



Nahum

translationNotes

v6

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Version: 6

Published: 2017-02-22

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translationNotes

Introduction to Nahum

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Nahum

1. Introduction to “the book of the vision of Nahum” (1:1)
2. The coming destruction of Nineveh
 - a) The power and goodness of Yahweh to conquer his enemies (1:2–8)
 - b) The destruction of Nineveh because of its people’s evil (1:9–15)
3. The fierceness of the coming attack on Nineveh (2:1–13)
4. The doom of Nineveh and the mockery of it by its enemies (3:1–19)

What is Book of Nahum about?

The Book of Nahum was about the coming destruction of Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The prophecy ends with a celebration by the prophet Nahum and the enemies of Assyria. The book’s purpose was to give hope to Judah.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may decided to translate this traditional title “The book of Nahum” in a way that is more clear to the readers. They may decide to call it, “The sayings of Nahum.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Who wrote the Book of Nahum?

It is probable that Nahum wrote this book. He was a prophet from Elkosh, an unknown city which was probably in Judah. The book was written before the fall of Nineveh in about 612 BC. The prophet also mentions the destruction of Thebes, a city in Egypt, which occurred about 663 BC. This fact allow us to have an approximate date for the Book of Nahum. (See: [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the importance of the descriptions of locusts in 3:15–17?

Locust attacks occurred all too frequently in the Ancient Near East. Certain kinds of grasshoppers would come in countless numbers, darkening the distant sky like a black cloud that blotted out the sunlight. They often came after a prolonged period of no rain. They came down on whatever crops were surviving in the fields and stripped them bare of their leaves. The locusts were irresistible

and always brought catastrophe with them. For this reason locust attacks served as a very powerful image of military attacks in the Old Testament.

Locust attacks are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, sometimes as threatened punishment from God, as, for example, one of the ten plagues that he inflicted on Egypt.

There are various names for locusts in the original language of the Old Testament. It is uncertain whether these refer to different kinds of locusts or to the same kind of locust in different stages of growth. For this reason, versions of the Bible differ in how they translate these terms.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What emotions are present in the various speakers in the Book of Nahum?

Nahum's message presents the prophet speaking to the people of Israel and both the prophet and Yahweh speaking to the city of Nineveh. In speaking to the Israelites, the prophet wants to comfort them. However, when speaking to the people of Nineveh, the prophet and Yahweh bring harsh judgment that is often mixed with mockery. This is similar to the custom in the ancient Near East, where it was usual for conquerors to laugh at their victims. It is important for translators to represent well both the emotion of comfort and of mockery in translation.

List of translationAcademy Topics in Nahum

- * **Apostrophe** is found in: 03:08, 03:10, 03:12, 03:14, 03:16
- * **Hyperbole** is found in: 02:08, 03:16
- * **Metaphor** is found in: 01:02, 01:07, 01:09, 01:12, 02:01, 02:11, 02:13, 03:03, 03:08, 03:10, 03:12, 03:18
- * **Metonymy** is found in: 01:09, 01:12, 02:03, 02:08, 02:13, 03:01, 03:10, 03:12
- * **Parallelism** is found in: 01:01, 02:01, 02:11, 03:01
- * **Personification** is found in: 01:04
- * **Rhetorical Question** is found in: 03:05, 03:08, 03:18
- * **Simile** is found in: 01:06, 01:09, 02:03, 02:06, 03:12, 03:14, 03:16
- * **Synecdoche** is found in: 01:15
- * **How to Translate Names** is found in: 01:01
- * **Translate Unknowns** is found in: 02:03, 03:16

List of translationWords in Nahum

- * **adversary, enemy** is found in: 01:02, 01:07, 03:10
- * **afflict, affliction** is found in: 01:12
- * **angry, anger** is found in: 01:02, 01:06

- * Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire is found in: 03:18
- * avenge, revenge, vengeance is found in: 01:02
- * Bashan is found in: 01:04
- * blood is found in: 03:01
- * captive, captivity is found in: 03:10
- * Carmel, Mount Carmel is found in: 01:04
- * chariot is found in: 02:03, 02:13, 03:01
- * clothe, clothed is found in: 02:03
- * command, to command, commandment is found in: 01:14
- * cut off is found in: 01:14, 01:15
- * darkness is found in: 01:07
- * declare, declaration is found in: 01:01, 01:02
- * descendant, descended from is found in: 01:14
- * dove, pigeon is found in: 02:06
- * drunk, drunkard is found in: 03:10
- * Egypt, Egyptian is found in: 03:08
- * Ethiopia, Ethiopian is found in: 03:08
- * evil, wicked, wickedness is found in: 01:09, 01:15, 03:18
- * fear, afraid, fear of Yahweh is found in: 02:11
- * festival is found in: 01:15
- * fig is found in: 03:12
- * fire is found in: 01:06, 01:09
- * flood is found in: 01:07
- * gate, gate bar is found in: 02:06, 03:12
- * God is found in: 01:02
- * gold is found in: 02:08
- * good news, gospel is found in: 01:15
- * heal, cure is found in: 03:18
- * heart is found in: 02:08
- * heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly is found in: 03:16
- * horse is found in: 03:01

- * **horsemen** is found in: 03:03
- * **image, carved image, carved figure, cast metal figure** is found in: 01:14
- * **innocent** is found in: 01:02
- * **Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel** is found in: 02:01
- * **Jacob, Israel** is found in: 02:01
- * **jealous, jealousy** is found in: 01:02
- * **joy, joyful** is found in: 03:18
- * **Judah** is found in: 01:12, 01:15
- * **king** is found in: 03:18
- * **kingdom** is found in: 03:05
- * **Lebanon** is found in: 01:04
- * **lion** is found in: 02:11, 02:13
- * **lots, casting lots** is found in: 03:10
- * **lust** is found in: 03:03
- * **majesty** is found in: 02:01
- * **mighty, might** is found in: 02:03
- * **Nahum** is found in: 01:01
- * **name** is found in: 01:14
- * **nation** is found in: 03:05
- * **Nile River, River of Egypt** is found in: 03:08
- * **Nineveh, Ninevite** is found in: 01:01, 01:09, 01:14, 02:08, 03:05, 03:08
- * **peace, peaceful** is found in: 01:15
- * **people group, peoples, the people, a people** is found in: 01:09, 02:08
- * **power, powers** is found in: 01:02
- * **prince, princess** is found in: 03:16
- * **prostitute, harlot, whore** is found in: 03:03
- * **queen** is found in: 02:06
- * **raise, rise, risen, arise, arose** is found in: 01:09
- * **rebuke** is found in: 01:04
- * **restore, restoration** is found in: 02:01
- * **ruin, ruins** is found in: 02:06, 02:08

- * **servant, slave, slavery** is found in: 02:06
- * **shepherd, to shepherd** is found in: 03:18
- * **siege, besiege** is found in: 03:14
- * **silver** is found in: 02:08
- * **sorcery, sorcerer, witchcraft** is found in: 03:03
- * **spear** is found in: 02:03
- * **stronghold, fortress, fortified** is found in: 01:07
- * **stumble** is found in: 02:05
- * **sword** is found in: 02:13, 03:03, 03:14
- * **tomb, grave, burial place** is found in: 01:14
- * **vine** is found in: 02:01
- * **vision** is found in: 01:01
- * **voice** is found in: 02:13
- * **vow** is found in: 01:15
- * **water, waters** is found in: 02:08
- * **woe** is found in: 03:01
- * **wrath, fury** is found in: 01:02, 01:06
- * **Yahweh** is found in: 01:02, 01:07, 01:09, 01:12, 01:14, 02:01
- * **Yahweh of hosts, God of hosts, host** is found in: 02:13, 03:05
- * **yoke** is found in: 01:12

Nahum 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 1:2-15, which is poetic prophecy. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book consists of one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's anger on Nineveh

This prophecy should be read alongside of the book of Jonah. The evil of the Ninevites will be punished by God, only after he uses them for his own purposes. These actions of Yahweh, although described as vengeance or anger, do not have the same connotations as they do with humans. Therefore, Yahweh is not sinful. (See: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [avenge](#), [revenge](#), [vengeance](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Complete destruction

At this time, Assyria controlled almost the entire Near East. Nahum prophesies that they will be completely destroyed as a nation so that they will not even be a people group any longer. This prophecy came true and did so very suddenly.

Links:

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

Nahum 1:1**UDB:**

¹ I am Nahum, from the village of Elkosh. This is a message about the city of Nineveh, a message that Yahweh gave me in a vision.

ULB:

1 ¹ The declaration about Nineveh. The Book of the Vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite.

translationWords:

- [declare, declaration](#)
- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)
- [vision](#)
- [Nahum](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum describes the destruction of Nineveh in poetry. (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **The declaration about Nineveh** - “A message from God about the City of Nineveh.”
- **Elkoshite** - A person from the village of Elkosh (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 1:2-3**UDB:**

² Yahweh our God tolerates no rival gods to himself. He is very angry with those who worship other gods, and he continues to be angry with his enemies. ³ Yahweh does not quickly become angry; but he is very powerful, and he will never say that his enemies are innocent. Wherever he walks, there are whirlwinds and storms, and clouds are like the dust stirred up by his feet.

ULB:

² Yahweh is a jealous God and avenges; Yahweh avenges and is full of wrath; Yahweh takes vengeance on his adversaries, and he continues his anger for his enemies.

³ Yahweh is slow to anger and great in power; he will by no means declare his enemies innocent.

Yahweh makes his way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

translationWords:

- **Yahweh**
- **jealous, jealousy**
- **God**
- **avenge, revenge, vengeance**
- **wrath, fury**
- **adversary, enemy**
- **angry, anger**
- **power, powers**
- **declare, declaration**
- **innocent**

translationNotes:

- **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.
- **he will by no means declare his enemies innocent** - This means that Yahweh will judge and punish his enemies when they disobey him.
- **makes his way in the whirlwind and the storm** - Like the strong wind and storm, Yahweh moves with power. Alternate translation: “comes in power” (See: **Metaphor**).
- **the dust of his feet** - “the dust that his feet kick up”

Links:

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

Nahum 1:4-5

UDB:

⁴ When he commands oceans and rivers to become dry, they dry up. He causes the grass to wither in the fields in the region of Bashan and on the slopes of Mount Carmel, and causes the flowers in Lebanon to fade. ⁵ When he appears, it is as though the mountains shake and the hills melt; the earth quakes, and the people on the earth tremble.

ULB:

⁴ He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; he dries up all the rivers.

Bashan is weak, and Carmel also; the flowers of Lebanon are weak.

⁵ The mountains shake in his presence, and the hills melt;

the earth collapses in his presence, indeed, the world and all people who live in it.

translationWords:

- [rebuke](#)
- [Bashan](#)
- [Carmel, Mount Carmel](#)
- [Lebanon](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum continues to describe the power of Yahweh over the whole world.
- **The mountains shake in his presence, and the hills melt; the earth collapses in his presence** - AT: "The mountains, the hills, and even the earth are afraid of Yahweh" (See: [Personification](#) and [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))
- **shake** - like a person who is afraid
- **collapses** - "falls to the ground in fear"

Links:

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

Nahum 1:6

UDB:

⁶ There is no one who can resist him when he becomes extremely angry; there is no one who can survive when his anger is very hot. When he is very angry, it is as though his anger is like a blazing fire, and it is as though mountains are shattered into pieces.

ULB:

⁶ Who can stand before his wrath? Who can resist the fierceness of his anger?

His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken apart by him.

translationWords:

- [wrath, fury](#)
- [angry, anger](#)
- [fire](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaking about Yahweh's power
- **fierceness of his anger** - "intensity of his anger" or "amount of his anger"
- **His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken apart by him** - Alternate translation: "He pours out his anger like fire and breaks rocks apart." (See: [Simile](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 1:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ But he is good; he protects us, his people, when we experience troubles. He takes care of those who trust in him. ⁸ But he will get rid of his enemies; he will be to them like a flood that destroys everything. He will chase his enemies into the darkness of the place where the dead are.

ULB:

⁷ Yahweh is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he is faithful to those who take refuge in him.

⁸ But he will make a full end to his enemies with an overwhelming flood; he will pursue them into darkness.

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [stronghold, fortress, fortified](#)
- [refuge, shelter](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [flood](#)
- [darkness](#)

translationNotes:

- **stronghold** - a safe place built for protection against enemies (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **day of trouble** - when the enemy attacks. Alternate translation: “when bad things happen”

Links:

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

Nahum 1:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ So it is useless for you people of Nineveh to plot against Yahweh. He will not need to strike you two times to destroy you; he will destroy you by striking you only once. ¹⁰ It will be as though his enemies are tangled in thorns and they will stagger like people who have drunk a lot of wine. It will be as though they will be burned up like dry stubble.

¹¹ In Nineveh there was a man who advised people to do very wicked things against Yahweh.

ULB:

⁹ What are you people plotting against Yahweh?

He will make a full end to it; trouble will not rise up a second time.

¹⁰ For they will become tangled up like thornbushes; they will be saturated in their own drink;

they will be completely devoured by fire like dry stubble.

¹¹ Someone arose among you, Nineveh, who planned evil against Yahweh, someone who promoted wickedness.

translationWords:

- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- Yahweh
- raise, rise, risen, arise, arose
- fire
- Nineveh, Ninevite
- evil, wicked, wickedness

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum tells the people of Nineveh how Yahweh will deal with them.
- **make a full end to it** - “completely stop what you do”
- **trouble will not rise up a second time** - AT: “He will not attack you a second time” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **they ... they ... their ... they** - Nahum speaks briefly to the Israelites about the people of Nineveh.
- **become tangled up like thornbushes** - “face many problems that will prevent them from attacking” (See: **Metaphor**).
- **they will be completely devoured** - Yahweh will totally destroy Nineveh (See: **Simile**)
- **promoted wickedness** - encouraged people to do wicked things

Links:

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

Nahum 1:12-13**UDB:**

¹² But this is what Yahweh says to you Israelites:

”Although the people of Assyria have very many people and their army is very powerful, they will be destroyed and will disappear. I say to my people in Judah, I have already punished you, but I will not punish you again. ¹³ Now I will cause the people of Assyria to no longer enslave you; it will be as though I will tear off the shackles on your hands and feet.”

ULB:

¹² This is what Yahweh says,

”Even if they are at their full strength and full numbers, they will nevertheless be sheared;

their people will be no more. But you, Judah: Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more.

¹³ Now will I break that people’s yoke from off you; I will break your chains.”

translationWords:

- **Yahweh**
- **Judah**
- **afflict, affliction**
- **yoke**

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Yahweh speaks to the Israelites about Nineveh.
- **they ... they ... their** - the people of Nineveh
- **they will nevertheless be sheared** - “They will be cut off.” Yahweh uses the image of cutting the wool off of sheep to show how he will cut away the army of Nineveh, even though they are many. AT: “they will be destroyed.” (See: **Metaphor**)
- **break that people’s yoke from off you** - AT: “set you free from slavery to those people” (See: **Metonymy**)
- **break your chains** - “break the chains with which they bound you as slaves”

Links:

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

Nahum 1:14**UDB:**

¹⁴ And this is what Yahweh also declares about you people of Nineveh:

“You will not have any descendants who will continue to have your family names. And I will destroy all the statues of your gods that were carved or formed in molds. I will cause you to be killed and sent to your graves, because you are vile!”

