



# **Jonah**

**translationNotes**

v10

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## Table of Contents

<b>Copyrights &amp; Licensing</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>translationNotes</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction to Jonah	5
Jonah 01 General Notes	7
Jonah 1:1-3	8
Jonah 1:4-5	11
Jonah 1:6-7	13
Jonah 1:8-10	15
Jonah 1:11-13	17
Jonah 1:14-16	19
Jonah 1:17	21
Jonah 02 General Notes	22
Jonah 2:1-2	23
Jonah 2:3-4	25
Jonah 2:5-6	27
Jonah 2:7-8	29
Jonah 2:9-10	31
Jonah 03 General Notes	33
Jonah 3:1-3	34
Jonah 3:4-5	36
Jonah 3:6-7	38
Jonah 3:8-9	40
Jonah 3:10	42
Jonah 04 General Notes	44
Jonah 4:1-3	45
Jonah 4:4-5	47
Jonah 4:6-7	48
Jonah 4:8-9	49
Jonah 4:10-11	51
<b>translationQuestions</b>	<b>53</b>
Jonah 1	53
Jonah 2	55
Jonah 3	56
Jonah 4	57
<b>translationWords</b>	<b>59</b>
authority, authorities	59
believe, believes, believed, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelievers, unbelief	61
call, calls, calling, called	64
compassion, compassionate	66
evil, wicked, wickedness	67
faith	69

*Table of Contents*

---

faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness . . . . .	71
fast, fasts, fasted, fasting, fastings . . . . .	73
fear, fears, afraid . . . . .	75
God . . . . .	77
god, false god, gods, goddess, idol, idols, idolater, idolaters, idolatrous, idolatry . . . . .	80
grace, gracious . . . . .	82
guilt, guilty . . . . .	84
Hades, Sheol . . . . .	86
heart, hearts . . . . .	88
heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly . . . . .	90
Hebrew, Hebrews . . . . .	92
holy, holiness, unholy, sacred . . . . .	93
Jonah . . . . .	95
Joppa . . . . .	96
judge, judges, judgment, judgments . . . . .	97
just, justice, unjust, unjustly, injustice, justly, justify, justification . . . . .	99
king, kings, kingdom, kingdoms, kingship, kingly . . . . .	102
labor, labors, labored, laborer, laborers . . . . .	104
law, law of Moses, God's law, law of Yahweh . . . . .	105
lots, casting lots . . . . .	107
mercy, merciful . . . . .	108
miracle, miracles, wonder, wonders, sign, signs . . . . .	110
Nineveh, Ninevite . . . . .	112
obey, obeys, obeyed, obeying, obedience, obedient, obediently, disobey, disobeys, dis- obeyed, disobedience, disobedient . . . . .	113
pray, prayer, prayers, prayed . . . . .	115
proclaim, proclaims, proclaimed, proclaiming, proclamation, proclamations . . . . .	117
prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess . . . . .	118
punish, punishes, punished, punishing, punishment, unpunished . . . . .	120
repent, repents, repented, repentance . . . . .	122
sackcloth . . . . .	124
sacrifice, sacrifices, sacrificed, sacrificing, offering, offerings . . . . .	125
save, saves, saved, safe, salvation . . . . .	127
soul, souls . . . . .	129
Tarshish . . . . .	131
temple . . . . .	132
throne, thrones, enthroned . . . . .	134
vow, vows, vowed . . . . .	135
will of God . . . . .	136
word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture, scriptures . . . . .	137
Yahweh . . . . .	139

<b>translationAcademy</b> . . . . .	<b>142</b>
Abstract Nouns . . . . .	142
Active or Passive . . . . .	145
Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information . . . . .	148
Background Information . . . . .	152
Doublet . . . . .	155
How to Translate Names . . . . .	157
Idiom . . . . .	161
Irony . . . . .	164
Metaphor . . . . .	167
Metonymy . . . . .	174
Numbers . . . . .	176
Parallelism . . . . .	179
Rhetorical Question . . . . .	182
Synecdoche . . . . .	186

## translationNotes

### Introduction to Jonah

#### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of the Book of Jonah

##### 1. Jonah tries to run away from Yahweh

- Jonah's first call from Yahweh to go to Nineveh and his disobedience (1:1–3)
- Jonah and the Gentile sailors (1:4–16)
- Yahweh provides a large fish to swallow Jonah (1:17)
- Jonah's prayer from inside the large fish and his rescue (2:1–10)
- Jonah's experience in Nineveh
- Jonah is called by God a second time to go to Nineveh, and he begins to proclaim God's message (3:1–4)
- All the people in Nineveh repent (3:5)
- The proclamation of the king of Nineveh (3:6–9)
- Yahweh decides not to destroy Nineveh (3:10)
- Jonah is very angry at Yahweh (4:1–3)
- Yahweh teaches Jonah about grace and mercy (4:4–11)

#### What is the Book of Jonah about?

This book is a narrative about the prophet Jonah. The purpose of this book is to tell how God showed mercy and grace to Gentiles. It also tells how the Ninevites were willing to repent and to call out to Yahweh for mercy. (See: [mercy](#), [merciful](#), [grace](#), [gracious](#), and [repent](#), [repents](#), [repented](#), [repentance](#))

God sent Jonah to warn the people of Nineveh that he was about to punish them. God said that if they would repent he would not harm them. However, Jonah was an Israelite and he did not want God to forgive the Ninevites. So, he tried to sail away in the opposite direction instead of doing what God told him to do. But, God stopped him by sending a large fish to swallow him.

Eventually, Jonah repented and went to warn the Ninevites. As a result, God taught him a lesson about his love for all human beings, not just the Israelites.

#### How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may decide to translate this traditional title "The Book of Jonah" in a way that is clearer to the readers. They may decide to call it, "The Book about Jonah." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

**Who wrote the Book of Jonah?**

The author of the Book of Jonah is unknown. The prophet Jonah lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. He prophesied sometime between 800-750 B.C. during the reign of King Jeroboam II.

**Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts****What was the nation of Assyria?**

During the time of Jonah, Assyria was the most powerful kingdom in the ancient Near East. It was known for its cruelty to its enemies. Eventually, God punished the Assyrians for the wicked things they did.

**Did Assyria convert to Judaism?**

Some scholars think that the Assyrians started worshipping Yahweh alone. However, most scholars think they continued to worship other false gods. (See: [god](#), [false god](#), [gods](#), [goddess](#), [idol](#), [idols](#), [idolater](#), [idolaters](#), [idolatrous](#), [idolatry](#))

## Jonah 01 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

The narrative of this chapter starts abruptly. This could cause difficulty for the translator. The translator should not attempt to smooth this introduction unless absolutely necessary.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Miracle

In verse [Jonah 17](#), there is the mention of “a great fish.” It may be difficult to imagine a sea creature big enough to swallow a man whole and who then survives for three days and nights inside. Translators should not try to explain miraculous events in an attempt to make it easier to understand. (See: [miracle](#), [miracles](#), [wonder](#), [wonders](#), [sign](#), [signs](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Situational irony

There is an ironic situation in this chapter. Jonah is a prophet of God and should endeavor to do God’s will. Instead, he is running away from God. Although the Gentile sailors are not Israelites, they act out of faith and fear of Yahweh when sending Jonah to a “certain death” by throwing him overboard. (See: [Irony](#), [prophet](#), [prophets](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#), [will of God](#) and [faith](#))

#### Sea

People in the ancient Near East also saw the sea as chaotic and did not trust it. Some of the gods they worshiped were gods of the sea. Jonah’s people, the Hebrews, feared the sea greatly. However, Jonah’s fear of Yahweh was not enough to keep him from going into a ship and sailing to get away from Yahweh. His actions are contrasted by the actions of the Gentiles. (See: [Irony](#) and [fear](#), [fears](#), [afraid](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Implicit information

Even though scholars are not sure of the exact location of Tarshish, it was in the exact opposite direction of where God told Jonah to go. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### Links:

- [Jonah 01:01 Notes](#)
- [Jonah intro](#)



## Jonah 1:1-3

### UDB:

<sup>1</sup> One day Yahweh said to the prophet Jonah son of Amittai, <sup>2</sup> “I have seen how wicked the people are who live in the great city of Nineveh. Therefore go there and warn the people that I am planning to destroy their city because of their sins.” <sup>3</sup> But instead of going to Nineveh, Jonah went in the direction of the city of Tarshish, to get away from Yahweh. He went down to the city of Joppa. There he paid the money to travel on a ship that was going to the city of Tarshish, and he got on.

