have the singular form here for “yourself” and “your”. Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, the verbs “dress” and “put on” will need the form for “you” singular.

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. ... For this purpose I left *you* in Crete, that *you* might set in order things not yet complete, and ordain elders in every city as I directed *you*. ... But *you*, say what agrees with healthy doctrine. (Titus 1:4,5; 2:1 ULB)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus. Most of the time the word “you” in this letter refers only to Titus.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

1. Look at the notes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
2. Look at the UDB to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
3. If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
4. Look at the context to see who the speaker was talking to and who responded.

Also watch the video for computer (see <http://youtu.be/cPtjzJ2Advk>) or tablet/phone (see <http://youtu.be/AVITfDEk8nc>).

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Forms of 'You' - Dual/Plural*

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*

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*

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*

End of Story

This page answers the question: What kinds of information are given at the end of a story?

In order to understand this page, it would be good to read

- [Writing Styles](#)
- [Background Information](#)

Description

There are different types of information that may be given at the end of a story. Often this is background information. This background information is different from the actions that make up the main part of the story. A book of the Bible is often made up of many smaller stories that are part of the larger story of the book itself. For example, the story of Jesus' birth is a smaller story in the larger story of the book of Luke. Each of these stories, whether large or small, can have background information at the end of it.

Different purposes for end of story information:

- to summarize the story
- to give a comment about what happened in the story
- to connect a smaller story to the larger story it is a part of
- to tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends
- to tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends
- to tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

Reasons this is a translation issue: Different languages have different ways of presenting these kinds of information. If translators do not use their language's ways of doing this, readers may not know

- that this information is ending the story
- what the purpose of the information is
- how the information is related to the story.

Principles of translation

- Translate the particular kind of information at the end of a story the way your language expresses that kind of information.
- Translate it so that people will understand how it relates to the story it is part of.
- If possible, translate the end of the story in a way that people will know where that story ends and the next begins.

Examples from the Bible

1. to summarize the story

Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. *In this way it happened that all of us came safely to land.* (Acts 27:44 ULB)

2. to give a comment about what happened in the story

Many who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. When they counted the value of them, it was fifty thousand pieces of silver. *So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways.* (Acts 19:19-20 ULB)

3. to tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends

Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her house. (Luke 1:56 ULB)

4. to tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends

All who heard it were amazed at what was spoken to them by the shepherds. *But Mary kept thinking about all the things she had heard, treasuring them in her heart.* (Luke 2:18-19 ULB)

5. to tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

After Jesus left there, the scribes and the Pharisees opposed him and argued with him about many things, trying to trap him in his own words. (Luke 11:53-54 ULB)

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*