ULB:

¹⁴ Yahweh has given a command about you, Nineveh:

”There will be no more descendants bearing your name.

I will cut off the carved figures and the cast metal figures from the houses of your gods.

I will dig your graves, for you are contemptible.”

translationWords:

- [Yahweh](#)
- [command, to command, commandment](#)
- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)
- [descendant, descended from](#)
- [name](#)
- [cut off](#)
- [image, carved image, carved figure, cast metal figure](#)
- [tomb, grave, burial place](#)

translationNotes:**Links:**

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

Nahum 1:15

UDB:

¹⁵ You people of Judah. Look! A messenger will come across the mountains, and he will bring good news to you. He will declare that you will now have peace. So celebrate your festivals, and do what you solemnly promised to do when your enemies were threatening to attack you, because your wicked enemies will not invade your country again, because they will be completely destroyed.

ULB:

¹⁵ Look, on the mountains there are the feet of someone who is bringing good news, who is announcing peace!

Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and keep your vows,

for the wicked one will invade you no more; he is completely cut off.

translationWords:

- [good news, gospel](#)
- [peace, peaceful](#)
- [festival](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [vow](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [cut off](#)

translationNotes:

- **on the mountains there are the feet of someone who is bringing good news** - “someone is bringing good news” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- **wicked one ... he** - Nahum refers to the Ninevites as though they were one person.
- **he is completely cut off** - Nahum is speaking of a future event as though it has already happened.

Links:

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

Nahum 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 2:1-13, which is a poetic prophecy. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book contains one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Complete destruction

At this time, Assyria controlled almost the entire Near East. Nahum prophesies that they will be completely destroyed as a nation so that they will not even be a people group any longer. This prophecy came true and did so very suddenly. At times, this chapter is very violent in describing the destruction of Assyria, which should not be toned down through the use of euphemism.

Links:

- [Nahum 02:01 Notes](#)

Nahum 2:1-2**UDB:**

¹ You people of Nineveh, your enemies are coming to attack you. So place guards on the tops of the walls around the city! Guard the roads into the city! Get ready to fight! Gather your troops together! ² Even though your soldiers have destroyed the descendants of Jacob, Yahweh will cause other nations to honor them again. Invaders from your country have ruined Israel as enemies would uproot a vineyard, but Israel will prosper again.

ULB:

² ¹ The one who will dash you to pieces is coming up against you.

Man the city walls, guard the roads,
make yourselves strong, assemble your armies.

² For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Jacob, like the majesty of Israel,
although the plunderers devastated them and destroyed their vine
branches.

translationWords:

- Yahweh
- restore, restoration
- majesty
- Jacob, Israel
- Israel, Israelites, nation of Israel
- vine

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum continues describing the destruction of Nineveh in poetry that began in 1:1. (See: **Parallelism**)
- **The one who will dash you to pieces** - The picture is of someone breaking a pot. Alternate translation: “He who will destroy you” (See: **Metaphor**).
- **The one who will dash** - The person who is “the one” is not clear, so translate using a general term: “Someone who will break you to pieces.”
- **Man the city walls, guard the roads, make yourselves strong, assemble your armies.** - prepare for war
- **Man the city walls** - “Set guards on the walls for protection”

- **For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Jacob, like the majesty of Israel** - This means that Yahweh will make Jacob and Israel great, and people will admire them again.
- **plunderers** - people who steal things by force, usually in war
- **devastated them** - destroyed everything
- **destroyed their vine branches** - The nation is spoken here as if it were a cultivated grapevine. AT: “and uprooted your nation as if it were a vineyard.” (See: [Metaphor](#)).

Links:

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

Nahum 2:3-4

UDB:

³ The shields of the enemy soldiers who are coming to attack you will shine red as the sun shines on them, and they will wear bright red uniforms. The metal of their chariot wheels will flash when they line up before the battle, and their soldiers will lift up their cypress spear and wave them. ⁴ Their chariots dash through the streets of Nineveh and rush furiously through the plazas. Going as quickly as lightning, they look like flaming torches.

ULB:

³ The shields of his mighty men are red, and the courageous men are clothed in scarlet;

the chariots flash with their metal on the day that they are made ready, and the cypress spears are waved in the air.

⁴ The chariots speed through the streets; they rush back and forth in the wide streets.

They look like torches, and they run like lightning.

translationWords:

- [mighty, might](#)
- [clothe, clothed](#)
- [chariot](#)
- [spear](#)

translationNotes:

- **his mighty men** - the soldiers of the one “who will dash” Nineveh “to pieces” (2:1).
- **cypress** - a type of tree whose wood is good for weapons (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **The chariots speed through the streets** - “The chariot drivers drive crazily in the streets” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **They look like torches** - This refers to the brightness of the chariots as they reflect the light from the sun. (See: [Simile](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Nahum](#)
- [Nahum 02 General Notes](#)

- Nahum 02 Translation Questions

Nahum 2:5

UDB:

⁵ Their king will summon his officers who will come so quickly that they will stumble. They will hurry to attack the city wall; they will get ready the large wooden shield to protect the attacking soldiers.

ULB:

⁵ The one who will dash you to pieces calls his officers; they stumble over each other in their march;

they hurry to attack the city wall. The large shield is made ready to protect these attackers.

translationWords:

- [stumble](#)

translationNotes:

- **dash you to pieces** - Translate this the same way you did in [2:1](#).
- **calls his officers** - Possible meaning: 1) “summons his officers” or 2) “thinks of his officers”
- **they ... their ... they** - the soldiers who will attack Nineveh
- **in their march** - “as they march”

Links:

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

Nahum 2:6-7**UDB:**

⁶ The enemy soldiers will force open the city gates on the rivers; the palace will collapse. ⁷ The queen will have her clothes stripped off her by enemy soldiers, and her slave girls will moan like doves and beat their breasts to show that they are very sad.

ULB:

⁶ The gates at the rivers are forced open, and the palace falls to ruins.

⁷ Huzzab is stripped of her clothes and is taken away;

her female servants moan like doves, beating on their breasts.

translationWords:

- [gate, gate bar](#)
- [ruin, ruins](#)
- [queen](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [dove, pigeon](#)

translationNotes:

- **Huzzab** - This name probably is either the name of Assyria's queen or the name of an Assyrian idol. If it refers to the queen, then the passage means that the attacking soldiers stripped her of her clothes in order to humiliate her. If it refers to an idol, then the passage means that the attackers stripped the gold and silver off the image.
- **her female servants moan like doves** - "the female servants of the queen sound like doves as they moan" to mourn her loss of power (See: [Simile](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 2:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ The people will rush from Nineveh like water rushes from a broken dam. The officials will shout, “Stop! Stop!” but the people will not even look back as they run away. ⁹ The enemy attackers say to each other,

“Seize the silver! Grab the gold! There is a huge amount of very valuable things in the city, more valuable things than anyone can count!”

¹⁰ Soon everything valuable in the city will be seized or ruined. People will be trembling, with the result that they will not be able to fight. Their faces will all become pale with fear.

ULB:

⁸ Nineveh is like a leaking pool of water, with its people fleeing away like rushing water.

Others shout, “Stop, stop,” but no one looks back.

⁹ Take the silver plunder, take the gold plunder, for there is no end to it, to the splendor of all Nineveh’s beautiful things.

¹⁰ Nineveh is empty and ruined. Everyone’s heart melts, everyone’s knees strike together,

and anguish is in everyone; their faces are all pale.

translationWords:

- Nineveh, Ninevite
- water, waters
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- silver
- gold
- ruin, ruins
- heart

translationNotes:

- **plunder** - Things stolen by force, usually in war.
- **there is no end to it** - This is a way to say there is a huge amount of something. Alternate translation: “there is a huge amount of it” (See: **Hyperbole**)

- **splendor of all Nineveh's beautiful things** - Possible meanings: 1) "abundance of all the beautiful things" or 2) "amount of all the beautiful things"
- **Everyone's heart melts** - "All the people lose their courage" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 2:11-12

UDB:

¹¹ After that happens, people will say,

”What happened to that great city of Nineveh? It was like a den full of young lions, where the male and female lions lived and fed the young ones, where they were afraid of nothing ¹² The soldiers in Nineveh were like lions that killed or strangled other animals and brought the meat to their dens.”

ULB:

¹¹ Where now is the lions’ den, the place where the young lion cubs feed, the place where the lion and lioness walked, with the cubs, where they were afraid of nothing?

¹² The lion tore his victims to pieces for his cubs; he strangled victims for his lionesses,

and filled his cave with victims, his dens with torn carcasses.

translationWords:

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

translationNotes:

- **lions’ den** - Nineveh is being compared to a lion’s den because it is a place where killers live and a place where they bring back what they have stolen from the people they have killed. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **strangled** - “choked.” Lions bite their victims’ throats to prevent them from breathing.
- **filled his cave with victims, his dens with torn carcasses** - These two phrases are saying the same thing in different ways. A lion’s den, its hiding place, is often in a cave. (See: [Parallelism](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 2:13

UDB:

¹³ Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, says to the people of Nineveh,

“I am your enemy; I will cause your chariots to burn in fire and go up in smoke. Your young men will be killed with swords. I will make all the valuable things you stole from other nations disappear. Your messengers will never again take messages to other nations, demanding that their armies surrender to them.”

ULB:

¹³ ”See, I am against you—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.

I will burn your chariots in the smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions.

I will cut off your plunder from your land, and the voices of your messengers will be heard no more.”

translationWords:

- [Yahweh of hosts, God of hosts, host](#)
- [chariot](#)
- [sword](#)
- [lion](#)
- [voice](#)

translationNotes:

- **See** - “Understand this” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **the sword will devour your young lions.** - “your soldiers will die violent deaths” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **the sword** - “soldiers with swords” (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **devour** - “eat all of”
- **your young lions** - “your best young men” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **I will cut off your plunder from your land** - The word “plunder” refers to the wealth that Nineveh captured and brought from other lands. This means that Yahweh will destroy Nineveh’s ability to steal from other nations.

Links:

- [Introduction to Nahum](#)

- Nahum 02 General Notes
- Nahum 02 Translation Questions

Nahum 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations indent the lines of 2:1-13, which is a poetic prophecy. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Despite being divided into three chapters, the book contains one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Euphemism

This chapter speaks about the evils of the Assyrians in violent ways. It is important to avoiding toning down this language through the use of euphemism, if at all possible. Although there is some hyperbole, the reader should not assume that the author intends this writing to be taken as completely hyperbolic. (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#))

Links:

- [Nahum 03:01 Notes](#)

Nahum 3:1-2

UDB:

¹ Terrible things will happen to Nineveh, that city that is full of people who murder, steal and lie. The city is full of people who the soldiers carried away from other countries. ² But now listen to the enemy soldiers coming to attack Nineveh; listen to them cracking their whips, and listen to the rattle of their chariot wheels! Listen to their galloping horses and their chariots as they bounce along!

ULB:

3 ¹ Woe to the city full of blood!

It is all full of lies and stolen property; victims are always in her.

² But now there is the noise of whips and the sound of rattling wheels, prancing horses, and bounding chariots.

translationWords:

- [woe](#)
- [blood](#)
- [horse](#)
- [chariot](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum continues describing the destruction of Nineveh in poetry that began in [1:1](#). (See: [Parallelism](#))
- **the city full of blood** - Nineveh's soldiers killed many people. Alternate translation: "the city responsible for many people's deaths" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 3:3-4**UDB:**

³ Look at their flashing swords and glittering spears as the horsemen race forward! Many people of Nineveh will be killed; there will be piles of corpses, so many that the attackers will stumble over them. ⁴ All that will happen because Nineveh is like a beautiful prostitute who lures men to where they will be ruined; Nineveh is a beautiful city that has attracted people of other nations to come there. The people of Nineveh taught those people of other nations rituals of magic, and caused them to become their slaves.

ULB:

³ There are attacking horsemen,
flashing swords, glittering spears,
heaps of corpses, great piles of bodies.

There is no end to the bodies; their attackers stumble over them.

⁴ This is happening because of the lustful actions of the beautiful prostitute,
the expert in witchcraft,
who sells nations through her prostitution, and peoples through her acts of
witchcraft.

translationWords:

- **horsemen**
- **sword**
- **lust**
- **prostitute, harlot, whore**
- **sorcery, sorcerer, witchcraft**

translationNotes:

- **heaps of corpses, great piles of bodies. There is no end to the bodies** - The author is stressing a great depth of slaughter against Nineveh since it was stated 3 times.
- **corpses** - bodies of people who have died
- **There is no end to the bodies** - “There are a great many bodies”
- **beautiful prostitute ... expert in witchcraft** - As prostitutes sell physical pleasure and witches sell knowledge and power gained through magic, the people of Nineveh sell people they have taken in war and take profit from their sin. (See: **Metaphor**)

Links:

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

Nahum 3:5-7**UDB:**

⁵ So Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, says to the people of Nineveh:

”I am your enemy, and I will cause the people in other nations to see you completely humiliated like women who have committed adultery are humiliated by having their skirts lifted high, with the result that people can see their naked bodies. ⁶ I will cause others to throw garbage at you; I will show others that I despise you very much, and I will cause everyone to ridicule you in public. ⁷ All those who see you will turn their backs to you and say, ‘Nineveh is ruined, but absolutely no one will mourn for it.’ Nineveh, no one will want to comfort you.”

ULB:

⁵ ”See, I am against you—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—I will raise up your skirt over your face

and show your private parts to the nations, your shame to the kingdoms.

⁶ I will throw disgusting filth on you and make you vile; I will make you someone that everyone will look at.

⁷ It will come about that everyone who looks at you will flee from you and say,

‘Nineveh is destroyed; who will weep for her?’

Where can I find anyone to comfort you?”

translationWords:

- Yahweh of hosts, God of hosts, host
- nation
- kingdom
- Nineveh, Ninevite

translationNotes:

- **See** - This word serves to draw attention to what comes next.
- **who will weep for her?’ Where can I find anyone to comfort you?** - Alternate translation: “no one will cry for her,’ and I cannot find anyone to comfort her.” (See: **Rhetorical Question**)

Links:

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

Nahum 3:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ Your city is certainly no safer than the city of Thebes was. Thebes was an important city beside the Nile River; the river was like a wall around her. ⁹ The rulers of Ethiopia and Egypt helped Thebes; there was no limit to their power. The governments of the nearby countries of Put and Libya were also allies of Thebes.

ULB:

⁸ Nineveh, are you better than Thebes, that was built on the Nile River, that had water around her,

whose defense was the ocean, whose wall was the sea itself?