### ULB:

<sup>1</sup> Now the word of Yahweh came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city, and speak out against it, because their wickedness has risen up before me.” <sup>3</sup> But Jonah got up to run away from the presence of Yahweh and go to Tarshish. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and boarded the ship to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of Yahweh.

### translationNotes

#### the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that means Yahweh spoke. “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh”

#### 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.

#### Amittai

This is the name of Jonah’s father. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city

“Go to the important city of Nineveh”

#### Get up and go

This is a common expression for traveling to distant places. (See: [Idiom](#))

**speak out against it**

God is referring to the people of the city. AT: “warn the people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**their wickedness has risen up before me**

“I know they have been continually sinning”

**got up to run away from the presence of Yahweh**

“ran away from Yahweh.” “got up” is referring to Jonah leaving where he was. (See: [Idiom](#))

**the presence of Yahweh**

Here Yahweh is represented by his presence. (See: [Metonymy](#))

**go to Tarshish**

“and went to Tarshish.” Tarshish was in the opposite direction to Nineveh. This can be made explicit. AT: “went in the opposite direction, toward Tarshish” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**He went down to Joppa**

“Jonah went to Joppa”

**ship**

A “ship” is a very large type of boat that can travel on the sea and carry many passengers or heavy cargo.

**So he paid the fare**

“There Jonah paid for the trip”

**boarded the ship**

“got on the ship”

**with them**

The word “them” refers to the others who were going on the ship.

**away from the presence of Yahweh**

Here Yahweh is represented by his presence. AT: “away from Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**translationWords**

- word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture, scriptures
- Yahweh
- Jonah
- Nineveh, Ninevite
- evil, wicked, wickedness
- Tarshish
- Joppa

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:4-5****UDB:**

<sup>4</sup> Then he went down to a lower deck, lay down, and went to sleep. But Yahweh caused a very strong wind to blow, and there was such a violent storm that the sailors thought that the ship would break apart. <sup>5</sup> The sailors were very frightened. Because of that, they each started to pray to their own gods to save them. Then they threw the cargo into the sea to make the ship lighter so that it would not sink easily.

**ULB:**

<sup>4</sup> But Yahweh sent out a great wind on the sea and it became a mighty storm on the sea. Soon it appeared that the ship was going to be broken up. <sup>5</sup> Then the sailors became very afraid and each man cried out to his own god. They threw the ship's cargo into the sea to lighten it. But Jonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship, and he was lying there deeply asleep.

**translationNotes****Soon it appeared**

It can be made explicit who thought the ship would be broken up. AT: "The men thought" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**to be broken up**

This can be stated in active form. AT: "to break apart" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**the sailors**

the men who worked on the ship

**his own god**

Here "god" refers to false gods and idols that people worship.

**They threw the ship's cargo**

"The men threw the heavy things off the ship." This was done to keep the ship from sinking.

**to lighten it**

Making the ship lighter would make it float better. AT: "to help the ship float better"

**But Jonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship**

Jonah did this before the storm started.

**down into the innermost parts of the ship**

“inside the ship”

**was lying there deeply asleep**

“was lying there fast asleep” or “was lying there and sleeping deeply.” For this reason, the storm did not wake him up.

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)
- [god, false god, gods, goddess, idol, idols, idolater, idolaters, idolatrous, idolatry](#)
- [Jonah](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:6-7****UDB:**

<sup>6</sup> Then the captain went down to where Jonah was sleeping soundly. He awoke him and said to him, “How can you sleep during a storm like this? Get up and pray to your god! Perhaps he will pity us and save us, so that we will not drown!”

<sup>7</sup> Then the sailors said to each other, “We need to cast lots, to determine who has caused all this trouble!” So they did that, and the lot indicated Jonah.

**ULB:**

<sup>6</sup> So the captain came to him and said to him, “What are you doing sleeping? Get up! Call upon your god! Maybe your god will notice us and we will not perish.”

<sup>7</sup> They all said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us.” So they threw lots, and the lot fell to Jonah.

**translationNotes****So the captain came to him and said to him**

“The man in charge of the ship went to Jonah and said”

**What are you doing sleeping?**

“Why are you sleeping?” He used this rhetorical question to scold Jonah. AT: “Stop sleeping!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**Get up!**

This refers to doing some activity. For Jonah, the Captain is telling him to wake up and pray to his god for safe passage. (See: [Idiom](#))

**Call upon your god!**

“Pray to your god!” “Call” refers to getting the attention of someone. (See: [Idiom](#))

**Maybe your god will notice us and we will not perish**

The implicit information that Jonah’s god might save them could be made explicit. AT: “Maybe your god will hear and save us so that we will not die” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**They all said to each other**

“The sailors all said to each other”

**Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us**

“We should cast lots to know who has caused this trouble.” The men believed that the gods would control how the lots fell in order to tell them what they wanted to know. This was a form of divination.

**this evil**

This refers to the terrible storm.

**the lot fell to Jonah**

“the lot showed that Jonah was the guilty person”

**translationWords**

- [call, calls, calling, called](#)
- [God](#)
- [lots, casting lots](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:8-10****UDB:**

<sup>8</sup> So various ones of them asked him, “Who is the one who has caused us all this trouble?” “What work do you do?” “Where are you coming from?” “What country and what people do you belong to?” <sup>9</sup> Jonah replied, “I am a Hebrew. I worship Yahweh God, who lives in heaven. He is the one who made the sea and the land. <sup>10</sup> I am running away from Yahweh, he is the one who called me to be a prophet.” After the sailors heard that, they were terrified. So they said to him, “Do you realize what trouble you have caused?”

**ULB:**

<sup>8</sup> Then they said to Jonah, “Please tell us who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us. What is your occupation, and where did you come from? What is your country, and from which people are you?” <sup>9</sup> Jonah said to them, “I am a Hebrew; and I fear Yahweh, the God of heaven, who has made the sea and the dry land.” <sup>10</sup> Then the men were even more afraid and said to Jonah, “What is this that you have done?” For the men knew that he was running away from the presence of Yahweh, because he had told them.

**translationNotes****Then they said to Jonah**

“Then the men who were working on the ship said to Jonah”

**Please tell us who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us.**

“Who caused this bad thing that is happening to us?”

**fear Yahweh**

The word “fear” refers Jonah having a deep respecting God.

**What is this that you have done?**

The men on the ship used this rhetorical question to show how upset they were with Jonah. AT: “You have done a terrible thing.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**he was running away from the presence of Yahweh**

Here Yahweh is represented by his presence. Jonah was seeking to escape Yahweh as if Yahweh was present only in the land of Israel. AT: “Jonah was running away from Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))



### **because he had told them**

What he told them can be stated clearly. AT: “because he had told them ‘I am trying to get away from Yahweh’” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **translationWords**

- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [Hebrew, Hebrews](#)
- [fear, fears, afraid](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)
- [heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly](#)

### **Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:11-13****UDB:**

<sup>11</sup> The storm kept getting worse and the waves kept getting bigger. So one of the sailors asked Jonah, “What should we do with you in order to make the sea become calm for us?” <sup>12</sup> He replied, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. If you do that, it will become calm for you. I know that this terrible storm happened because I did not do what Yahweh told me to do.”

<sup>13</sup> But the sailors did not want to do that. Instead, they tried hard to row the ship back to the land. But they could not do that, because the storm continued to get worse.