⁹ Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and there was no end to it;
Put and Libya were allies to her.

translationWords:

- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)
- [Nile River, River of Egypt](#)
- [Ethiopia, Ethiopian](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself. (See: [Apostrophe](#))
- **are you better than Thebes ... itself?** - AT: “you are not better than Thebes ... itself.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))
- **Thebes** - the former capital of Egypt, which the Assyrians had conquered
- **whose defense was the ocean, whose wall was the sea itself** - These two phrases share similar meanings. The words “ocean” and “sea” both refer to the Nile River which ran near the city and made attacking it difficult. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Parallelism](#))
- **defense ... wall** - Ancient cities had a main “wall” to keep attackers out, and an outer line of “defense” to keep attackers from the wall.

Links:

- [Introduction to Nahum](#)

- Nahum 03 General Notes
- Nahum 03 Translation Questions

Nahum 3:10-11**UDB:**

¹⁰ Nevertheless, Thebes was captured, and its people were exiled. Their babies were dashed to pieces in the streets of the city. Enemy soldiers cast lots to decide who would get each official in Thebes to become his slave. All the leaders of Thebes were fastened by chains. ¹¹ You people of Nineveh will similarly become dazed and drunk, and you will search for places to hide to escape from your enemies.

ULB:

¹⁰ Yet Thebes was carried away; she went into captivity;
 her young children were dashed in pieces at the head of every street;
 her enemies threw lots for her honorable men,
 and all her great men were bound in chains.
¹¹ You also will become drunk; you will try to hide,
 and you will also look for a refuge from your enemy.

translationWords:

- captive, captivity
- lots, casting lots
- drunk, drunkard
- refuge, shelter
- adversary, enemy

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself. (See: [Apostrophe](#))
- **Yet** - This continues the comparison of Nineveh and Thebes from [3:8-9](#). Possible meanings: “nevertheless” (UDB) or “even so”
- **Thebes** - the former capital of Egypt, which the Assyrians had conquered
- **she ... her** - Thebes.
- **dashed in pieces** - The invaders killed the children of Thebes as easily as one breaks a clay pot. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **bound in chains** - put into slavery. AT: “became slaves” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 3:12-13

UDB:

¹² Your enemies will cause the walls around your city to fall down like the first figs that fall right into your mouths when you shake the tree. This is how easily your city will be captured. ¹³ Look at your soldiers! They will be like weak women! The gates of your city will be opened wide to allow your enemies to enter them, and then the bars of those gates will be burned.

ULB:

¹² All your fortresses will be like fig trees with the earliest ripe figs:

if they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.

¹³ See, the people among you are women;

the gates of your land have been opened wide to your enemies;

fire has devoured their bars.

translationWords:

- [fig](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself. (See: [Apostrophe](#))
- **fortresses** - This term, which could also be rendered as “strongholds” refers to all of Nineveh and the Assyrian empire. (See: [Metonymy](#))
- **All your fortresses will be like fig trees with the earliest ripe figs: if they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater** - The city of Nineveh will be easy to take like fruit from a tree. (See: [Simile](#))
- **the people among you are women** - “your people are weak and cannot defend themselves” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **their bars** - large beams of wood that give the gates strength and do not allow it to be opened from outside the city. Burning these would make it impossible to close the city again.

Links:

- [Introduction to Nahum](#)

- Nahum 03 General Notes
- Nahum 03 Translation Questions

Nahum 3:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ Store up water now to use when your enemies surround the city! Repair the forts! Dig up clay and trample it to make it soft, and put it into molds to make bricks to repair the walls! ¹⁵ Nevertheless, your enemies will burn your city; they will kill you with their swords; they will kill you as locusts destroy crops.

Go ahead and increase your population like swarms of locusts and grasshoppers.

ULB:

¹⁴ Go draw water for the siege; strengthen your fortresses;
go into the clay and tread the mortar;
pick up the molds for the bricks.

¹⁵ Fire will devour you there, and the sword will destroy you. It will devour you as young locusts devour everything.

Make yourselves as many as the young locusts, as many as the full-grown locusts.

translationWords:

- **siege, besiege**
- **sword**

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself. (See: **Apostrophe**)
- **It will devour you as young locusts devour everything** - It will destroy as locusts devour everything in their path. See: **Simile**)
- **It** - the “fire” and “sword”
- **Make yourselves as many as the young locusts, as many as the full-grown locusts** - “Multiply yourself like young locusts! Multiply yourself like adult locusts!” These words probably begin a new paragraph.
- **Make yourselves as many as the young locusts** - This means they would become a very large city with many people and destroy many lands. (See: **Simile**)

Links:

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

Nahum 3:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ In your city there are now very many merchants; more than stars. But when your city is being destroyed, those merchants will take the valuable things and disappear like locusts that strip the leaves from plants and then fly away. ¹⁷ Your leaders are also like a swarm of locusts that crowd together on the fences on a cold day, and then fly away when the sun comes up, and no one knows where they have gone.

ULB:

¹⁶ You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars in the heavens; but they are like young locusts: they plunder the land and then fly away.

¹⁷ Your princes are as many as the full-grown locusts, and your generals are like swarms of them

that camp in the walls on a cold day.

But when the sun rises they fly away to no one knows where.

translationWords:

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

translationNotes:

- **General Information:** - Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself. (See: [Apostrophe](#))
- **You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars in the heavens** - The merchants of Nineveh are as impossible to count as the stars in the sky. AT: “You have more merchants than anyone could count.” (See: [Hyperbole](#))
- **merchants** - “traders” or “ones who buy and sell things” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))
- **princes** - Use a word for political “leaders” (UDB).
- **generals** - Use a word for military “leaders” or other government authorities. (See: [Simile](#))

Links:

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

Nahum 3:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ King of Assyria, your officials will all die; your important people will lie down and rest forever. Your people will be scattered over the mountains, and there will no one to gather them together.

¹⁹ You are like someone who has a wound that cannot be healed; it will be a wound that causes him to die. And all those who hear about what has happened to you will clap their hands joyfully. They will say, "Everyone has suffered because he continually acted very cruelly toward us."

ULB:

¹⁸ King of Assyria, your shepherds are asleep; your rulers are lying down resting.

Your people are scattered on the mountains, and there is no one to gather them.

¹⁹ No healing is possible for your wounds. Your wounds are severe.

Everyone who hears the news about you will clap their hands in joy over you.

Who has escaped your constant wickedness?

translationWords:

- [king](#)
- [Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire](#)
- [shepherd, to shepherd](#)
- [heal, cure](#)
- [joy, joyful](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

translationNotes:

- **shepherds** - "Shepherds" here stands for the governors of the Assyrian people. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- **Who has escaped your constant wickedness?** - AT: "Your constant wicked actions have hurt many people and nations." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Links:

- [Introduction to Nahum](#)

- Nahum 03 General Notes
- **Nahum 03 Translation Questions**

translationQuestions

Nahum 1

Q? Of what is Yahweh full?

A. Yahweh is full of wrath. [1:2]

Q? On whom does Yahweh take vengeance?

A. Yahweh takes vengeance on his adversaries. [1:2]

Q? Where does Yahweh make his way?

A. Yahweh makes his way in the whirlwind and the storm. [1:3]

Q? What is happening to the flowers of Lebanon?

A. The flowers of Lebanon are weak. [1:4]

Q? What happens to the earth in Yahweh's presence?

A. The earth collapses in Yahweh's presence. [1:5]

Q? To what can we compare Yahweh in the day of trouble?

A. Yahweh is a stronghold in the day of trouble. [1:7]

Q? Into what will Yahweh pursue his enemies?

A. Yahweh will pursue his enemies into darkness. [1:8]

Q? What will Yahweh do to the people's yoke?

A. He will break the people's yoke from them. [1:13]

Q? Why will Yahweh dig graves for the people of Nineveh?

A. He will dig their graves, for they are wicked. [1:14]

Q? Where are the feet of him who brings good news?

A. On the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news. [1:15]

Q? Why should Judah celebrate the festivals and keep its vows?

A. Judah should celebrate its festivals and keep its vows, for the wicked one will invade them no more. [1:15]

Nahum 2

Q? What is Yahweh restoring?

A. Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Jacob. [2:2]

Q? What color are the shields of his mighty men?

A. The shields of his mighty men are red. [2:3]

Q? What speeds through the streets?

A. The chariots speed through the streets. [2:4]

Q? What has been decreed?

A. It has been decreed: the queen is stripped and taken away; her female servants moan like doves, beating on their breasts. [2:7]

Q? What will the people of Nineveh do?

A. They will flee away like rushing water. [2:8]

Q? Of what were the lions afraid?

A. They were afraid of nothing. [2:11]

Q? With what did the lion fill his cave and his dens?

A. The lion filled his cave with victims and his dens with his prey. [2:12]

Q? What will Yahweh do to Nineveh?

A. Yahweh will burn their chariots in the smoke, devour their young lions, and cut off their prey from the land. [2:13]

Nahum 3

Q? Of what is the city full?

A. The city is full of blood, lies and stolen property. [3:1]

Q? How many people will be killed by the attacking horsemen?

A. There will be heaps of corpses, a great pile of bodies, and no end of the bodies. [3:3]

Q? Why are these things happening?

A. This is happening because of the lustful actions of the beautiful prostitute. [3:4]

Q? What will Yahweh of hosts do against the prostitute because he is against her?

A. Yahweh will raise up her skirt over her face and show her private parts to the nations, her shame to the kingdoms. He will throw disgusting filth on her and make her vile. He will make her someone that everyone will look at. [3:5-6]

Q? Whose wall was the sea?

A. Thebe's wall was the sea. [3:8]

Q? Who threw lots for Thebes' honorable men?

A. Thebes' enemies threw lots for her honorable men. [3:10]

Q? If Nineveh's fortresses are shaken, what happens?

A. If Nineveh's fortresses are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater. [3:12]

Q? How many princes are there?

A. The princes are as many as the locusts. [3:17]

Q? What will everyone who hears the news about you do?

A. Everyone who hears the news about you will clap their hands in joy over you. [3:19]

translationWords

adversary, enemy

Definition:

An “adversary” is a person or group who is opposed to someone or something. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- An adversary can be a person who tries to oppose you or harm you.
- A nation can be called an “adversary” when it fights against another nation.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- Adversary may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See: [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

afflict, affliction

Definition:

The term “afflict” means to cause someone distress or suffering. An “affliction” is the disease, emotional grief, or other disaster that results from this.

- God afflicted his people with sickness or other hardships in order to cause them to repent of their sins and turn back to him.
- God caused afflictions or plagues to come on the people of Egypt because their king refused to obey God.
- To “be afflicted with” means to be suffering some kind of distress, such as a disease, persecution, or emotional grief.

Translation Suggestions:

- To afflict someone could be translated as “cause someone to experience troubles” or “cause someone to suffer” or “cause suffering to come.”
- In certain contexts “afflict” could be translated as “happen to” or “come to” or “bring suffering.”
- A phrase like, “afflict someone with leprosy” could be translated as, “cause someone to be sick with leprosy.”
- When a disease or disaster is sent to “afflict” people or animals, this could be translated as “cause suffering to.”
- Depending on the context, the term “affliction” could be translated as “calamity” or “sickness” or “suffering” or “great distress.” physical
- The phrase “afflicted with” could also be translated as, “suffering from” or “sick with.”

(See: [leprosy](#), [leper](#), [leprous](#), [plague](#), [suffer](#), [suffering](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

angry, anger

Definition:

To “be angry” or to “have anger” means to be very displeased, irritated and upset about something or against someone.

- When people get angry, it often is sinful and selfish, but sometimes it is righteous anger against injustice or oppression.
- God’s anger (also called “wrath”) expresses his strong displeasure regarding sin.
- The phrase, “provoke to anger” means “cause to be angry.”

(See also: [wrath](#), [fury](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire

Facts:

Assyria was a powerful nation during the time the Israelites were living in the land of Canaan. The Assyrian Empire was a group of nations ruled by an Assyrian king.

- The nation of Assyria was located in a region that is now the northern part of Iraq.
- The Assyrians fought against Israel at different times in their history.
- In the year 722 BC, the Assyrians completely conquered the kingdom of Israel and forced many of the Israelites to move to Assyria.
- The remaining Israelites intermarried with foreigners that the Assyrians had brought into Israel from Samaria. The descendants of those people who intermarried were later called the Samaritans.

(See also: [Samaria](#), [Samaritan](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[20-02]** So God punished both kingdoms by allowing their enemies to destroy them. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the **Assyrian Empire**, a powerful, cruel nation. The **Assyrians** killed many people in the kingdom of Israel, took away everything of value, and burned much of the country.
- **[20-03]** The **Assyrians** gathered all the leaders, the rich people, and the people with skills and took them to **Assyria**.
- **[20-04]** Then the **Assyrians** brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been.

avenge, revenge, vengeance

Definition:

To “avenge” or “take revenge” or “execute vengeance” is to punish someone in order to pay him back for the harm he did. The act of avenging or taking revenge is “vengeance.”

- Usually “avenge” implies an intent to see justice done or to right a wrong,
- When referring to people, the expression “take revenge” or “get revenge” usually involves wanting to get back at the person who did the harm.
- When God “takes vengeance” or “executes vengeance,” he is acting in righteousness because he is punishing sin and rebellion.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression, “to avenge” someone could also be translated as “to right a wrong” or “to get justice for.”
- When referring to human beings, to “take revenge” could be translated as “pay back” or “hurt in order to punish” or “get back at.”
- Depending on the context, “vengeance” could be translated as “punishment” or “punishment of sin” or “payment for wrongs done.” If a word meaning “retaliation” is used, this would apply to human beings only.
- When God says, “take my vengeance,” this could be translated by, “punish them for wrongs done against me” or “cause bad things to happen because they have sinned against me.”
- When referring to God’s vengeance, make sure it is clear that God is right in his punishment of sin.

(See also: [punish](#), [punishment](#), [just](#), [justice](#), [justly](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Bashan

Facts:

Bashan was a region of land east of the Sea of Galilee. It covered an area that is now part of Syria and the Golan Heights.

- An Old Testament city of refuge called “Golan” was located in the region of Bashan.
- Bashan was a very fertile region known for its oak trees and pasturing animals.
- Genesis 14 records that Bashan was the site of a war between several kings and their nations.
- During Israel’s wanderings in the desert after their escape from Egypt, they took possession of part of the region of Bashan.
- Years later, King Solomon obtained supplies from that region.

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

(See: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [oak](#), [Sea of Galilee](#), [Sea of Chinnereth](#), [Lake of Gennesaret](#), [Sea of Tiberias](#), [Syria](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

blood

Definition:

The term “blood” refers to the red liquid that comes out of a person’s skin when there is an injury or wound. Blood brings life-giving nutrients to a person’s entire body.