**ULB:**

<sup>11</sup> Then they said to Jonah, “What should we do to you so that the sea will calm down for us?” For the sea became more and more violent. <sup>12</sup> Jonah said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will be calm for you, for I know that it is because of me that this great storm is happening to you.”

<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get them back to the land, but they could not do it because the sea was becoming more and more violent against them.

**translationNotes****they said to Jonah**

“the men on the ship said to Jonah” or “the sailors said to Jonah”

**do to you so that the sea will calm down**

“do with you in order to make the sea become calm”

**the sea became more and more violent**

This was the reason that the men asked Jonah what they should do. This reason can also be put at the beginning of verse 11 as in the UDB.

**for I know that it is because of me that this great storm is happening to you**

“because I know this huge storm is my fault”

**Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get them back to the land**

The men did not want to throw Jonah into the sea, so they rowed hard as if they were digging into the water to get back to land. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**the sea was becoming more and more violent**

“the storm became worse, and the waves became bigger”

**translationWords**

- [Jonah](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:14-16****UDB:**

<sup>14</sup> Therefore they prayed to Yahweh, and one of them prayed, “O Yahweh, please do not say we are guilty if we make this man die; please do not kill us. O Yahweh, you have done what you wanted to do.” <sup>15</sup> Then they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea. Then the sea became calm. <sup>16</sup> When that happened, the sailors became greatly awed at Yahweh’s power. So they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh, and they strongly promised him that they would do things that would please him.

**ULB:**

<sup>14</sup> Therefore they cried out to Yahweh and said, “We beg you, Yahweh, we beg you, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life, and do not lay upon us the guilt of his death, because you, Yahweh, have done just as it pleased you.” <sup>15</sup> So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped raging. <sup>16</sup> Then the men feared Yahweh very much. They offered sacrifices to Yahweh and made vows.

**translationNotes****Therefore**

It was the result of the storm getting worse that triggered the next response. AT: “Because the sea became more violent” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**they cried out to Yahweh**

“the men prayed to Yahweh”

**do not let us perish on account of this man’s life**

“Please do not kill us because we caused this man to die” or “We are going to cause this man to die. But please do not kill us”

**do not lay upon us the guilt of his death**

“please do not blame us for his death” or “do not consider us guilty when this man dies.” The author speaks of “guilt” as if it were an object that can be placed on top of a person. It refers to making that person accountable for their actions. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**the sea stopped raging**

“the sea stopped moving violently” or “the sea became calm”

**feared Yahweh very much**

“became greatly awed at Yahweh’s power”

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)
- [guilt, guilty](#)
- [fear, fears, afraid](#)
- [sacrifice, sacrifices, sacrificed, sacrificing, offering, offerings](#)
- [vow, vows, vowed](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 1:17****UDB:**

<sup>17</sup> While they were doing that, Yahweh sent a huge fish that swallowed Jonah. Then Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

**ULB:**

<sup>17</sup> Now Yahweh had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

**translationNotes****General Information:**

Some versions number this verse as the first verse of chapter 2. You may want to number the verses according to the main version that your language group uses.

**Now**

This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story.

**three days and three nights**

“three days and nights”

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1 translationQuestions](#)

## Jonah 02 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with a prayer by Jonah, and many translators have chosen to set it apart by indenting its lines. Translators can follow this practice, but they are not obligated to indent the lines.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Sea

This chapter contains many terms from the sea.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Poetry

Prayers in Scripture often contain a poetic form. Poetry frequently uses metaphors to communicate something with a special meaning. For example, since Jonah was in a fish in the sea, being trapped is compared to a prison. Jonah is overwhelmed by the depth of the sea and expresses this by speaking about the at the “base of the mountains” and in the “belly of Sheol.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Repentance

Scholars are divided over whether Jonah’s repentance was genuine or whether he was trying to save his life. In light of his attitude in chapter 4, it is uncertain if he was genuinely repentant. If possible, it is best for translators to avoid making a definitive stance on whether Jonah’s repentance was genuine. (See: [repent, repents, repented, repentance](#) and [save, saves, saved, safe, salvation](#))

#### Links:

- [Jonah 02:01 Notes](#)

**Jonah 2:1-2****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> While he was inside the huge fish, Jonah prayed to Yahweh God, whom he worshiped. <sup>2</sup> Jonah said,

”Yahweh, when I was greatly distressed here, I prayed to you, and you heard what I prayed. When I was about to descend way down into the place where dead people go, you heard me when I called out for you to help me.

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> Then Jonah prayed to Yahweh his God from the fish’s stomach. <sup>2</sup> He said,

”I called out to Yahweh about my distress  
and he answered me;  
from the belly of Sheol I cried out for help!  
You heard my voice.

**translationNotes****Yahweh his God**

This means “Yahweh, the God he worshiped.” The word “his” does not mean that Jonah owned God.

**He said**

“Jonah said”

**I called out to Yahweh about my distress**

“I prayed to Yahweh about my great trouble.” Even though Jonah was praying to Yahweh, he used Yahweh’s name here and not “you.” AT: “Yahweh, I called out to you about my distress”

**he answered me**

“Yahweh responded to me” or “he helped me”

**from the belly of Sheol**

“from the center of Sheol” or “from the deep part of Sheol.” Possible meanings are 1) Jonah was speaking as being in the belly of the whale was being in Sheol or 2) Jonah believed that he was about to die and go to Sheol or 3) He spoke as if he already had died and gone there. (See: [Metaphor](#))



**translationWords**

- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)
- [Hades, Sheol](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 2:3-4****UDB:**

<sup>3</sup> You threw me down into the deep water, into the bottom of the sea. The currents you made in the sea swirled around me, and the huge waves crashed above me.

<sup>4</sup> Then I thought, ‘You have banished me, and I will never be able to enter your presence again. But in spite of what you do to me, one day I will again see your holy temple in Jerusalem!’

**ULB:**

<sup>3</sup> You had thrown me into the depths, into the heart of the seas,  
and the currents surrounded me;  
all your waves and billows  
passed over me.

<sup>4</sup> I said, ‘I am driven out from before your eyes;  
yet I will again look toward your holy temple.’

**translationNotes****General Information:**

This is a continuation of Jonah’s prayer that started in [Jonah 2:2](#). In verse 4 Jonah spoke of something he had prayed before this prayer.

**into the depths, into the heart of the seas**

This speaks of the vastness of the ocean Jonah was in. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**into the heart of the seas**

“to the bottom of the sea”

**the currents surrounded me**

“the sea water closed in around me”

**waves and billows**

These are disturbances on the surface of the ocean. (See: [Doublet](#))

**I am driven out**

This can be stated in active form. AT: “You have driven me away” or “You have sent me away” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**from before your eyes**

Here Yahweh is represented by his “eyes.” AT: “from you” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

**yet I will again look toward your holy temple**

Jonah has hope that, in spite of all he is going through, he will see the temple. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**translationWords**

- [heart, hearts](#)
- [holy, holiness, unholy, sacred](#)
- [temple](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 2:5-6****UDB:**

<sup>5</sup> The water surrounded me and almost drowned me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head.

<sup>6</sup> I sank down to where the mountains start rising from the bottom of the sea. I thought that forever it would be as though my body would be in a prison inside the earth below me.

But you, Yahweh God, whom I worship, rescued me from going down to the place of the dead!

**ULB:**

<sup>5</sup> The waters closed around me up to my neck;

the deep was all around me;

seaweed wrapped around my head.

<sup>6</sup> I went down to the bases of the mountains;

the earth with its bars closed upon me forever.

Yet you brought up my life from the pit, Yahweh, my God!

**translationNotes****General Information:**

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in [Jonah 2:2](#).

**The waters**

"The waters" refers to the sea.

**my neck**

Some versions understand the Hebrew word in this expression to mean "my life." In that interpretation, the waters were about to take away Jonah's life.