- Blood symbolizes life and when it is shed or poured out, it symbolizes the loss of life, or death.
- When people made sacrifices to God, they killed an animal and poured its blood on the altar. This symbolized the sacrifice of the animal’s life to pay for people’s sins.
- Through his death on the cross, Jesus’ blood symbolically cleanses people from their sins and pays for the punishment they deserve for those sins.
- The expression “flesh and blood” refers to human beings.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to people who are biologically related.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term should be translated with the term that is used for blood in the target language
- The expression “flesh and blood” could be translated as “people” or “human beings.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “my own flesh and blood” could be translated as “my own family” or “my own relatives” or “my own people.”
- If there is an expression in the target language that is used with this meaning, that expression could be used to translate “flesh and blood.”

(See: [flesh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-03]** Before Joseph’s brothers returned home, they tore Joseph’s robe and dipped it in goat’s **blood**.
- **[10-03]** God turned the Nile River into **blood**, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.
- **[11-05]** All the houses of the Israelites had **blood** around the doors, so God passed over those houses and everyone inside was safe. They were saved because of the lamb’s **blood**.
- **[13-09]** The **blood** of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person’s sin and made that person clean in God’s sight.
- **[38-05]** Then Jesus took a cup and said, “Drink this. It is my **blood** of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins.
- **[48-10]** When anyone believes in Jesus, the **blood** of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s punishment passes over him.

captive, captivity**Definition:**

The terms “captive” and “captivity” refer to capturing people and forcing them to live somewhere they do not want to live, such as in a foreign country.

- The Israelites from the kingdom of Judah were held captive in the kingdom of Babylonia for 70 years.
- Captives are often required to work for the people or nation that captured them.
- Daniel and Nehemiah were Israelite captives who worked for the Babylonian king.
- The expression “to take captive” is another way of talking about capturing someone.
- The expression, “carry you away captive” could also be translated as, “force you to live as captives” or “take you away to another country as prisoners.”
- In a figurative sense, the apostle Paul tells Christians to “take captive” every thought and make it obedient to Christ.
- He also talks about how a person can be “taken captive” by sin, which means he is “controlled by” sin.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, to be “held captive” could also be translated by, “not allowed to be free” or “kept in prison” or “forced to live in a foreign country.”
- The expression, “led captive” or “taken captive” could be translated as, “captured” or “imprisoned” or “forced to go to a foreign land.”
- The term “captives” could also be translated as, “people who were captured” or “enslaved people.”
- Depending on the context, “captivity” could also be translated as, “imprisonment” or “exile” or “forced stay in a foreign country.”

(See also: [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [exile](#), [the Exile](#), [prison](#), [prisoner](#), [imprison](#), [seize](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Carmel, Mount Carmel

Facts:

“Mount Carmel” refers to a mountain range that was located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea just north of the Plain of Sharon. Its highest peak is 546 meters high.

- There was also a town called “Carmel” located in Judah, south of the Salt Sea.
- The wealthy landowner Nabal and his wife Abigail lived near the town of Carmel where David and his men helped guard Nabal’s sheep shearers.
- On Mount Carmel, Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest in order to prove that Yahweh is the only true God.
- To make it clear that this wasn’t just a single mountain, “Mount Carmel” could be translated as, “mountain on the Carmel mountain range” or “Carmel mountain range.”

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

(See also: [Baal](#), [Elijah](#), [Judah](#), [Salt Sea](#), [Dead Sea](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

chariot

Definition:

In ancient times, chariots were lightweight, two-wheeled carts that were pulled by horses.

- People would sit or stand in chariots, using them for war or travel.
- In war, an army that had chariots had a great advantage of speed and mobility over an army that did not have chariots.
- The ancient Egyptians and Romans were well-known for their use of horses and chariots.

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

(See: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Rome](#), [Roman](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[12-10]** So they followed the Israelites onto the path through the sea, but God caused the Egyptians to panic and caused their **chariots** to get stuck.
- Rome, Romaning in his **chariot**.

clothe, clothed

Definition:

When used figuratively in the Bible, “clothed with” means to be endowed or equipped with something. To “clothe” oneself with something means to seek to have a certain character quality.

- In the same way that clothing is external to your body and is visible to all, when you are “clothed” with a certain character quality, others can readily see it. To “clothe yourself with kindness” means to let your actions be so characterized by kindness that it is easily seen by everyone.
- To be “clothed with power from on high” means to have power given to you.
- This term is also used to express negative experiences, such as “clothed with shame” or “clothed with terror”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the literal figure of speech, “clothe yourselves with.” Another way to translate this could be “put on” if this refers to putting on clothes.
- If that does not give the correct meaning, other ways to translate “clothed with” could be “showing” or “manifesting” or “filled with” or “having the quality of.”
- The term “clothe yourself with” could also be translated as “cover yourself with” or “behave in a way that shows.”

Bible References:

Waiting

command, to command, commandment

Definition:

The term “to command” means to order someone to do something. A “command” or “commandment” is what the person was ordered to do.

- Although these terms have basically the same meaning, “commandment” often refers to certain commands of God which are more formal and permanent, such as the “Ten Commandments.”
- A command can be positive (“Honor your parents”) or negative (“Do not steal”).
- To “take command” means to “take control” or “take charge” of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions

- It is best to translate this term differently from the term, “law.” Also compare with the definitions of “decree” and “statute.”
- Some translators may prefer to translate “command” and “commandment” with the same word in their language.
- Others may prefer to use a special word for commandment that refers to lasting, formal commands that God has made.

(See [decree](#), [statute](#), [statutes](#), [law](#), [principle](#), [Ten Commandments](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

cut off**Definition:**

The expression “be cut off” is an expression that means to be excluded, banished or isolated from the main group. It can also refer to being killed as an act of divine judgment for sin.

- In the Old Testament, disobeying God’s commands resulted in being cut off, or separated, from God’s people and from his presence.
- God also said he would “cut off” or destroy the non-Israelite nations, because they did not worship or obey him and were enemies of Israel.
- The expression “cut off” is also used to refer to God causing a river to stop flowing.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression “be cut off” could be translated as “be banished” or “be sent away” or “be separated from” or “be killed” or “be destroyed.”
- Depending on the context, “to cut off” could be translated as, “to destroy” or “to send away” or “to separate from” or “to destroy.”
- In the context of flowing waters being cut off, this could be translated as “were stopped” or “were caused to stop flowing” or “were divided.”
- The literal meaning of cutting something with a knife should be distinguished from the figurative uses of this term.

Bible References:

Waiting

darkness

Definition:

The term “darkness” literally means an absence of light. There are also several figurative meanings of this term:

- As a metaphor, “darkness” means “impurity” or “evil” or “spiritual blindness.”
- It also refers to anything related to sin and moral corruption.
- The expression, “dominion of darkness” refers to all that is evil and ruled by Satan.
- The term “darkness” can also be used as a metaphor for death. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- People who do not know God are said to be “living in darkness,” which means they do not understand or practice righteousness.
- God is light (righteousness) and the darkness (evil) cannot overcome that light.
- The place of punishment for those who reject God is sometimes referred to as “outer darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally, with a word in the project language that refers to the absence of light. This could also be a term that refers to the darkness of a room with no light or to the time of day when there is no light.
- For the figurative uses, it is also important to keep the image of darkness in contrast to light, as a way to describe evil and deception in contrast to goodness and truth.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could be, “darkness of night” (as opposed to “light of day”) or “not seeing anything, like at night” or “evil, like a dark place”.

(See also: [corrupt](#), [corruption](#), [dominion](#), [kingdom](#), [light](#), [redeem](#), [redemption](#), [righteous](#), [righteousness](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

declare, declaration

Definition:

The terms “declare” and “declaration” refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something.

- A “declaration” not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by, “the declaration of Yahweh” or “this is what Yahweh declares.” This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “declare” could also be translated as “proclaim” or “publicly state” or “strongly say” or “emphatically state.”
- The term “declaration” could also be translated as, “statement” or “proclamation.”
- The phrase, “this is Yahweh’s declaration” could be translated as, “this is what Yahweh declares” or “this is what Yahweh says.”

(See also: [proclaim](#), [proclamation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

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.

u

dove, pigeon

Definition:

Doves and pigeons are two kinds of small, gray-brown birds that look similar. A dove is often thought of as being lighter in color, almost white.

- Some languages have two different names for them, while others use the same name for both.
- Doves and pigeons were used in sacrifices to God, especially for people who could not afford to buy a larger animal.
- A dove brought the leaf of an olive tree to Noah when the flood waters were going down.
- Doves sometimes symbolize purity, innocence, or peace.
- If doves or pigeons are not known in the language area where the translation is being done, this term could be translated as “a small grayish brown bird called a dove” or “a small gray or brown bird, similar to a (name of local bird)”.
- If both a dove and a pigeon are referred to in the same verse, it is best to use two different words for these birds, if possible.

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

(See also: [olive](#), [innocent](#), [pure](#), [purify](#), [purification](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

drunk, drunkard

Facts:

The term “drunk” means to be intoxicated from drinking too much of an alcoholic beverage.

- A “drunkard” is a person who is often drunk. This kind of person could also be referred to as an “alcoholic.”
- The Bible tells believers not to be drunk with alcoholic drinks, but to be controlled by God’s Holy Spirit.
- The Bible teaches that drunkenness is unwise and influences a person to sin in other ways.
- Other ways to translate “drunk” could include, “inebriated” or “intoxicated” or “having too much alcohol” or “filled with fermented drink.”

(See also: [wine](#), [wineskin](#), [new wine](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Egypt, Egyptian

Facts:

Egypt is a country in the northeast part of Africa, to the southwest of the land of Canaan. An Egyptian is a person who is from the country of Egypt.

- In ancient times, Egypt was a powerful and wealthy country.
- Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts, Lower Egypt (northern part where the Nile River flowed downward into the sea) and Upper Egypt (southern part). In the Old Testament, these parts are referred to as “Egypt” and “Pathros” in the original language text.
- Several times when there was little food in Canaan, Israel’s patriarchs traveled to Egypt to buy food for their families.
- For several hundred years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph and Mary went down to Egypt with the young child Jesus, to escape from Herod the Great.

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

(See also: [Herod the Great](#), [Joseph \(NT\)](#), [Nile River](#), [River of Egypt](#), [patriarchs](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-04]** The slave traders took Joseph to **Egypt**. **Egypt** was a large, powerful country located along the Nile River.
- **[08-08]** Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of **Egypt**!
- **[08-11]** So Jacob sent his older sons to **Egypt** to buy food.
- **[08-14]** Even though Jacob was an old man, he moved to **Egypt** with all of his family, and they all lived there.
- **[09-01]** After Joseph died, all of his relatives stayed in **Egypt**.

Ethiopia, Ethiopian

Facts:

Ethiopia is a country in Africa located just south of Egypt, bordered by the Nile River to the west and by the Red Sea to the east. A person from Ethiopia is an “Ethiopian.”

- Ancient Ethiopia was located south of Egypt and included land that is now part of several modern-day African countries, such as Sudan, modern Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Central African Republic, and Chad.
- In the Bible, Ethiopia is sometimes called “Cush” or “Nubia.”
- The countries of Ethiopia (‘Cush’) and Egypt are often mentioned together in the Bible, perhaps because they were located next to each other and their people may have had some of the same ancestors.
- God sent Philip the evangelist to a desert where he shared the good news about Jesus with an Ethiopian eunuch.

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

(See also: [Cush](#), [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [eunuch](#), [Philip, the evangelist](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

evil, wicked, wickedness

Definition:

The terms “evil” and “wicked” both refer to anything that is opposed to God’s holy character and will.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering or being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral”
- Other ways to translate these could include, “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [good](#), [goodness](#), [righteous](#), demon, evil spirit, unclean spirit)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[02-04]** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- **[03-01]** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **[03-02]** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **[04-02]** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **[08-12]** “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- **[14-02]** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **[17-01]** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **[18-11]** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.

- [29-08] The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- [45-02] They said, "We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!"
- [50-17] He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

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

festival

Definition:

In general, a festival is a celebration held by a community of people.

- The word for “festival” in the Old Testament literally means “appointed time.”
- The festivals celebrated by the Israelites were specially appointed times or seasons that God had commanded them to observe.
- In some English translations, the word “feast” is used instead of festival because the celebrations included having a large meal together.
- There were several main festivals that the Israelites celebrated every year:
 - Passover
 - Festival of Unleavened Bread
 - Firstfruits
 - Festival of Weeks (Pentecost)
 - Festival of Trumpets
 - Day of Atonement
 - Festival of Shelters
- The purpose of these festivals was to thank God and to remember the amazing things he had done to rescue, protect, and provide for his people.

(See also: [feast](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

fig**Definition:**

A fig is a small, soft, sweet fruit that grows on trees. When ripe, this fruit can be a variety of colors, including brown, yellow, or purple.

- Fig trees can grow to be as tall as 6 meters high and their large leaves provide pleasant shade. The fruit is about 3-5 centimeters long.
- Adam and Eve used the leaves from fig trees to make clothing for themselves after they had sinned.
- Figs can be eaten raw, cooked, or dried. People also chop them into small pieces and press them into cakes to eat later.
- In Bible times, figs were important as a source of food and income.
- The presence of fruitful fig trees is frequently mentioned in the Bible as a sign of prosperity.
- Several times Jesus used fig trees as an illustration to teach his disciples spiritual truths.

Bible References:

Waiting

fire**Definition:**

Fire is the heat, light, and flames that are produced when something is burned.

- Burning wood by fire turns the wood into ashes.
- The term “fire” is also used figuratively, usually referring to judgment or purification.
- The final judgment of unbelievers is in the fire of hell.
- Fire is used to refine gold and other metals. In the Bible, this process is used to explain how God refines people through difficult things that happen in their lives.
- The phrase “baptize with fire” could also be translated as, “cause you to experience suffering in order to purify you.”

(See also: [pure](#), [purify](#), [purification](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

flood

Definition:

The term “flood” literally refers to a large amount of water that completely covers over the land.

- This term is also used figuratively to refer to an overwhelming amount of something, especially something that happens suddenly.
- In Noah’s time, people had become so evil that God caused a worldwide flood to come over the entire surface of the earth, even covering the mountaintops. Everyone who was not in the boat with Noah drowned. All other floods cover a much smaller land area.
- This term can also be an action as in, “the land was flooded by river water.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the literal meaning of “flood” could include, “an overflowing of water” or “large amounts of water.”
- The figurative comparison, “like a flood” could keep the literal term, or a substitute term could be used that refers to something that has a flowing aspect to it, such as a river.
- For the expression “like a flood of water” where water is already mentioned, the word “flood” could be translated as “an overwhelming amount” or “an overflowing.”
- This term can be used as a metaphor as in, “do not let the flood sweep over me,” which means “do not let these overwhelming disasters happen to me” or “don’t let me be devastated by disasters” or “don’t let your anger devastate me.” (See: [Metaphor](#))
- The figurative expression, “I flood my bed with tears” could be translated as “my tears soak my bed with water like a flood.”