**the deep was all around me**

"the deep water was all around me"

**seaweed**

"grass that grows in the sea"

**the earth with its bars closed upon me forever**

Jonah used a metaphor to compare the earth to a prison. AT: “the earth was like a prison that was about to lock me in forever” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**Yet you brought up my life from the pit**

Jonah speaks of the place of the dead as if it were a pit. AT: “But you saved my life from the place of the dead” or “But you saved me from the place where the dead people are” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**Yahweh, my God!**

In some languages, it may be more natural to put this at the beginning of the sentence or next to the word “you.”

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 2:7-8****UDB:**

<sup>7</sup> When I was almost dead, Yahweh, I thought about you. You heard my prayer, up there where you are, in your holy temple.

<sup>8</sup> All those who worship worthless idols are rejecting you, the one who could act faithfully toward them.

**ULB:**

<sup>7</sup> When my soul fainted within me, I called Yahweh to mind;  
then my prayer came to you, to your holy temple.

<sup>8</sup> They give attention to useless gods  
while they forsake loving faithfulness.

**translationNotes****General Information:**

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in [Jonah 2:2](#).

**I called Yahweh to mind**

Since Jonah was praying to Yahweh, it might be more clear in some languages to say "I thought about you, Yahweh" or "Yahweh, I thought about you."

**then my prayer came to you, to your holy temple**

Jonah speaks as if his prayers could travel to God and his temple. AT: "then you in your holy temple heard my prayer" (See: [Metaphor](#))

**They give attention to useless gods**

"People pay attention to useless gods"

**forsake loving faithfulness**

"are rejecting you, who would be faithful to them"

**translationWords**

- soul, souls
- Yahweh
- pray, prayer, prayers, prayed
- holy, holiness, unholy, sacred
- temple
- god, false god, gods, goddess, idol, idols, idolater, idolaters, idolatrous, idolatry
- faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 2:9-10****UDB:**

<sup>9</sup> But I will sing to thank you, and I will offer a sacrifice to you. I will surely do what I have solemnly promised to do. Yahweh, you are the one who is able to save us.”

<sup>10</sup> Then Yahweh commanded the huge fish to vomit out Jonah, and the fish vomited out Jonah onto the dry land.

**ULB:**

<sup>9</sup> But as for me, I will sacrifice to you with a voice of thanksgiving;

I will fulfill that which I have vowed.

Salvation comes from Yahweh!”

<sup>10</sup> Then Yahweh spoke to the fish, and it vomited up Jonah upon the dry land.

**translationNotes****General Information:**

This is a continuation of Jonah’s prayer that started in [Jonah 2:2](#).

**But as for me, I**

This expression in English shows that there is a contrast between the people Jonah had just spoken about and himself. They paid attention to useless gods, but he would worship Yahweh. AT: “But I”

**I will sacrifice to you with a voice of thanksgiving**

This means that Jonah would thank God while he offered a sacrifice to him. It is not clear whether Jonah planned to thank God by singing or shouting joyfully.

**Salvation comes from Yahweh**

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun “salvation” is expressed as the verb “save.” “Yahweh is the one who saves people” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**upon the dry land**

“upon the ground” or “onto the shore”



### translationWords

- [sacrifice, sacrifices, sacrificed, sacrificing, offering, offerings](#)
- [vow, vows, vowed](#)
- [save, saves, saved, safe, salvation](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

### Links:

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2 translationQuestions](#)

## Jonah 03 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter returns to a narrative of Jonah's life.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Animals

According to the king's proclamation, the animals had to participate in the fast he ordered. This most likely reflects their pagan mindset. There was nothing in the law of Moses that instructed the people to have the animals participate in any religious acts. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [God's law](#), [law of Yahweh](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Size of Nineveh

When the author talks about the size of Nineveh, the measurements he gives are confusing. The phrase "three days' journey" is ambiguous in Hebrew, as many scholars have remarked. In Jonah's day, cities were not as big as they are today. So although Nineveh was a big city, it was not as big as most modern cities.

#### God repenting or relenting

The last verse of this chapter says, "So then God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it." This concept of God changing His mind may be troubling for some translators and people may struggle to understand it. God's character is consistent. This whole book is written from a human viewpoint and so it is hard to understand the mind of God.

Yahweh is just and merciful so even though God did not follow through with a judgment in this instance, God's plan is always to punish evil. Later in history this nation did fall and was destroyed. (See: [just](#), [justice](#), [unjust](#), [unjustly](#), [injustice](#), [justly](#), [justify](#), [justification](#), [mercy](#), [merciful](#), [judge](#), [judges](#), [judgment](#), [judgments](#) and [evil](#), [wicked](#), [wickedness](#))

#### Links:

- [Jonah 03:01 Notes](#)

**Jonah 3:1-3****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> Then Yahweh said to Jonah again, <sup>2</sup> “Go to that huge city of Nineveh, and tell them the message that I gave you previously.”

<sup>3</sup> So this time Jonah obeyed Yahweh, and he went to Nineveh. That city was very big. A person had to walk for three days to completely go through it.

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> The word of Yahweh came to Jonah a second time, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I command you to give.” <sup>3</sup> So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh in obedience to the word of Yahweh. Now Nineveh was a very large city, one of three days’ journey.

**translationNotes****The word of Yahweh came**

This is an idiom that means Yahweh spoke. See how you translated this in [Jonah 1:1](#). AT: “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))

**the word of Yahweh**

Here “word” represents Yahweh’s message. AT: “the message of Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city**

“Go to the important city of Nineveh”

**Get up**

This refers to leaving the place one is at. (See: [Idiom](#))

**proclaim to it the message that I command you to give**

“tell the people what I tell you to tell them”

**So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh in obedience to the word of Yahweh**

“This time Jonah obeyed Yahweh and went to Nineveh”

**So Jonah got up**

“So Jonah left the beach.” “got up” refers to leaving the place Jonah was at. (See: [Idiom](#))

**Now**

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to information about Nineveh.

**one of three days' journey**

“a city of three days' journey.” A person had to walk for three days to completely go through it. (See: [Idiom](#))

**translationWords**

- word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture, scriptures
- Nineveh, Ninevite
- proclaim, proclaims, proclaimed, proclaiming, proclamation, proclamations
- obey, obeys, obeyed, obeying, obedience, obedient, obediently, disobey, disobeys, disobeyed, disobedience, disobedient

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 3:4-5****UDB:**

<sup>4</sup> When Jonah arrived, he began walking through the city for one day. Then he started to proclaim to the people, “Forty days from now, Nineveh will be destroyed!”

<sup>5</sup> The people of Nineveh believed God’s message. They all decided that everyone should begin fasting. So everyone, including all the important people and all the unimportant people, did that. They also put on coarse cloth, to show that they were sorry for having sinned.

**ULB:**

<sup>4</sup> Jonah began to enter the city and after a day’s journey he called out and said, “In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown.” <sup>5</sup> The people of Nineveh believed God and they proclaimed a fast. They all put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them down to the least of them.

**translationNotes****after a day’s journey he called out**

Possible meanings are 1) “after Jonah walked a day’s journey he called out” or 2) “while Jonah walked on the first day, he called out.”

**after a day’s journey**

“after a day’s walk.” A day’s journey is the distance that people would normally travel in one day. AT: “after Jonah walked for one day”

**he called out and said**

“he proclaimed” or “he shouted”

**forty days**

“40 days” (See: [Numbers](#))

**They all put on sackcloth**

Why people put on sackcloth can be stated more clearly. AT: “They also put on coarse cloth to show that they were sorry for having sinned” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**from the greatest of them down to the least of them**

“from the most significant to the least significant people” or “including all the important people and all the unimportant people”

### translationWords

- [believe, believes, believed, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelievers, unbelief](#)
- [proclaim, proclaims, proclaimed, proclaiming, proclamation, proclamations](#)
- [fast, fasts, fasted, fasting, fastings](#)
- [sackcloth](#)

### Links:

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 3:6-7****UDB:**

<sup>6</sup> The king of Nineveh heard about Jonah's message. So he took off his royal robes, and he also put on coarse cloth. He left his throne and sat down where there were cold ashes, to show that he also was sorry for having sinned. <sup>7</sup> Then he sent messengers to proclaim to the people in Nineveh: "My advisors and I have decreed that no one may eat or drink anything. Do not even allow your animals to eat or drink.