(See also: [ark](#), [Noah](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

gate, gate bar

Definition:

A “gate” is a hinged barrier at an access point in a fence or wall that surrounds a house or city. The “gate bar” refers to a wooden or metal bar that can be moved into place to lock the gate.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A city gate was often the news and social center of a village. It was also where business transactions occurred and judgments were made, because city walls were thick enough to have gateways that produced cool shade from the hot sun. Citizens found it pleasant to sit in the shade to conduct their business and even to judge legal cases.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “gate” could be, “door” or “wall opening” or “barrier” or “entranceway.”
- The phrase, “bars of the gate” could be translated as, “gate bolts” or “wooden beams to lock the gate” or “metal locking rods of the gate.”

Bible References:

Waiting

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.

gold

Definition:

Gold is a yellow-colored high-quality metal that was used for making jewelry and religious objects. It was the most valuable metal in ancient times.

- In Bible times, many different kinds of objects were made out of solid gold or were covered with a thin layer of gold.
- These objects included ear rings and other jewelry, idols, altars, and other objects used in the tabernacle or temple, such as the ark of the covenant.
- In Old Testament times, gold was used as a means of exchange in buying and selling. It was weighed on a scale to determine its value.
- Later on, gold and other metals such as silver were used to make coins to use in buying and selling
- When referring to something that is not solid gold, but only has a thin covering of gold, the term “golden” or “gold-covered” or “gold-overlaid” could also be used.
- Sometimes an object is described as “gold-colored” which means it has the yellow color of gold, but may not actually be made of gold.

(See also: [altar](#), [ark of the covenant](#), [ark of the covenant decrees](#), [ark of Yahweh](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [silver](#), [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

good news, gospel

Definition:

The term “gospel” literally means “good news” and refers to a message or announcement that tells people something that benefits them and makes them glad.

- In the Bible, this term usually refers to the message about God’s salvation for people through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross.
- In most English Bibles, “good news” is usually translated as “gospel” and is also used in phrases such as, the “gospel of Jesus Christ,” the “gospel of God” and the “gospel of the kingdom.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways to translate this term could include, “good message” or “good announcement” or “God’s message of salvation” or “the good things God teaches about Jesus.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the phrase, “good news of” could include, “good news/message about” or “good message from” or “the good things God tells us about” or “what God says about how he saves people.”

(See: [kingdom](#), , [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [salvation](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [23-06] The angel said, “Do not be afraid, because I have some **good news** for you. The Messiah, the Master, has been born in Bethlehem!”
- [26-03] Jesus read, “God has given me his Spirit so that I can proclaim **good news** to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed. This is the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- [45-10] Philip also used other Scriptures to tell him the **good news of Jesus**.
- [46-10] Then they sent them off to preach the **good news about Jesus** in many other places.
- [47-01] One day, Paul and his friend Silas went to the town of Philippi to proclaim the **good news about Jesus**.
- [47-13] The **good news about Jesus** kept spreading, and the Church kept growing.
- [50-01] For almost 2,000 years, more and more people around the world have been hearing the **good news about Jesus** the Messiah.
- [50-02] When Jesus was living on earth he said, “My disciples will preach the **good news** about the kingdom of God to people everywhere in the world, and then the end will come.”

- **[50-03]** Before he returned to heaven, Jesus told Christians to proclaim the **good news** to people who have never heard it.

heal, cure

Definition:

The terms “heal” and “cure” both mean to cause a sick, wounded, or disabled person to be healthy again.

- A person who is “healed” or “cured” has been “made well” or “made healthy.”
- Healing can happen naturally since God gave our bodies the ability to recover from many kinds of wounds and diseases. This kind of healing usually happens slowly.
- However, certain conditions such as being blind or paralyzed, and certain serious diseases such as leprosy do not heal on their own. When people are healed of these things, it is a miracle that usually happens suddenly.
- For example, Jesus healed many people who were blind or lame or diseased and they became well right away.
- The apostles also healed people miraculously, such as when Peter caused a crippled man to immediately be able to walk.

(See also: [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[19-14]** One of the miracles happened to Naaman, an enemy commander, who had a horrible skin disease. He had heard of Elisha so he went and asked Elisha to **heal** him.
- **[21-10]** He (Isaiah) also predicted that the Messiah would **heal** sick people and those who could not hear, see, speak, or walk.
- **[26-06]** Jesus continued saying, “And during the time of the prophet Elisha, there were many people in Israel with skin diseases. But Elisha did not **heal** any of them. He only **healed** the skin disease of Naaman, a commander of Israel’s enemies.”
- **[26-08]** They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and Jesus **healed** them.
- **[32-14]** She had heard that Jesus had **healed** many sick people and thought, “I’m sure that if I can just touch Jesus’ clothes, then I will be **healed**, too!”
- **[44-03]** Immediately, God **healed** the lame man, and he began to walk and jump around, and to praise God.
- **[44-08]** Peter answered them, “This man stands before you **healed** by the power of Jesus the Messiah.”
- **[49-02]**] Jesus did many miracles that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, **healed** many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

heart

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with no holding back, with complete commitment and willingness.
- The expression, “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. They have been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

- Some languages use a different body part such as “stomach” or “liver” to refer to these ideas.
- Other languages may use one word to express some of these concepts and another word to express others.
- If “heart” or other body part does not have this meaning, some languages may need to express this nonfiguratively with terms such as “thoughts” or “emotions” or “desires.”
- Depending on the context, “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” could be translated as, “with all my energy” or “with complete dedication” or “completely” or “with total commitment.”
- The expression “take it to heart” could be translated as “treat it seriously” or “carefully think about it.”
- The expression “hard-hearted” could also be translated as, “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to obey” or “continually disobeying God.”
- Ways to translate “brokenhearted” could include, “very sad” or “feeling deeply hurt.”

(See also: [hard](#), [hardness](#), [harden](#) other)

Bible References:

Waiting

heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we can’t directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.
- When “heaven” is used figuratively, it is a way of referring to God. For example, when Matthew writes about the “kingdom of heaven” he is referring to the kingdom of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “heaven” is used figuratively, it could be translated as “God.”
- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as, “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See: [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [04-02] They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- [14-11] He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- [23-07] Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- [29-09] Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- [37-09] Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- [42-11] Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

horse

Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for doing farm work and for transporting people.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon's great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.

(See also: [chariot](#), , [donkey](#), [mule](#), [Solomon](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

horsemen

Definition:

In Bible times, the term “horsemen” referred to men who rode horses into battle.

- Warriors who rode in horse-pulled chariots may also have been called “horsemen,” though this term usually refers to men who are actually riding on the horses.
- The Israelites believed that using horses in battle placed too much emphasis on their own strength rather than on Yahweh, so they did not use a lot of horsemen.
- This term could also be translated as, “horse riders” or “men on horses.”

(See also: [chariot](#), [horse](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

image, carved image, carved figure, cast metal figure

Definition:

These terms are all used to refer to idols that have been made for worshiping a false god. In the context of worshiping idols, the term “image” is a shortened form of “carved image.”

- A “carved image” or “carved figure” is a wooden object that has been made to look like an animal, person, or thing.
- A “cast metal figure” is an object or statue created by melting metal and pouring it into a mold that is in the shape of an object, animal, or person.
- These wooden and metal objects were used in the worship of false gods.
- The term “image” when referring to an idol could either refer to a wooden or metal idol.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to an idol, the term “image” could also be translated as “statue” or “engraved idol” or “carved religious object.”
- It may be more clear in some languages to always use a descriptive word with this term, such as “carved image” or “cast metal figure,” even in places where only the term “image” or “figure” is in the original text.
- Make sure it is clear that this term is different than the term used to refer to being in the image of God.

(See also: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [God](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [image of God](#), [image](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

innocent

Definition:

The term “innocent” means to not be guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing. It can also refer more generally to people who are not involved in evil things.

- A person accused of doing something wrong is innocent if he has not committed that wrong.
- Sometimes the term “innocent” is used to refer to people who have done nothing wrong to deserve the bad treatment they are receiving, as in an enemy army attacking “innocent people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- In most contexts, the term “innocent” can be translated as “not guilty” or “not responsible” or “not to blame” for something.
- When referring in general to innocent people, this term could be translated as, “who have done nothing wrong” or “who are not involved in evil.”
- The frequently occurring expression, “innocent blood” could be translated as, “people who did nothing wrong to deserve being killed.”
- The expression “shed innocent blood” could be translated as, “kill innocent people” or “kill people who did nothing wrong to deserve it.”
- In the context of someone being killed, “innocent of the blood of” could be translated as, “not guilty for the death of.”
- When talking about people not accepting the good news about Jesus but not accepting it, “innocent of the blood of” could be translated as “not responsible for whether they remain spiritually dead or not” or “not responsible for whether they accept this message.”
- When Judas said, “I have betrayed innocent blood” he was saying, “I have betrayed a man who did nothing wrong” or “I have caused the death of a man who was sinless.”
- When Pilate said about Jesus, “I am innocent of the blood of this innocent man,” this could be translated as, “I am not responsible for the killing of this man who has done nothing wrong to deserve it.”

(See also: [guilt](#), [guilty](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [08-06] After two years, Joseph was still in prison, even though he was **innocent**.

- [40-04] One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, "Do you have no fear of God? We are guilty, but this man is **innocent**."
- [40-08] When the soldier guarding Jesus saw everything that happened, he said, "Certainly, this man was **innocent**. He was the Son of God."
-

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.”

Jacob, Israel

Facts:

Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac and Rebekah.

- Jacob's name means "he grabs the heel" which is an expression meaning, "he deceives." As Jacob was being born, he was holding onto the heel of his twin brother Esau.
- Many years later, God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," which means, "he struggles with God."
- Jacob was clever and deceptive. He found ways to take the firstborn blessing and inheritance rights from his older brother, Esau.
- Esau was angry and planned to kill him, so Jacob left his homeland. But years later Jacob returned with his wives and children to the land of Canaan where Esau was living, and their families lived peacefully near each other.
- Jacob had twelve sons. Their descendants became the twelve tribes of Israel.
- A different man named Jacob is listed as being Joseph's father in Matthew's genealogy.

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

(See also: [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [deceive](#), [deceit](#), [deception](#), [deceptive](#), [Esau](#), [Isaac](#), [Israel](#), [Israelites](#), [nation of Israel](#), [Rebekah](#), [twelve tribes of Israel](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[07-01]** As the boys grew up, Rebekah loved **Jacob**, but Isaac loved Esau. **Jacob** loved to stay at home, but Esau loved to hunt.
- **[07-07]** **Jacob** lived there for many years, and during that time he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God made him very wealthy.
- **[07-08]** After twenty years away from his home in Canaan, **Jacob** returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.
- **[07-10]** The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to **Jacob**.
- **[08-01]** Many years later, when **Jacob** was an old man, he sent his favorite son, Joseph, to check on his brothers who were taking care of the herds.

jealous, jealousy

Definition:

The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” refer to a strong desire to protect the purity of a relationship. They can also refer to a strong desire to keep possession of something or someone.

- These terms are often used to describe the angry feeling that a person has toward a spouse who has been unfaithful in their marriage.
- When used in the Bible, these terms often refer to God’s strong desire for his people to remain pure and unstained by sin.
- God is also “jealous” for his name, that it be treated with honor and reverence.
- Another meaning of jealous involves being angry that someone else is successful or more popular. This is close in meaning to the word “envy.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “jealous” could include, “strong protective desire” or “possessive desire.”
- The term “jealousy” could be translated as, “strong protective feeling” or “possessive feeling.”
- When talking about God, make sure the translation of these terms does not give a negative meaning of being resentful of someone else.
- In the context of people’s wrong feelings of anger toward toward other people who are more successful, the terms “envious” and “envy” could be used. But these terms should not be used for God.

(See also: [envy](#), [covet](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

joy, joyful

Definition:

Joy is a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction that comes from God. The related term, “joyful” describes a person who feels very glad and full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “joy” could also be translated as “gladness” or “delight” or “great happiness.”
- The phrase, “be joyful” could be translated as “rejoice” or “be very glad” or with a phrase that means, “be very happy in God’s goodness.”
- A person who is joyful could be described as “very happy” or “delighted” or “deeply glad.”
- A phrase such as “make a joyful shout” could be translated as “shout in a way that shows you are very happy.”
- A “joyful city” or “joyful house” could be translated as “city where joyful people live” or “house full of joyful people” or “city whose people are very happy.” **Metonymy**)

(See also: **rejoice**)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[33-07]**”The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with **joy**.”
- **[34-04]**”The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field.”
- **[41-07]** The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

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

kingdom

Definition:

A kingdom is a group of people ruled by a king. It also refers to the realm or political regions over which a king or other ruler has control and authority.

- A kingdom can be of any geographical size. A king might govern a nation or country or only one city.
- The term “kingdom” can also refer to a spiritual reign or authority, as in the term “kingdom of God.”
- God is the ruler of all creation, but the term “kingdom of God” especially refers to his reign and authority over the people who have believed in Jesus and who have submitted to his authority.
- The Bible also talks about Satan having a “kingdom” in which he temporarily rules over many things on this earth. His kingdom is evil and is referred to as “darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a physical region that is ruled over by a king, the term “kingdom” could be translated as, “country (ruled by a king)” or “king’s territory” or “region ruled by a king.”
- In a spiritual sense, “kingdom” could be translated as “ruling” or “reigning” or “controlling” or “governing.”
- One way to translate “kingdom of priests” might be, “spiritual priests who are ruled by God.”
- The phrase, “kingdom of light” could be translated as, “God’s reign that is good like light” or “when God, who is light, rules people” or “the light and goodness of God’s kingdom.” It is best to keep the word “light” in this expression since that is a very important term in the Bible.
- Note that the term “kingdom” is different from an empire, in which an emperor rules over several countries.

(See also: [authority](#), [king](#), [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#), [kingdom of Israel](#), [Judah](#), [Judah](#), [kingdom of Judah](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[13-02]** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation.”
- **[18-04]** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon’s death.

- **[18-07]** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- **[18-08]** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.
- **[21-08]** A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

king

Definition:

The term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a city, state, or country.

- A king is usually chosen to rule because of his family relation to previous kings.
- When a king dies, it is usually his oldest son who becomes the next king.
- In ancient times, the king had absolute authority over the people in his kingdom.
- Rarely the term “king” may be used to refer to someone who is not a true king, such as “King Herod” in the New Testament.
- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a king who rules over his people.
- The “kingdom of God” refers to God’s rule over his people.
- Jesus was called “king of the Jews,” “king of Israel,” and “king of kings.”
- When Jesus comes back, he will rule as king over the world.
- This term could also be translated as, “supreme chief” or “absolute leader” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” could be translated as, “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

(See also: [authority](#), [Herod Antipas](#), [kingdom](#), [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-06]** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- **[16-01]** The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- **[16-18]** Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.
- **[17-05]** Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- **[21-06]** God’s prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- **[48-14]** David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

Lebanon

Facts:

Lebanon is a beautiful mountainous region located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Israel. In Bible times this region was also thickly wooded with fir trees, such as cedar and cypress.