**ULB:**

<sup>6</sup> Soon the news reached the king of Nineveh. He rose up from his throne, took off his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. <sup>7</sup> He sent out a proclamation that said, "In Nineveh, by the authority of the king and his nobles, let neither man nor animal, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not eat, nor drink water.

**translationNotes****the news**

"Jonah's message"

**He rose up from his throne**

"He got up from his throne" or "He stood up from his throne." The king left his throne to show that he was acting humbly.

**throne**

A throne is a chair that the king sits on. It shows that he is the king.

**He sent out a proclamation that said**

"He sent out an official announcement that said" or "He sent his messengers to announce to the people in Nineveh"

**nobles**

"advisors." These were important men who helped the king rule the city.

**herd nor flock**

This refers to two kinds of animals that people care for. AT: "cattle or sheep"

**Let them not eat, nor drink water**

“They must not eat nor drink anything.” The reason they were not to eat or drink anything can be made explicit by adding “in order to show that they are sorry for their sins.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**translationWords**

- [king, kings, kingdom, kingdoms, kingship, kingly](#)
- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)
- [throne, thrones, enthroned](#)
- [sackcloth](#)
- [proclaim, proclaims, proclaimed, proclaiming, proclamation, proclamations](#)
- [authority, authorities](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3 translationQuestions](#)



**Jonah 3:8-9****UDB:**

<sup>8</sup> Instead, every person must put on coarse cloth. Put coarse cloth on your animals, too. Then everyone must pray fervently to God. And everyone must stop doing evil actions, and stop acting violently toward others. <sup>9</sup> Perhaps, if everyone does that, God may change his mind and be merciful to us, and stop being very angry with us. If that happens, we will not die.”

**ULB:**

<sup>8</sup> But let both man and animal be covered with sackcloth and let them cry out loudly to God. Let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God may relent and change his mind and turn away from his fierce anger so that we do not perish.”

**translationNotes****General Information:**

This is a continuation of what the king told the people of Nineveh.

**But let both**

“Let both”

**let both man and animal be covered with sackcloth**

This can be stated in active form. AT: “let people and animals wear sackcloth” or “let people cover themselves and their animals with sackcloth” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**animal**

The word “animal” refers to animals that people own.

**cry out loudly to God**

“pray earnestly to God.” What they were to pray for can be made explicit. AT: “cry out loudly to God and ask for mercy” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**the violence that is in his hands**

This means “the violent things that he does”

**Who knows?**

The king used this rhetorical question to get the people to think about something that they might not have thought possible, that if they would stop sinning, God might not kill them. It could be translated as a statement: “We do not know.” Or it could be stated as a word and be part of the next sentence: “Perhaps.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**God may relent and change his mind**

“God may decide to do something different” or “God may not do what he said he will do”

**we do not perish**

“we do not die.” Here perish equates to drowning at sea.

**translationWords**

- [sackcloth](#)
- [God](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 3:10****UDB:**

<sup>10</sup> When they all did that, God saw what they were doing, and he saw that they had stopped doing evil actions. So he pitied them, and he did not get rid of them as he had threatened to do.

**ULB:**

<sup>10</sup> God saw what they did, that they turned from their evil ways. So then God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

**translationNotes****God saw what they did**

“God understood that they stopped doing evil actions”

**they turned from their evil ways**

The author speaks of the people stop sinning as if they turned their back to an object. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them**

Here God deciding not to do the punishment he had planned is spoken of as if he changed his mind. AT: “God changed his thinking about the punishment that he had said he would do to them” or “God decided not to punish them as he had said he would” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**he did not do it**

What God was to do can be made explicit. AT: “he did not punish them” or “he did not destroy them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**translationWords**

- [God](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [punish, punishes, punished, punishing, punishment, unpunished](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3 translationQuestions](#)

## Jonah 04 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jonah continues the narrative while bringing the book to what seems like an unusual end. This emphasizes that the book is not really about Jonah. It is about God's desire to be merciful on anyone, whether Jew or pagan. (See: [mercy, merciful](#))

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Jonah's anger

It is important to see the relationship between a prophet and Yahweh. A prophet was to prophesy for Yahweh, and his words must come true. According to the law of Moses, if that did not happen, the penalty was death. When Jonah told the city of Nineveh that it was going to be destroyed in forty days, he was certain it was going to happen. When it did not happen, Jonah was angry with God because he hated the people of Nineveh. (See: [prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#) and [law, law of Moses, God's law, law of Yahweh](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical questions

As in other places, Jonah asks rhetorical questions to show how angry he was at Yahweh. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### Parallel to Mount Sinai

In verse 2, Jonah attributes a series of characteristics to God. A Jewish reader of this book would recognize this as a formula Moses used in speaking about God when he was meeting God on Mount Sinai. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### God's grace

When Jonah went outside the city, he got very hot and God graciously provided some relief through the plant. God was trying to teach Jonah through an object lesson. It is important for the reader to see this clearly. (See: [grace, gracious](#))

#### Links:

- [Jonah 04:01 Notes](#)

**Jonah 4:1-3****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> But Jonah felt that it was very bad that God had not destroyed Nineveh. He became very angry. <sup>2</sup> He prayed to Yahweh, "Oh, Yahweh, what you have done is just what I thought that you would do even before I left home. The reason I ran away to go to Tarshish was to stop this very thing from happening, because I knew that you act very kindly and compassionately toward all people. You do not quickly become angry with people who do evil. You love people very much, and you change your mind about punishing people who sin. <sup>3</sup> So now, Oh Yahweh, since you will not destroy Nineveh as you said you would, please allow me to die, because now it would be better for me to die than to continue to live."

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> But this displeased Jonah and he became very angry. <sup>2</sup> So Jonah prayed to Yahweh and said, "Ah, Yahweh, is this not just what I said when I was back in my own country? That is why I acted first and tried to flee to Tarshish—because I knew that you are a gracious God, compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in covenant faithfulness, and you hold back from sending disaster. <sup>3</sup> Therefore now, Yahweh, I beg you, take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

**translationNotes****Ah, Yahweh**

The word "Ah" expresses Jonah's feeling of frustration.

**is this not just what I said when I was back in my own country?**

Jonah used this rhetorical question to show God how angry he was. Also, what Jonah said when he was back in his own country can be stated explicitly. AT: "When I was still in my own country I knew that if I warned the people of Nineveh, they would repent, and you would not destroy them" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**I acted first and tried to flee to Tarshish**

Possible meanings are 1) "I tried to prevent this by fleeing to Tarshish" or 2) "I acted quickly and tried to flee to Tarshish" or 3) "I did all I could to flee to Tarshish."

**abounding in covenant faithfulness**

"very faithful" or "you love people very much"

**you hold back from sending disaster**

This means “you say that you will send disaster on sinners, but then you decide not to.” AT: “you decide not to punish people who sin”

**take my life from me**

Jonah’s reason for wanting to die can be stated explicitly. AT: “since you will not destroy Nineveh as you said you would, please allow me to die” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**for it is better for me to die than to live**

“I would prefer to die than live” or “because I want to die. I do not want to live”

**translationWords**

- [Jonah](#)
- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Tarshish](#)
- [grace, gracious](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4 translationQuestions](#)

## Jonah 4:4-5

### UDB:

<sup>4</sup> Yahweh replied, “Is it right for you to be angry that I did not destroy the city?”

<sup>5</sup> Jonah did not reply. He went out of the city to the east side of it. He made a small shelter in order that he could sit under it and be protected from the sun. He sat under the shelter and waited to see what would happen to the city.

### ULB:

<sup>4</sup> Yahweh said, “Is it good that you are so angry?” <sup>5</sup> Then Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made a shelter and sat under it in the shade so that he could see what might become of the city.