- King Solomon sent workers to Lebanon to harvest cedar trees for use in building God's temple.
- Ancient Lebanon was inhabited by Phoenician people who were skilled builders of ships that were used for a successful trading industry.
- The cities of Tyre and Sidon were located in Lebanon. It was in these cities that a valuable purple dye was first used.

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

(See also: [cedar](#), [cypress](#), [fir](#), [Phoenicia](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

lion

Definition:

A lion is a large, cat-like, wild animal, with powerful teeth and claws for killing and tearing apart its prey.

- Lions have powerful bodies and great speed to catch their prey. Their fur is short and golden-brown in color.
- Male lions have a mane of hair that encircles their heads.
- Lions kill other animals to eat them and can also be dangerous to human beings.
- When King David was a boy, he killed lions who tried to attack the sheep he was caring for.
- Samson also killed a lion with his bare hands.

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

(See also: [David](#), [leopard](#), [Samson](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

lots, casting lots

Definition:

A “lot” is a marked object that is chosen from among other similar objects as a way of deciding something. “Casting lots” referred to tossing marked objects onto the ground or other surface.

- Often the lots were small marked stones or pieces of broken pottery.
- Some cultures “draw” or “pull out” lots using a bunch of straws. Someone holds the straws so that no one can see how long they are. Each person pulls out a straw and the one who picks the longest (or shortest) straw is the one who is chosen.
- The practice of casting lots was used by the Israelites to find out what God wanted them to do.
- As in the time of Zechariah and Elizabeth, it was also used to choose which priest would perform a specific duty in the temple at a specific time.
- The soldiers who crucified Jesus cast lots to decide who would get to keep Jesus’ robe.
- The phrase “casting lots” can be translated as “tossing lots” or “drawing lots” or “rolling lots.” Make sure the translation of “cast” does not sound like the lots were being thrown a long distance.
- Depending on the context, the term “lot” could also be translated as “marked stone” or “pottery piece” or “stick” or “piece of straw.”
- If a decision is made “by lot” this could be translated as, “by drawing (or throwing) lots.”

(See also: [Elizabeth](#), [priest](#), [priesthood](#), [Zechariah \(OT\)](#), [Zechariah \(NT\)](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

lust

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral.

- In the Bible, “lust” usually refers to sexual desire for someone other than one’s own spouse.
- Sometimes this term is used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, “lust” could also be translated as “wrong desire” or “strong desire” or “wrongful sexual desire” or “strong immoral desire” or “to strongly desire to sin.”
- The phrase “to lust after” could also be translated as “to wrongly desire” or “to think immorally about” or “to immorally desire.”

(See also: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

majesty

Definition:

The term “majesty” refers to greatness and splendor, often in relation to the qualities of a king.

- In the Bible, “majesty” frequently refers to the greatness of God, who is the supreme King over the universe.
- “Your Majesty” is a way of addressing a king.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as, “kingly greatness” or “royal splendor.”
- “Your Majesty” could be translated as something like “your Highness” or “your Excellency” or using a natural way of addressing a ruler in the target language.

(See also: [king](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

mighty, might

Definition:

The terms “mighty” and “might” refer to having great strength or power.

- Often the word “might” is another word for “strength.” When talking about God, it can mean “power.”
- The phrase, “mighty men” often refers to men who are courageous and victorious in battle. David’s band of faithful men who helped protect and defend him were often called “mighty men.”
- God is also referred to as the “mighty one.”
- The phrase, “mighty works” usually refers to the amazing things God does, especially miracles.
- This term is related to the term, “almighty,” which is a common description for God, meaning that he has complete power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “mighty” could be translated as “powerful” or “amazing” or “very strong.”
- The phrase “his might” could be translated as “his strength” or “his power.”
- In Acts 7, Moses is described as a man who was “mighty in word and deed.” This could be translated as, “Moses spoke powerful words from God and did miraculous things” or “Moses spoke God’s word powerfully and did many amazing things.”
- Depending on the context, “mighty works” could be translated as, “amazing things that God does” or “miracles” or “God doing things with power.”
- The term “might” could also be translated as “power” or “great strength.”
- Do not confuse this term with the English word that is used to express a possibility, as in “It might rain.”

(See also: [Almighty](#), [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [strength](#), [strengthen](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Nahum

Facts:

Nahum was a prophet who preached during the time when the evil King Manasseh was ruling over Judah.

- Nahum was from the town of Elkosh, about 20 miles from Jerusalem.
- The Old Testament book of Nahum records his prophecies about the destruction of the Assyrian city of Nineveh.

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

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Manasseh](#), [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [Nineveh](#), [Ninevite](#))

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

nation

Definition:

A nation is a large group of people ruled by some form of government. The people of a nation often have the same ancestors and share a common ethnicity.

- The term “nation” usually includes the idea of a well-defined culture and territorial boundaries.
- In the Bible, a “nation” can be a country (like Egypt or Ethiopia), but often it is more general and refers to a people group, especially when used in the plural. It is important to check the context.
- Nations in the Bible included the Israelites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, the Romans, and the Greeks, among many others.
- Sometimes the word “nation” is used figuratively to refer to the ancestor of a certain people group, as when Rebekah was told by God that her unborn sons were “nations” that would fight against each other. This could be translated as “the founders of two nations” or the “ancestors of two people groups.”
- The word translated as “nation” is also sometimes used to refer to “Gentiles” or to people who do not worship Yahweh. The context usually makes the meaning clear.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the word “nation” could also be translated as, “people group” or “people” or “country.”
- If a language has a term for “nation” that is distinct from these other terms, then that term can be used wherever it occurs in the Bible text, as long as it is natural and accurate in each context.
- The plural term “nations” can often be translated as “people groups.”
- In certain contexts, this term could also be translated as “Gentiles” or “nonJews.”

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Babylon](#), [Babylonian](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [Gentile](#), [Greek](#), [Grecian](#), [people group](#), [peoples](#), [the people](#), [a people](#), [Philistines](#), [Rome](#), [Roman](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Nile River, River of Egypt

Facts:

The Nile is a very long and wide river in northeastern Africa. It is especially well-known as the main river of Egypt.

- The Nile River flows north through Egypt and into the Mediterranean Sea.
- Crops grow well in the fertile land on either side of the Nile River.
- Most Egyptians live near the Nile River since it is an important source of water and food crops.
- The Israelites lived in the land of Goshen which was very fertile because it was located along the Nile River.
- When Moses was a baby, his parents placed him in a basket among the reeds of the Nile to hide him from Pharaoh's men.

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

(See: [Egypt](#), [Egyptian](#), [Goshen](#), [Moses](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[08-04]** Egypt was a large, powerful country located along the **Nile River**.
- **[09-04]** Pharaoh saw that the Israelites were having many babies, so he ordered his people to kill all Israelite baby boys by throwing them into the **Nile River**.
- **[09-06]** When the boy's parents could no longer hide him, they put him in a floating basket among the reeds along the edge of the **Nile River** in order to save him from being killed.
- **[10-03]** God turned the **Nile River** into blood, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.

Nineveh, Ninevite

Facts:

Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria. A “Ninevite” was a person who lived in Nineveh.

- God sent the prophet Jonah to warn the Ninevites to turn from their wicked ways. The people repented and God did not destroy them.
- The Assyrians later stopped serving God. They conquered the kingdom of Israel and carried the people away to Nineveh.

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

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Assyrian](#), [Assyrian Empire](#), [Jonah](#), [repent](#), [repentance](#), [turn](#), [turn away](#), [turn back](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

peace, peaceful

Definition:

The term “peace” refers to a state of being or a feeling of having no conflict, anxiety, or fearfulness. A person who is “peaceful” feels calm and assured of being safe and secure.

- “Peace” can also refer to a time when people groups or countries are not at war with each other. These people are said to have “peaceful relations.”
- To “make peace” with a person or a group of people means to take actions to cause fighting to stop.
- A “peacemaker” is someone who does and says things to influence people to live at peace with each other.
- To be “at peace” with other people means being in a state of not fighting against those people.
- A good or right relationship between God and people happens when God saves people from their sin. This is called having “peace with God.”
- The greeting “grace and peace” was used by the apostles in their letters to their fellow believers as a blessing.
- The term “peace” can also refer to being in a good relationship with other people or with God.

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [15-06] God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- [15-12] Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- [16-03] Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- [21-13] He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- [48-14] David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- [50-17] Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

people group, peoples, the people, a people

Definition:

The term “peoples” or “people groups” refers to groups of people who share a common language and culture. The phrase “the people” often refers to a gathering of people in a certain place or at a specific event.

- When God set apart “a people” for himself, it means that he chose certain people to belong to him and serve him.
- In Bible times, the members of a people group usually had the same ancestors and lived together in a particular country or area of land.
- Depending on the context, a phrase such as “your people” can mean “your people group” or “your family” or “your relatives.”
- The term “peoples” is often used to refer to all people groups on the earth. Sometimes it refers more specifically to people who are not Israelites or who do not serve Yahweh. In some English Bible translations the term “nations” is also used in this way.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people group” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “large family group” or “clan” or “ethnic group.”
- A phrase such as “my people” could be translated as “my relatives” or “my fellow Israelites” or “my family” or “my people group,” depending on the context.
- The expression “scatter you among the peoples” could also be translated as “cause you to go live with many different people groups” or “cause you to separate from each other and go live in many different regions of the world.”
- The term “the peoples” or “the people” could also be translated as “the people in the world” or “people groups,” depending on the context.
- The phrase, “the people of” could be translated as, “the people living in” or “the people descended from” or “the family of” depending on whether it is followed by the name of a place or a person.
- “All the peoples of the earth” could be translated as, “everyone living on earth” or “every person in the world” or “all people.”
- The phrase “a people” could also be translated as, “a group of people” or “certain people” or “a community of people” or “a family of people.”

(See also: [descendant](#), [descended from](#), [nation](#), [tribe](#), [world](#), [worldly](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[14-02]** God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the Promised Land to their descendants, but now there were many **people groups** living there. what follows is
- **[21-02]** God promised Abraham that through him all **people groups** of the world would receive a blessing. This blessing would be that the Messiah would come sometime in the future and provide the way of salvation for people from all the **people groups** of the world.
- **[42-08]** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all **people groups** everywhere."
- **[42-10]** "So go, make disciples of all **people groups** by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **[48-11]** Because of this New Covenant, anyone from any **people group** can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.
- **[50-03]** He (Jesus) said, "Go and make disciples of all **people groups!**" and, "The fields are ripe for harvest!"

power, powers

Definition:

The term “power” refers to the ability to do things or make things happen, often using great strength. “Powers” refers to people or spirits who have great ability to cause things to happen.

- The “power of God” refers to God’s ability to do everything, especially things that are not possible for people to do.
- God has complete power over everything that he has created.
- God gives his people power to do what he wants, so that when they heal people or do other miracles, they do this by the power of God.
- Because Jesus and the Holy Spirit are also God, they have this same power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “power” could also be translated as “ability” or “strength” or “energy” or “ability to do miracles” or “control.”
- Possible ways to translate the term “powers” could include, “powerful beings” or “controlling spirits” or “those who control others.”
- An expression like “save us from the power of our enemies” could be translated as, “save us from being oppressed by our enemies” or “rescue us from being controlled by our enemies.” In this case, “power” has the meaning of using one’s strength to control and oppress others.

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [Jesus](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Christ Jesus](#), [miracle](#), [wonder](#), [sign](#),)

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [22-05] The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the **power** of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the Son of God.”
- [26-01] After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the **power** of the Holy Spirit to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- [32-15] Immediately Jesus realized that **power** had gone out from him.
- [42-11] Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, “Stay in Jerusalem until my Father gives you **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- [43-06] “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the **power** of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- [44-08] Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the **power** of Jesus the Messiah.”

prince, princess

Definition:

A “prince” is the son of a king. A “princess” is a daughter of a king.

- The term “prince” is often used figuratively to refer to a leader, ruler, or other powerful person.
- Because of Abraham’s wealth and importance, he was referred to as a “prince” by the Hittites he was living among.
- In the book of Daniel, the term “prince” is used in the expressions “prince of Persia” and “prince of Greece,” which in those contexts probably refer to powerful evil spirits who had authority over those regions.
- The archangel Michael is also referred to as a “prince” in the book of Daniel.
- Sometimes in the Bible Satan is referred to as “the prince of this world.”
- Jesus is called the “Prince of Peace” and the “Prince of Life.”
- In Acts 2:36, Jesus is referred to as “Lord and Christ” and in Acts 5:31 he is referred to as “Prince and Savior,” showing the parallel meaning of “Lord” and “Prince.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “prince” could include, “king’s son” or “ruler” or “leader” or “chieftain” or “captain.”
- When referring to angels, this could also be translated as, “spirit ruler” or “leading angel.”
- When referring to Satan or other evil spirits, this term could also be translated as, “evil spirit ruler” or “powerful spirit leader” or “ruling spirit,” depending on the context.

(See also: [angel](#), [archangel](#), [authority](#), [Christ](#), [Messiah](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [power](#), [powers](#), [ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [Satan](#), [devil](#), [evil one](#), [Savior](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example, the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as, “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as, “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as, “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: [Baal](#), [divination](#), [diviner](#), [soothsaying](#), [soothsayer](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [false prophet](#), [fulfill](#), [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God’s law](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [vision](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [12-12] When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- [17-13] God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- [19-01] Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God's messages.
- [19-06] All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- [19-17] Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- [21-09] The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- [43-05] "This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- [43-07] "This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- [48-12] Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.
-

prostitute, harlot, whore

Definition:

The terms “prostitute” and “harlot” both refer to a person who performs sexual acts for money or for religious rites. Prostitutes or harlots were usually female, but some were male.

- In the Bible, the word “prostitute” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to a person who worships false gods or who practices witchcraft.
- The expression “play the harlot” means to act like a harlot by being sexually immoral. This expression is also used in the Bible to refer to a person who worships idols.
- To “prostitute oneself” to something means to be sexually immoral or when used figuratively, to be unfaithful to God by worshiping false gods.
- In ancient times, some pagan temples used male and female prostitutes as part of their rituals.
- This term could be translated by the word or phrase that is used in the project language to refer to a prostitute. Some languages may have a euphemistic term that is used for this. (See: [Euphemism](#))

(See: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [sexual immorality](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

queen

Definition:

A queen is either the female ruler of a country or the wife of a king.

- Esther became the queen of the Persian empire when she married King Ahasuerus.
- Queen Jezebel was the evil wife of King Ahab.
- The Queen of Sheba was a famous ruler who came to visit King Solomon.
- The term “queen mothAthaliaher” usually refers to the mother or grandmother of a ruling king or the widow of the previous king. A queen mother had much influence, as was seen in the case of Athaliah who influenced the people to worship idols.

(See also: [Ahasuerus](#), [Athaliah](#), [Esther](#), [king](#), [Persia](#), [Persians ruler](#), [rulers](#), [rule](#), [Sheba](#))

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.

rebuke

Definition:

To rebuke is to give someone a stern verbal correction, often in order to help that person turn away from sin.

- The New Testament commands Christians to rebuke other believers when they are clearly disobeying God.
- The book of Proverbs instructs parents to rebuke their children when they are disobedient.
- A rebuke is typically given to prevent the one who committed the wrong from involving themselves further in sin.
- This could be translated by, “sternly correct” or “admonish.”
- The phrase “a rebuke” could be translated by, “a stern correction” or “a strong criticism.”
- “Without rebuke” could be translated as, “without admonishing” or “without criticism.”

(See also [admonish](#), [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

refuge, shelter

Definition:

The term “refuge” refers to a place or condition of safety and protection. A “shelter” refers to a physical structure that protects from weather or danger.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a refuge where his people can be safe, protected, and cared for.
- The term, “city of refuge” in the Old Testament referred to certain cities where a person who accidentally killed someone could run to for protection from people who would attack them in revenge.
- A “shelter” is often a physical structure such as a building or roof that can provide protection to people or animals.
- Sometimes “shelter” means “protection” as when Lot said that his guests were “under the shelter” of his roof. He was saying that they should be safe because they were in his house.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “refuge” could be translated as “safe place” or “place of protection.”
- Depending on the context, the term “shelter” could be translated as, “something that protects” or “protection” or “protected place.”
- If it refers to a physical structure, “shelter” could also be translated as “protective building” or “ ”
- The phrase “into safe shelter” could be translated as “into a safe place” or “into a place that will protect.”
- To “find shelter” or “take shelter” or “take refuge” could be translated as, “find a place of safety” or “put oneself in a protected place.”

Bible References:

Waiting

restore, restoration

Definition:

The terms “restore” and “restoration” refer to causing something to return to its original and better condition.

- When a diseased body part is restored, this means it has been “healed.”
- A broken relationship that is restored, has been “reconciled.” God restores sinful people and brings them back to himself.
- If people are restored to their home country it means they have been “brought back” or “returned” to that country.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “restore” could include: “renew” or “repay” or “return” or “heal” or “bring back.”
- An expression for this term could be “make new” or “make like new again.”
- When property is “restored,” it means it has been “repaired” or “replaced” or “given back” to its owner.
- Depending on the context, “restoration,” could be translated as, “renewal” or “healing” or “reconciliation.”

Bible References:

Waiting

ruin, ruins**Definition:**

To “ruin” something means to spoil, destroy, or cause to be useless. The term “ruin” or “ruins” refers to the rubble and spoiled remains of something that has been destroyed.

- The prophet Zephaniah spoke about the day of God’s wrath as a “day of ruin” when the world will be judged and punished.
- The book of Proverbs says that ruin and destruction await those who are ungodly.
- Depending on the context, “to ruin” could be translated as “to destroy” or “to spoil” or “to make useless” or “to break.”
- The term “ruin” or “ruins” could be translated as “rubble” or “broken-down buildings” or “destroyed city” or “devastation” or “brokenness” or “destruction,” depending on the context.

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."

shepherd, to shepherd

Definition:

A shepherd is a person who takes care of sheep. The verb “to shepherd” means to protect the sheep and provide them with food and water.

- Shepherds watch over the sheep, leading them to places with good food and water. Shepherds also keep the sheep from getting lost and protect them from wild animals.
- This term is often used metaphorically in the Bible to refer to taking care of people’s spiritual needs. This includes teaching them what God has told them in the Bible and guiding them in the way they should live. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- In the Old Testament, God is called the “shepherd” of his people because he takes care of all their needs and protects them. He also leads and guides them.
- Moses was a shepherd for the Israelites as he guided them spiritually in their worship of Yahweh and led them physically on their journey to the land of Canaan.
- In the New Testament, Jesus calls himself the “good shepherd.” The apostle Paul also refers to him as the “great shepherd” over the Church.
- Also in the New Testament, the term “shepherd” is used to refer to a person who is a spiritual leader over other believers. The term “pastor” is the same word as “shepherd.” The elders and overseers were also called shepherds.

Translation Suggestions

- When used literally, the action “shepherd” could be translated as “take care of sheep” or “watch over sheep.”
- The person “shepherd” could be translated as, “person who takes care of sheep” or “sheep tender” or “sheep caregiver.”
- When used as a metaphor, different ways to translate this term could include, “spiritual shepherd” or “spiritual leader” or “one who is like a shepherd” or “one who cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his sheep” or “one who leads his people like a shepherd guides his sheep” or “one who takes care of God’s sheep.”
- In some contexts, “shepherd” could be translated as “leader” or “guide” or “caregiver.”
- The expression, “to shepherd (a flock)” could be translated as, “to take care of” or “to spiritually nourish” or “to guide and teach” or “to lead and take care of (like a shepherd cares for sheep)”
- In figurative uses, it is best to use or include the literal word for “shepherd” in the translation of this term.

(See also: [believer](#), [Canaan](#), [Canaanite](#), [church](#), [Church](#), [Moses](#), [pastor](#), [sheep](#), [ram](#), [ewe](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [09-11] Moses became a **shepherd** in the wilderness far away from Egypt.to
- [17-02] David was a **shepherd** from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father's sheep, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the sheep.
- [23-06] That night, there were some **shepherds** in a nearby field guarding their flocks.
- [23-08] The **shepherds** soon arrived at the place where Jesus was and they found him lying in a feeding trough, just as the angel had told them.
- [30-03] To Jesus, these people were like sheep without a **shepherd**.

siege, besiege**Definition:**

The term “siege” refers to when an attacking army surrounds a city and keeps it from being able to receive any supplies of food and water. To “besiege” a city means to cause that city to be under a siege.

- When Babylon came to attack Israel, they used a siege tactic on Jerusalem to weaken the people inside the city.
- Often during a siege attack, ramps of dirt are gradually constructed to enable the attacking army to cross over the city walls and invade the city.
- The expression “lay siege” means to perform a siege. It has the same meaning as “besiege.”
- The term “besieged” has the same meaning as the expression “under siege.” Both these expressions describe a city that an enemy army is surrounding and besieging.

Bible References:

Waiting

silver

Definition:

Silver is a shiny, gray precious metal used to make coins, jewelry, containers, and ornaments.

- The containers would include silver cups and bowls, among other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, silver coins and silver weights called shekels were used.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.

(See also: [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a sinful nature that controls them.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- “To sin” could also be translated as “to disobey God” or “to do wrong.”
- Depending on the context, “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means, “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include, “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- In expressions like “slaves to sin” or “ruled by sin,” the term “sin” could be translated as “disobedience” or “evil desires and actions.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: [disobey](#), [disobedient](#), [disobedience](#), [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#), [flesh](#), [tax collector](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- * **[03-15]** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- * **[13-12]** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- * **[20-01]** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- * **[21-13]** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- * **[35-01]** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- * **[38-05]** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- * **[43-11]** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- * **[48-08]** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- * **[49-17]** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

sorcery, sorcerer, witchcraft

Definition:

“Sorcery” or “witchcraft” refers to using magic, which involves doing powerful things through the help of evil spirits. A “sorcerer” is someone who does these powerful, magical things.

- The use of magic and sorcery can involve both beneficial things (such as healing someone) and harmful things (such as putting a curse on someone). But all kinds of sorcery are wrong, because they use the power of evil spirits.
- In the Bible, God says that the use of sorcery is as evil as other terrible sins (such as adultery, worshiping idols, and child sacrifice).
- The terms “sorcery” and “witchcraft” could also be translated as, “evil spirit power” or “casting spells.”
- Possible ways to translated “sorcerer” could include, “worker of magic” or “person who casts spells” or “person who does miracles using evil spirit power.”
- Note that “sorcery” has a different meaning than the term “divination,” which refers to attempting to contact the spirit world.

(See also: [adultery](#), [adulterous](#), [adulterer](#), [adulteress](#), [demon](#), [evil spirit](#), [unclean spirit](#), [divination](#), [diviner](#), [soothsaying](#), [soothsayer](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [magic](#), [magician](#), [sacrifice](#), [offering](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

spear**Definition:**

A spear is a weapon with a long wooden handle and sharp metal blade on one end that is thrown a long distance.

- Spears were commonly used for war in biblical times. They are sometimes still used in present-day conflicts between certain people groups.
- A spear was used by a Roman soldier to pierce the side of Jesus while he hung on the cross.
- Sometimes people throw spears to catch fish or other prey to eat.
- Similar weapons are the “javelin” or “lance.”
- Make sure that the translation of “spear” is different from the translation of “sword,” which is a weapon that is used for thrusting or stabbing, not throwing. Also, a sword has a long blade with a handle, while a spear has a small blade on the end of a long shaft.

(See also: [prey, to prey on](#), [Rome, Roman](#), [sword](#), [warrior](#), [soldier](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

stronghold, fortress, fortified

Definition:

The terms “stronghold” and “fortress” both refer to places that are well protected against an attack by enemy soldiers. The term “fortified” describes a city or other place that has been made safe from attack.

- Often, strongholds and fortresses are manmade structures with defensive walls. They can also be natural protective barriers such as rocky cliffs or high mountains.
- People fortify strongholds by building thick walls or other structures that make it difficult for an enemy to break through.
- “Stronghold” or “fortress” could be translated as “securely strong place” or “strongly protected place.”
- The term “fortified city” could be translated as “securely protected city” or “strongly built city.”
- This term is also used figuratively to refer to God as a stronghold or fortress for those who trust in him. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- Another figurative meaning for the term “stronghold” refers to something that someone wrongly trusts in for security, such as a false god or other thing that is worshiped instead of Yahweh. This could be translated as, “false strongholds.”
- This term should be translated differently from “refuge,” which emphasizes safety more than the concept of being fortified.

(See also: [false god](#), [foreign god](#), [god](#), [goddess](#), [idol](#), [idolatrous](#), [refuge](#), [shelter](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

stumble

Definition:

The term “stumble” means to “almost fall” when walking or running. Usually it involves tripping over something.

- Figuratively, “to stumble” can mean “to sin” or “to falter” in believing.
- This term can also refer to faltering or showing weakness when fighting a battle or when being persecuted or punished.

Translation Suggestions

- In contexts where the term “stumble” means to physically trip over something, it should be translated with a term that means “almost fall” or “trip over.”
- This literal meaning could also be used in a figurative context, if it communicates the correct meaning in that context.
- For figurative uses where the literal meaning would not make sense in the project language, “stumble” could be translated as, “sin” or “falter” or “stop believing” or “become weak,” depending [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) on the context.
- Another way to translate this term could be, “stumble by sinning” or “stumble by not believing.”
- The phrase “made to stumble” could be translated as “caused to become weak” or “caused to falter.”

(See also: [believe](#), [believe in](#), [belief](#), [persecute](#), [persecution](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#), [stumbling block](#), [stone of stumbling](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

sword

Definition:

A sword is a flat-bladed metal weapon used to cut or stab. It has a handle and a long, pointed blade with a very sharp cutting edge.

- The blade of a sword in ancient times was around 60 to 91 centimeters long.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called “double-edged” or “two-edged” swords.
- Jesus’ disciples had swords they planned to use to defend themselves. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

Translation Suggestions

- A sword is used as a metaphor for God’s word. God’s teachings in the Bible expose people’s innermost thoughts and convict them of their sin. In a similar way, a sword cuts deeply, causing pain. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- One way to translate this figurative use would be, “God’s word is like a sword, which cuts deeply and exposes sin.”
- Another figurative use of this term is in the book of Psalms where the tongue or speech of a person is compared to a sword, which can injure people. This could be translated as, “the tongue is like a sword that can badly injure someone.”
- If swords are not known in your culture, this word could be translated with the name of another long-bladed weapon that is used to cut or stab.
- A sword could also be described as a “sharp weapon” or “long knife.” Some translations may decide to include a picture of a sword.

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

(See also: [James \(brother of Jesus\)](#), [John \(the Baptist\)](#), [tongue](#), [word of God](#), [word of Yahweh](#), [word of the Lord](#), [scripture](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

tomb, grave, burial place

Definition:

The terms “tomb” and “grave” refer to a place where people put the body of a person who has died. A “burial place” is a more general term that also refers to this.

- The Jews sometimes used natural caves as tombs, and sometimes they dug caves into rock in the side of a hill.
- In New Testament times, it was common to roll a large, heavy stone in front of the opening of a tomb in order to close it.
- If the word for a tomb or a grave can only refer to a hole in which the body is placed below the ground, other ways to translate this could include, “cave” or “hole in the side of a hill.”
- The phrase “the grave” is often used generally and figuratively to refer to the condition of being dead or a place where the souls of dead people are.

(See also: [bury](#), [buried](#), [burial](#), [death](#), [die](#), [dead](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **[32-04]** The man lived among the **tombs** in the area.
- **[37-06]** Jesus asked them, “Where have you put Lazarus?” They told him, “In the **tomb**. Come and see.”
- **[37-07]** The **tomb** was a cave with a stone rolled in front of its opening.
- **[40-09]** Then Joseph and Nicodemus, two Jewish leaders who believed Jesus was the Messiah, asked Pilate for Jesus’ body. They wrapped his body in cloth and placed it in a **tomb** cut out of rock. Then they rolled a large stone in front the **tomb** to block the opening.
- **[41-04]** He (the angel) rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the **tomb** and sat on it. The soldiers guarding the **tomb** were terrified and fell to the ground like dead men.
- **[41-05]** When the women arrived at the **tomb**, the angel told them, “Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would! Look in the **tomb** and see.” The women looked into the **tomb** and saw where Jesus’ body had been laid. His body was not there!

vine

Definition:

The term “vine” refers to a plant that grows by trailing along the ground or by climbing trees and other structures. The word “vine” in the Bible is used only of fruit-bearing vines and usually refers to grape vines.

- In the Bible, the word “vine” almost always means, “grapevine.”
- The branches of the grapevine are attached to the main stem which gives them water and other nutrients so that they can grow.
- Jesus called himself the “vine” and called his people the “branches.” In this context, the word “vine” could also be translated as “grapevine stem” or “grape plant stem.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

(See also: [grape](#), [vineyard](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

vision

Facts:

The term “vision” refers to something that a person sees. It especially refers to something unusual or supernatural that God shows people in order to give them a message.

- Usually, visions are seen while the person is awake. However sometimes a vision is something a person sees in a dream while asleep.
- God sends visions to tell people something that is very important. For example, Peter was shown a vision to tell him that God wanted him to welcome Gentiles.

Translation Suggestion

- The phrase “saw a vision” could be translated as, “saw something unusual from God” or “God showed him something special.”
- Some languages may not have separate words for “vision” and “dream.” So a sentence such as, “Daniel had dreams and visions in his mind” could be translated as something like, “Daniel was dreaming while asleep and God caused him to see unusual things.”