### translationNotes

#### Is it good that you are so angry?

God used this rhetorical question to scold Jonah for being angry about something he should not have been angry about. AT: “Your anger is not good.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### went out of the city

“left the city of Nineveh”

#### what might become of the city

“what would happen to the city.” Jonah wanted to see if God would destroy the city or not destroy it.

### translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)

### Links:

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4 translationQuestions](#)



**Jonah 4:6-7****UDB:**

<sup>6</sup> Then Yahweh God caused a vine to grow up immediately to shade Jonah's head from the sun and to save him from his discomfort. Jonah was very happy about having the vine over his head. <sup>7</sup> But before dawn the next day, God sent a worm that chewed the vine, with the result that the vine withered.

**ULB:**

<sup>6</sup> Yahweh God prepared a plant and made it grow up over Jonah so that it might be a shade over his head to relieve his distress. Jonah was very glad because of the plant. <sup>7</sup> But God prepared a worm at sunrise the next morning. It attacked the plant and the plant withered.

**translationNotes****over Jonah so that it might be a shade over his head**

“over Jonah's head for shade”

**to relieve his distress**

“to protect Jonah from the heat of the sun”

**But God prepared a worm**

“God sent a worm”

**It attacked the plant**

“The worm chewed the plant”

**the plant withered**

The plant became dry and died. AT: “the plant died”

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 4:8-9****UDB:**

<sup>8</sup> Then, when the sun rose high in the sky, God sent a very hot wind from the east, and the sun shone very strongly on Jonah's head, with the result that he felt faint. He wanted to die, and he said, "It would be better for me to die than to continue to live!"

<sup>9</sup> But God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about what happened to the vine?" Jonah replied, "Yes, it is right! Now I am angry enough to die!"

**ULB:**

<sup>8</sup> It came about that when the sun rose the next morning, God prepared a hot east wind. Also, the sun beat down on Jonah's head and he became faint. Then Jonah wished that he might die. He said to himself, "It is better for me to die than to live." <sup>9</sup> Then God said to Jonah, "Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?" Then Jonah said, "It is good that I am angry, even to death."

**translationNotes****God prepared a hot east wind**

God caused a hot wind from the east to blow on Jonah. If wind can only mean a cool or cold wind then you can try this. AT: "God sent a very hot warmth from the east to Jonah" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**the sun beat down**

"the sun was very hot"

**on Jonah's head**

Jonah may have felt the heat most on his head. AT: "on Jonah" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

**he became faint**

"he became very weak" or "he lost his strength"

**It is better for me to die than to live**

"I would prefer to die than live" or "Because I want to die. I do not want to live." See how you translated this in [Jonah 4:3](#).

**Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?**

God challenges Jonah for being angry that the plant died and yet wanted God to kill the people of Nineveh. AT: “Your anger about the plant dying is not good.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?**

implicit information can be made explicit. AT: “You should be more concerned about the people in Nineveh dying than about the plant dying.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**It is good that I am angry, even to death.**

“It is good that I am angry. Now I am angry enough to die!”

**translationWords**

- [God](#)
- [Jonah](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4 translationQuestions](#)

**Jonah 4:10-11****UDB:**

<sup>10</sup> But Yahweh said to him, "You were concerned about that vine when I caused it to wither, even though you did not take care of it, and you did not make it grow. It just grew up during one night and it completely withered at the end of the next night. <sup>11</sup> But there are more than 120,000 people in Nineveh, that huge city, who cannot tell right from wrong, and there are also many cattle. So is it not right for me to be concerned about those people, and not want to destroy them?"

**ULB:**

<sup>10</sup> Yahweh said, "You have had compassion for the plant, for which you have not labored, nor did you make it grow. It grew up in a night and died in a night. <sup>11</sup> So as for me, should I not have compassion for Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than one hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left hand, and also many cattle?"

**translationNotes****Yahweh said**

It may be helpful to say that Yahweh was speaking to Jonah. AT: "Yahweh said to Jonah" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**should I not have compassion for Nineveh, that great city ... cattle?**

God used this question to emphasize his claim that he should have compassion on Nineveh. AT: "I certainly should have compassion for Nineveh, that important city ... cattle." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**in which there are more**

This can also be the beginning of a new sentence. AT: "There are more" or "It has more"

**one hundred and twenty thousand people**

120,000 people (See: [Numbers](#))

**who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left hand**

This may be a way of saying "they cannot tell the difference between right and wrong."

### **also many cattle**

The author is pointing out the depth of Nineveh's repentance to the extent that Yahweh takes note of the beasts' participation in the act of repentance. (See: [Background Information](#))

### **translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [labor, labors, labored, laborer, laborers](#)
- [Nineveh, Ninevite](#)

### **Links:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4 translationQuestions](#)

## translationQuestions

### Jonah 1

**What did Yahweh command Jonah to go and do?**

Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and speak out against it. [1:2]

**What did Jonah do after he heard Yahweh's command?**

Jonah ran away from the presence of Yahweh to go to Tarshish. [1:3]

**What did Yahweh do to the ship which Jonah had boarded?**

Yahweh sent a great wind on the sea, and it appeared that the ship would break up. [1:4]

**What did the sailors do in the midst of the storm?**

The sailors became very afraid and each cried out to his own god. [1:5]

**How did the sailors determine who was the cause of the evil, and what was the result?**

The sailors cast lots to determine who was the cause, and the lot indicated Jonah. [1:7]

**What did Jonah say was the cause of the evil that was happening to them?**

Jonah told the men that he was running from the presence of Yahweh. [1:10]

**What did Jonah tell the men to do in order to stop the storm?**

Jonah told the men to throw him into the sea in order to stop the storm. [1:11]

**What did Jonah tell the men to do in order to stop the storm?**

Jonah told the men to throw him into the sea in order to stop the storm. [1:12]

**What two requests did the sailors make of Yahweh?**

The asked Yahweh to not let them perish, and to not hold them guilty for Jonah's death. [1:14]

**What happened when the sailors threw Jonah into the sea?**

When they threw Jonah into the sea, the sea stopped raging. [1:15]

**What happened to Jonah when they threw him into the sea?**

A great fish swallowed Jonah, and he was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. [1:17]

## Jonah 2

**What did Jonah do from the belly of the fish?**

Jonah called out to Yahweh for help. [2:1]

**What did Jonah do from the belly of the fish?**

Jonah called out to Yahweh for help. [2:2]

**What did Jonah think he would never be able to do again?**

Jonah thought he would never be able to see Yahweh's holy temple again. [2:4]

**From where did Yahweh bring up Jonah's life?**

Yahweh brought Jonah's life up from the pit. [2:6]

**What happens to those who pay attention to useless gods?**

Those who pay attention to useless gods reject Yahweh's faithfulness to them. [2:8]

**What promise did Jonah make from the belly of the fish?**

Jonah promised to fulfill that which he had vowed. [2:9]

**From where did Jonah say salvation comes?**

Jonah said that salvation comes from Yahweh. [2:9]

**What did Yahweh tell the fish to do?**

Yahweh told the fish to vomit out Jonah upon the dry land. [2:10]



**Jonah 3**

**What command did Yahweh give a second time to Jonah?**

Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and proclaim Yahweh's message. [3:1]

**What command did Yahweh give a second time to Jonah?**

Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and proclaim Yahweh's message. [3:2]

**How did Jonah respond this time to Yahweh's command?**

Jonah obeyed and went to Nineveh. [3:3]

**What message did Jonah proclaim in Nineveh?**

Jonah proclaimed that in forty days Nineveh would be overthrown. [3:4]

**How did the Ninevites respond to Yahweh's message that Jonah preached?**

The Ninevites fasted and put on sackcloth, turned from their evil ways, and cried out to God. [3:8]

**What hope did the king of Nineveh still have for the people and the city?**

The king of Nineveh still hoped that God might relent and turn away from his fierce anger. [3:9]

**How did God respond to the Ninevites' repentance?**

God changed his mind about the punishment which he had said he would do to them and he did not do it. [3:10]