(See also: [dream](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

voice**Definition:**

The term “voice” is often used figuratively to refer to speaking or communicating something.

- God is said to use his voice, even though he doesn’t have a voice in the same way a human being does.
- This term can be used to refer to the whole person, as in the statement “A voice is heard in the desert saying, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’” This could be translated as, “A person is heard calling out in the desert...” (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- To “hear someone’s voice” could also be translated as “hear someone speaking.”
- Sometimes the word “voice” may be used for objects that cannot literally speak, such as when David exclaims in the psalms that the “voice” of the heavens proclaims God’s mighty works. This could also be translated as “their splendor shows clearly how great God is.”

(See also: [call](#), [calling](#), [called](#), [call out](#), [proclaim](#), [proclamation](#), [splendor](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

VOW**Definition:**

A vow is a promise that a person makes to God. The person promises to do a certain thing in order to specially honor God or to show devotion to him.

- After a person makes a vow, he is obligated to fulfill that vow.
- The Bible teaches that a person may be judged by God if he doesn't keep his vow.
- Sometimes a person may ask God to protect him or provide for him in exchange for making the vow.
- But God is not required to fulfill a request that a person asks for in his vow.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "vow" could be translated as "solemn promise" or "promise made to God."
- This word should be translated differently than "oath."

(See also: [promise](#), [oath](#), [swear](#), [swear by](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

water, waters

Definition:

In addition to its primary meaning, “water” also often refers to a body of water, such as an ocean, sea, lake, or river.

- The term “waters” refers to bodies of water or many sources of water. It can also be a general reference for a large amount of water.
- A figurative use of “waters” refers to great distress, difficulties, and suffering. For example, God promises that when we “go through the waters” he will be with us.
- The phrase “many waters” emphasizes how great the difficulties are.
- To “water” livestock and other animals means to “provide water for” them. In Bible times, this usually involved drawing water from a well with a bucket and pouring the water into a trough or other container for the animals to drink from.
- In the Old Testament, God is referred to as the spring or fountain of “living waters” for his people. This means he is the source of spiritual power and refreshment.
- In the New Testament, Jesus used the phrase “living water” to refer to the Holy Spirit working in a person to transform and bring new life.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase, “draw water” could be translated as, “pull water up from a well with a bucket.”
- “Streams of living water will flow from them” could be translated as, “the power and blessings from the Holy Spirit will flow out of them them like streams of water.” Instead of “blessings” the term “gifts” or “fruits” or “godly character” could be used.
- When Jesus is talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, the phrase “living water” could be translated as “water that gives life” or “lifegiving water.” In this context, the imagery of water must be kept in the translation.
- Depending on the context, the term “waters” or “many waters” could be translated as “great suffering (that surrounds you like water)” or “overwhelming difficulties (like a flood of water)” or “large amounts of water.”

(See also: [life](#), [live](#), [living](#), [alive](#), [spirit](#), [spiritual](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [power](#), [powers](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

woe**Definition:**

The term “woe” refers to a feeling of great distress. It also gives a warning that someone will experience severe trouble.

- The expression “woe to” is followed by a warning to people that they will experience suffering as punishment for their sins.
- In several places in the Bible, the word “woe” is repeated, to emphasize an especially terrible judgment.
- A person who says, “woe is me” or “woe to me” is expressing sorrow about severe suffering.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “woe” could also be translated as “great sorrow” or “sadness” or “calamity” or “disaster.”
- Other ways to translate the expression, “Woe to (name of city)” could include, “How terrible it will be for (name of city)” or “(The people in) that city will be severely punished” or “Those people will suffer greatly.”
- The expression, “Woe is me!” or “Woe to me!” could be translated as “How sad I am!” or “I am so sad” or “How terrible this is for me!”
- The expression, “Woe to you” could also be translated as “You will suffer terribly” or “You will experience terrible troubles.”

Bible References:

Waiting

wrath, fury

Definition:

Wrath is an intense anger that is sometimes long-lasting. It especially refers to God's righteous judgment of sin and punishment of people who rebel against him.

- In the Bible, "wrath" usually refers to God's anger toward those who sin against him.
- The "wrath of God" can also refer to his judgment and punishment for sin.
- God's wrath is the righteous penalty for those who do not repent of their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways this term could be translated include, "intense anger" or "righteous judgment" or "anger."
- When talking about God's wrath, make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful fit of rage. God's wrath is just and holy.

(See: [judge](#), [judgment](#), [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

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."

Yahweh of hosts, God of hosts, host

Definition:

The terms “Yahweh of hosts” and “God of hosts” are titles that express God’s authority over the thousands of angels who obey him.

- The term “host” or “hosts” is a word that refers to a large number of something, such as an army of people or the massive number of stars. It can also refer to all the many spirit beings, including evil spirits. The context makes it clear what is being referred to.
- Phrases similar to “host of the heavens” refer to all the stars, planets and other heavenly bodies.
- In the New Testament, the phrase, “Lord of hosts” means the same as “Yahweh of hosts” but it cannot be translated that way since the Hebrew word “Yahweh” is not used in the New Testament.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “Yahweh of hosts” could include, “Yahweh, who rules all the angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler over armies of angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler of all creation.”
- The phrase “of hosts” in the terms “God of hosts” and “Lord of hosts” would be translated the same way as in the phrase “Yahweh of hosts” above.
- Certain churches do not accept the literal term “Yahweh” and prefer to use the capitalized word, “LORD” instead, following the tradition of many Bible versions. For these churches, a translation of the term “LORD of hosts” would be used in the Old Testament for “Yahweh of hosts.”

(See also: [angel](#), [archangel](#), [authority](#), [God](#), [lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#), [Lord](#), [Lord Yahweh](#), [Yahweh God Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

yoke

Definition:

A yoke is a piece of wood or metal attached to two or more animals to connect them for the purpose of pulling a plow or a cart. There are also several figurative meanings for this term.

- The term “yoke” is used figuratively to refer to something that joins people for the purpose of working together, such as in serving Jesus.
- Paul used the term “yokefellow” to refer to someone who was serving Christ as he was. This could also be translated as “fellow worker” or “fellow servant” or “coworker.”
- The term “yoke” is also often used figuratively to refer to a heavy load that someone has to carry, such as when being oppressed by slavery or persecution.
- In most contexts, it is best to translate this term literally, using the local term for a yoke that is used for farming.
- Other ways to translate the figurative use of this term could be, “oppressive burden” or “heavy load” or “bond,” depending on the context.

(See also: [bind](#), [bond](#), [bound](#), [burden](#), [oppress](#), [oppression](#), [oppressor](#), [persecute](#), [persecution](#), [servant](#), [slave](#), [slavery](#))

Bible References:

Waiting

translationAcademy

Apostrophe

This answers the question: What is the figure of speech called apostrophe?

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

- *Figures of Speech*

Apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. This calls his listener's attention to his feelings toward that person or thing.

Mountains of Gilboa, Let there not be dew or rain on you (2 Samuel 1:21 ULB)

King Saul was killed on Mount Gilboa, and David sang a sad song about it. By telling the mountains that he wanted them to have no dew or rain, he showed how sad he was.

Description

Apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. This calls his listener's attention to his feelings toward that person or thing.

Reason this is a translation issue: Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to.

Examples from the Bible

Come now, you who are rich, cry out loud because of the miseries coming upon you.
(James 5:1 ULB)

James wrote to the church, which was made up of poor people, as if rich people could hear him, showing his anger about what rich people were doing.

The man of God cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh and said, "Altar, altar, Yahweh says, '... on you they will burn men's bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULB)

The man of God spoke as if the altar could hear him, but he really wanted the king, who was standing there, to hear him.

Translation Strategies

If apostrophe would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option.

1. Have the speaker express his feelings toward the thing or idea without speaking directly to it.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, you may preserve the meaning of the apostrophe and let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him.

- **The man of God cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh and said, "Altar, altar, Yahweh says, ' ... on you they will burn men's bones.' "** (1 Kings 13:2 ULB)
 - "The man of God said, "This is what Yahweh says *about this altar*' ... They will burn men's bones on *it*."

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”

Hyperbole

This answers the question: What is hyperbole?

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

- *Figures of Speech*

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the speaker shows that something is very important by describing it as larger or greater than it really is. He may greatly exaggerate something in order to show his strong feeling or opinion about it, or he may generalize the situation by using words like “every” or “all” to mean “many.”

Description

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the speaker shows that something is very important by describing it as larger or greater than it really is. There are two kinds of hyperbole:

1. Exaggeration: This is when a speaker deliberately describes something by an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it.

Whoever does not *carry his own cross* and come after me cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:27 ULB) - This is an exaggeration. It means that whoever wants to be Jesus’ disciple must be determined to follow him faithfully, even if his enemies were to kill that person.

2. Generalization: This is when a speaker uses words like “every” or “all” to mean something like “very many,” but not “every one.” (Some people may not call generalization like this “hyperbole.”)

Moses was educated in *all the learning of the Egyptians* (Acts 7:22 ULB) - This is a generalization. It means that he had learned much of what the Egyptians knew and taught.

Reason this is a translation issue

If readers do not understand that a statement is a hyperbole, they may either think that something happened that did not happen, or they may think that the speaker or writer was saying something that is not true.

Examples from the Bible

Examples of Exaggeration

If your hand causes you to stumble, *cut it off*. It is better for you to enter into life maimed... (Mark 9:43 ULB)

When Jesus said to cut off your hand, he meant that we should do whatever extreme things we need to do in order not to sin. He used this hyperbole to show how extremely important it is to try to stop sinning.

If anyone comes to me and does not *hate* his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26 ULB)

Because of many other things that Jesus said, we know that his use of the word “hate” here is hyperbole. He meant that we must not love even our own family members more than we love him. We must love him more than we love ourselves or anyone else.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops *as numerous as the sand on the seashore*. (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)

The underlined phrase is an exaggeration. It means that there were many, many soldiers in the Philistine army.

Examples of Generalization

They found him, and they said to him, “*Everyone* is looking for you.” (Mark 1:37 ULB)

The disciples told Jesus that everyone was looking looking for him. They probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for him, but that many people were looking for him, or that all of Jesus closest friends there were looking for him.

But as his anointing teaches you about *all things* and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27 ULB)

This is a generalization. God’s Spirit teaches us about all things that we need to know.

Caution

Do not assume that something is hyperbole just because it seems to be impossible. God does miraculous things.

... they saw Jesus *walking on the sea* and coming near the boat ... (John 6:19 ULB)

This is not hyperbole. Jesus really walked on the water. It is a literal statement.

... for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23 ULB)

The word “all” here is not hyperbole. All humans have sinned. The only human who has never sinned is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here is another option.

1. Express the meaning without the hyperbole. For example “all the people” could be translated as “large crowds of people.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Express the meaning without the hyperbole.

- **If anyone comes to me and does not *hate* his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple.** (Luke 14:26 ULB)
 - “If anyone comes to me and does not *love me much more than* he loves his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters—yes, and his own life also—he cannot be my disciple.”
- **The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops *as numerous as the sand on the seashore*.** (1 Samuel 13:5 ULB)
 - “The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and *a great number of troops*.”

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](#)

Personification

This answers the question: What is personification?

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

- *Figures of Speech*

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often speak this way because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see, such as wisdom and sin.

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

sin crouches at the door (Genesis 4:7 ULB)

Some languages do not use personification, and some languages use it only in certain situations.

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see, such as wisdom, sin, and wind. For example:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

sin crouches at the door (Genesis 4:7 ULB)

People also do this because it is sometimes easier to talk about relationships between people and other people than about relationships between people and non-human things, such as wealth.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples from the Bible

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24 ULB)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom call out? Does not Understanding raise her voice? (Proverbs 8:1 ULB)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they are a woman who calls out to teach people. They are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would not be understood clearly, here are some strategies for dealing with it.

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.
2. Use the words “like” or “as” to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.
3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.

- **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - God speaks of sin as a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.
 - “sin is at your door, waiting to attack you”

2. Use the words “like” or “as” to show that the sentences is not to be understood literally.

- **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - This can be translated with the word “as.”
 - ”sin is about to destroy you, just *as* a wild animal could harm a person.”

3. Find a way to translate it without the personification.

- **even the winds and the sea obey him** (Matthew 8:27 ULB) - The men speak of the wind and the sea as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.
 - “He even controls the winds and the sea.”

Note: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had human characteristics).

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Apostrophe*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns*

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?”*

Simile

This answers the question: What is a simile?

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

- *Figures of Speech*

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. One is said to be “like” the other. It focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as” or “than.”

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. It focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as” or “than.”

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were worried and confused, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36 ULB)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves*, so be as wise *as serpents* and harmless *as doves*. (Matthew 10:16 ULB)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep. Jesus’ enemies would attack his disciples.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper *than any two-edged sword*. (Hebrews 4:12 ULB)

God’s word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person’s flesh. God’s word is very effective in showing what is in a person’s heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people’s attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with the item that something is compared to.

Examples from the Bible

Suffer hardship with me, *as a good soldier of Christ Jesus*. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULB)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

for as the lightning appears when it flashes from one part of the sky to another part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in his day. (Luke 17:24 ULB)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But from the context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lightning flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

1. If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.
2. If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible.
3. Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1 If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves*,** (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.
 - "See, I send you out among wicked people and you will be in danger from them as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves."
- **For the word of God is living and active and sharper *than any two-edged sword*.** (Hebrews 4:12 ULB)
 - "For the word of God is living and active and *more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword*"

2. If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves***, (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.
 - "See, I send you out *as chickens in the midst of wild dogs*,"
- **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a mother closely watches over her infants, but you refused!
- **If you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard**, (Matthew 17:20 ULB)
 - "If you have faith even as small as a tiny seed"

3. Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

- **See, I send you out *as sheep in the midst of wolves***, (Matthew 10:16 ULB)
 - "See, I send you out and people will want to harm you."
- **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - "How often I wanted to protect you, but you refused!"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Metaphor*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns*

Synecdoche

This answers the question: What does the word synecdoche mean?

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

- *Figures of Speech*

Synecdoche is when a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole or uses the whole to refer to a part.

Description

Synecdoche is when a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole or uses the whole to refer to a part.

My soul exalts the Lord. (Luke 1:46 ULB)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul”, the part of herself that has emotions, to refer to her whole self.

the Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful ...?”
(Mark 2:24 ULB)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some readers may understand the words literally.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example from the Bible

I looked on all the deeds that *my hands* had accomplished (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person, because clearly the legs and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

- **My soul exalts the Lord.** (Luke 1:46 ULB)
 - "I exalt the Lord."
- **the Pharisees said to him** (Mark 2:24 ULB)
 - "a representative of the Pharisees said to him"
- **I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished** (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)
 - "I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished"

Next we recommend you learn about:

- *Metonymy*
- *Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies*

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*

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*