## Jonah 4

### What seemed terribly wrong to Jonah?

It seemed terribly wrong to Jonah that Yahweh changed his mind and did not punish the Ninevites. [4:1]

### Why did Jonah say that he had tried to flee to Tarshish?

Jonah said he knew Yahweh was gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, abundant in loving kindness, and one who relents from sending disaster. [4:2]

### What did Jonah want Yahweh to do to him?

Jonah wanted Yahweh to take his life. [4:3]

### What question did Yahweh ask Jonah?

Yahweh asked Jonah if it was good that he was angry. [4:4]

### Why did Jonah go out of the city and sit down?

Jonah wanted to see what might become of the city. [4:5]

### What did Yahweh do to Jonah while he sat outside the city?

Yahweh first prepared a shade plant for Jonah, then had a worm kill it the next day, and then prepared a hot east wind to make Jonah faint. [4:6]

### What did Yahweh do to Jonah while he sat outside the city?

Yahweh first prepared a shade plant for Jonah, then had a worm kill it the next day, and then prepared a hot east wind to make Jonah faint. [4:7]

### What question did Yahweh then ask Jonah?

Yahweh asked Jonah if it was good that he was angry about the plant. [4:9]

### How did Jonah feel about the shade plant?

Jonah had compassion for the plant. [4:10]

**For what did Yahweh have compassion?**

Yahweh had compassion for the people of Nineveh and the cattle. [4:11]

## translationWords

### authority, authorities

#### Definition:

The term “authority” refers to the power of influence and control that someone has over someone else.

- Kings and other governing rulers have authority over the people they are ruling.
- The word “authorities” can refer to people, governments, or organizations that have authority over others.
- The word “authorities” can also refer to spirit beings who have power over people who have not submitted themselves to God’s authority.
- Masters have authority over their servants or slaves. Parents have authority over their children.
- Governments have the authority or right to make laws that govern their citizens.

#### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “authority” can also be translated as “control” or “right” or “qualifications.”
- Sometimes “authority” is used with the meaning of “power.”
- When “authorities” is used to refer to people or organizations who rule people, it could also be translated as “leaders” or “rulers” or “powers.”
- The phrase “by his own authority” could also be translated as, “with his own right to lead” or “based on his own qualifications.”
- The expression, “under authority” could be translated as, “responsible to obey” or “having to obey others’ commands.”

(See also: citizen, command, **obey**, power, ruler)

#### Bible References:

- [Colossians 02:10-12](#)
- [Esther 09:29](#)
- [Genesis 41:35-36](#)
- [Jonah 03:6-7](#)
- [Luke 12:4-5](#)
- [Luke 20:1-2](#)
- [Mark 01:21-22](#)
- [Matthew 08:8-10](#)
- [Matthew 28:18-19](#)
- [Titus 03:1-2](#)

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H8633, G831, G1413, G1849, G1850, G2003, G2715, G5247

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)

## **believe, believes, believed, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelievers, unbelief**

### **Definition:**

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

#### **1. believe**

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

#### **2. believe in**

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term “believer” literally means “person who believes.”
- The term “Christian” eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”

- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”
- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: [believe](#), apostle, Christian, disciple, [faith](#), trust)

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 15:6-8
- Genesis 45:24-26
- Job 09:16-18
- [Habakkuk 01:5-7](#)
- [Mark 06:4-6](#)
- [Mark 01:14-15](#)
- [Luke 09:41-42](#)
- [John 01:12-13](#)
- [Acts 06:5-6](#)
- [Acts 09:40-43](#)
- [Acts 28:23-24](#)
- [Romans 03:3-4](#)
- [1 Corinthians 06:1-3](#)
- [1 Corinthians 09:3-6](#)
- [2 Corinthians 06:14-16](#)
- [Hebrews 03:12-13](#)
- [1 John 03:23-24](#)

### **Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **03:04** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **04:08** Abram **believed** God’s promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God’s promise.
- **11:02** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:06** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:05** Jesus replied, “I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?”
- **43:01** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:03** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared

over the heads of all the **believers**.

- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:06** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:01** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:09** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus. It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called “Christians.”
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

#### Word Data:

- Strong's: H539, H540, G543, G544, G569, G570, G571, G3982, G4100, G4102, G4103, G4135

#### Uses:

- **Jonah 3:4-5**



## **call, calls, calling, called**

### **Definition:**

The terms “call” and “call out” literally means to say something loudly to someone who is not nearby. There are also several figurative meanings.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout or speak loudly to someone far away. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- The term “called” is used in the Bible to mean that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- This term is also used in the context of calling someone a name. For example, “He is called John,” means, “He is named John” or “His name is John.”
- To be “called by the name of” means that someone is given the name of someone else. God says that he has called his people by his name.
- A different expression, “I have called you by name” means that God knows a person’s name personally and has specifically chosen him.

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as, “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- “You must call his name” can also be translated as, “you must name him.”
- “His name is called” could also be translated as, “his name is” or “he is named.”
- To “call out” could be translated as, “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”
- The expression “you are called by my name” could be translated as, “I have given you my name, showing that you belong to me.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as, “I know your name and have chosen you.”

(See also: [pray](#))

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 18:22-24
- 1 Thessalonians 04:7-8
- 2 Timothy 01:8-11
- Ephesians 04:1-3
- Galatians 01:15-17
- Matthew 02:13-15
- Philippians 03:12-14

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**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, G154, G363, G1458, G1528, G1941, G1951, G2028, G2046, G2564, G2821, G2822, G2840, G2919, G3004, G3106, G3333, G3343, G3603, G3686, G3687, G4316, G4341, G4377, G4779, G4867, G5455, G5537, G5581

**Uses:**

- Jonah 1:6-7

## **compassion, compassionate**

### **Definition:**

The term “compassion” refers to a feeling of concern for people, especially for those who are suffering. A “compassionate” person cares about other people and helps them.

- The word “compassion” usually includes caring about people in need, as well as taking action to help them.
- The Bible says that God is compassionate, that is, he is full of love and mercy.
- In Paul’s letter to the Colossians, he tells them to “clothe themselves with compassion.” He is instructing them to care about people and to actively help others who are in need.

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- The literal meaning of “compassion” is “bowels of mercy.” This is an expression that means “mercy” or “pity.” Other languages may have their own expression that means this.
- Ways of translating “compassion” could include, “a deep caring for” or “helpful mercy.”
- The term “compassionate” could also be translated as, “caring and helpful” or “deeply loving and merciful.”

### **Bible References:**

- Daniel 01:8-10
- Hosea 13:14
- James 05:9-11
- Jonah 04:1-3
- Mark 01:40-42
- Romans 09:14-16

### **Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2550, H7349, H7355, H7356, G1653, G3356, G3627, G4697, G4834, G4835

### **Uses:**

- Jonah 4:1-3
- Jonah 4:10-11

## 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 and 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, sin, good, righteous, demon)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:10-11
- 1 Timothy 06:9-10
- 3 John 01:9-10
- Genesis 02:15-17
- Genesis 06:5-6
- Job 01:1-3
- Job 08:19-20
- Judges 09:55-57
- Luke 06:22-23
- Matthew 07:11-12
- Proverbs 03:7-8
- Psalms 022:16-17

### 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.

#### Word Data:

- Strong's: H205, H605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2617, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G92, G113, G459, G932, G987, G988, G1426, G2549, G2551, G2554, G2555, G2556, G2557, G2559, G2560, G2635, G2636, G4151, G4189, G4190, G4191, G5337

#### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 3:10](#)

## faith

### Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression “keep the faith” could be translated by “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#))

### Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 04:6-8](#)
- [Acts 06:7](#)
- [Galatians 02:20-21](#)
- [James 02:18-20](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **05:06** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”

- **31:07** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, "You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?"
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, "Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace."
- **38:09** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H529, H530, G1680, G3640, G4102, G6066

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)

## faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness

### Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”
- Depending on the context, “unfaithful” could be translated as “not faithful” or “unbelieving” or “not obedient” or “not loyal.”
- The phrase “the unfaithful” could be translated as “people who are not faithful (to God)” or “unfaithful people” or “those who disobey God” or “people who rebel against God.”
- The term “unfaithfulness” could be translated as “disobedience” or “disloyalty” or “not believing or obeying.”
- In some languages, the term “unfaithful” is related to the word for “unbelief.”

(See also: adultery, [believe](#), disobey, [faith](#), [believe](#))

### Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40-42
- Numbers 12:6-8
- Joshua 02:14



- Judges 02:16-17
- 1 Samuel 02:9
- Psalm 012:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 01:26
- Jeremiah 09:7-9
- Hosea 05:5-7
- Luke 12:45-46
- Luke 16:10-12
- Colossians 01:7-8
- 1 Thessalonians 05:23-24
- 3 John 01:5-8

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **08:05** Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- **14:12** Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **15:13** The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- **17:09** David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **18:04** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon's **unfaithfulness**, he promised to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after Solomon's death.
- **35:12** "The older son said to his father, 'All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!"
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:04** If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you."

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H529, H530, H539, H540, H571, H898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G569, G571, G4103

### Uses:

- Jonah 2:7-8
- Jonah 4:1-3

## fast, fasts, fasted, fasting, fastings

### Definition:

The term to “fast” means to stop eating food for a period of time, such as for a day or more. Sometimes it also includes not drinking.

- Fasting can help people to focus on God and pray without being distracted by preparing food and eating.
- Jesus condemned the Jewish religious leaders for fasting for the wrong reasons. They fasted so that others would think they were righteous.
- Sometimes people fast because they are very sad or grieved about something.
- The verb to “fast” can also be translated as to “refrain from eating” or to “not eat.”
- The noun “fast” could be translated as “time of not eating” or “time of abstaining from food.”

(See also: Jewish leaders)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 21:8-10
- 2 Chronicles 20:3-4
- Acts 13:1-3
- Jonah 03:4-5
- Luke 05:33-35
- Mark 02:18-19
- Matthew 06:16-18
- Matthew 09:14-15

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:01** Immediately after Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led him out into the wilderness, where he **fasted** for forty days and forty nights.
- **34:08** ”For example, I **fast** two times every week and I give you ten percent of all the money and goods that I receive.”
- **46:10** One day, while the Christians at Antioch were **fasting** and praying, the Holy Spirit said to them, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul to do the work I have called them to do.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2908, H5144, H6684, H6685, G777, G3521, G3522, G3523

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:4-5](#)

## fear, fears, afraid

### 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,” as well as related terms “fear of God” and “fear of the Lord,” refer to a deep respect of God and the showing of 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” is used instead.

(See also: marvel, awe, Lord, power, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- [1 John 04:17-18](#)
- [Acts 02:43-45](#)
- [Acts 19:15-17](#)
- Genesis 50:18-21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 06:14-17
- [Jonah 01:8-10](#)
- [Luke 12:4-5](#)
- [Matthew 10:28-31](#)
- Proverbs 10:24-25

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H367, H926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032,

H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G870, G1167, G1168, G1169, G1630, G1719, G2124, G2125, G2962, G5398, G5399, G5400, G5401

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)

## 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 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, [false god](#), God the Father, Holy Spirit, [false god](#), Son of God, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 Samuel 10:7-8](#)
- [1 Timothy 04:9-10](#)
- [Colossians 01:15-17](#)
- [Deuteronomy 29:14-16](#)
- [Ezra 03:1-2](#)

- Genesis 01:1-2
- Hosea 04:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 02:18-20
- Jeremiah 05:4-6
- John 01:1-3
- Joshua 03:9-11
- Lamentations 03:40-43
- Micah 04:4-5
- Philippians 02:5-8
- Proverbs 24:11-12
- Psalms 047:8-9

### 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.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H136, H305, H410, H426, H430, H433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G112, G516, G932, G935, G1096, G1140, G2098, G2124, G2128, G2150, G2152, G2153, G2299, G2304, G2305, G2312, G2313, G2314, G2315, G2316, G2317, G2318, G2319, G2320, G3361, G3785, G4151, G5207, G5377, G5463, G5537, G5538

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 2:1-2](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 3:10](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)



## **god, false god, gods, goddess, idol, idols, idolater, idolaters, idolatrous, idolatry**

### **Definition:**

A false god is something that people worship instead of the one true God. The term “goddess” refers specifically to a female false god.

- These false gods or goddesses do not exist. Yahweh is the only God.
- People sometimes make objects into idols to worship as symbols of their false gods.
- In the Bible, God’s people frequently turned away from obeying him in order to worship false gods.
- Demons often deceive people into believing that the false gods and idols they worship have power.
- Baal, Dagon, and Molech were three of the many false gods that were worshiped by people in Bible times.
- Asherah and Artemis (Diana) were two of the goddesses that ancient peoples worshiped.

An idol is an object that people make so they can worship it. Something is described as “idolatrous” if it involves giving honor to something other than the one true God.

- People make idols to represent the false gods that they worship.
- These false gods do not exist; there is no God besides Yahweh.
- Sometimes demons work through an idol to make it seem like it has power, even though it does not.
- Idols are often made of valuable materials like gold, silver, bronze, or expensive wood.
- An “idolatrous kingdom” means a “kingdom of people who worship idols” or a “kingdom of people who worship earthly things.”
- The term “idolatrous figure” is another word for a “carved image” or an “idol.”

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- There may already be a word for “god” or “false god” in the language or in a nearby language.
- The term “idol” could be used to refer to false gods.
- In English, a lower case “g” is used to refer to false gods, and upper case “G” is used to refer to the one true God. Other languages also do that.
- Another option would be to use a completely different word to refer to the false gods.
- Some languages may add a word to specify whether the false god is described as male or female.

(See also: **God**, Asherah, Baal, Molech, demon, image, kingdom, worship)

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 35:1-3

- Exodus 32:1-2
- Psalms 031:5-7
- Psalms 081:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 07:41-42
- Acts 07:43
- Acts 15:19-21
- Acts 19:26-27
- Romans 02:21-22
- Galatians 04:8-9
- Galatians 05:19-21
- Colossians 03:5-8
- 1 Thessalonians 01:8-10

#### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **10:02** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's **gods**.
- **13:04** Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other **gods**."
- **14:02** They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- **18:13** But most of Judah's kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

#### Word Data:

- Strong's: H205, H367, H410, H426, H430, H457, H1322, H1544, H1892, H2553, H3649, H4656, H4906, H5236, H5566, H6089, H6090, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6673, H6736, H6754, H7723, H8163, H8251, H8267, H8441, H8655, G1493, G1494, G1495, G1496, G1497, G2299, G2712

#### Uses:

- Introduction to Jonah
- Jonah 1:4-5
- Jonah 2:7-8

## grace, gracious

### Definition:

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression to “find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

### Bible References:

- [Acts 04:32-33](#)
- [Acts 06:8-9](#)
- [Acts 14:3-4](#)
- [Colossians 04:5-6](#)
- [Colossians 04:18](#)
- [Genesis 43:28-29](#)
- [James 04:6-7](#)
- [John 01:16-18](#)
- [Philippians 04:21-23](#)
- [Revelation 22:20-21](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G2143, G5485, G5543

### Uses:

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)

- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)

## guilt, guilty

### Definition:

The term “guilt” refers to the fact of having sinned or committed a crime.

- To “be guilty” means to have done something morally wrong, that is, to have disobeyed God.
- The opposite of “guilty” is “innocent.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages might translate “guilt” as “the weight of sin” or “the counting of sins.”
- Ways to translate to “be guilty” could include a word or phrase that means, to “be at fault” or “having done something morally wrong” or “having committed a sin.”

(See also: innocent, iniquity, [punish](#), sin)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 28:36-38
- Isaiah 06:6-7
- [James 02:10-11](#)
- [John 19:4-6](#)
- [Jonah 01:14-16](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- [39:02](#) They brought many witnesses who lied about him (Jesus). However, their statements did not agree with each other, so the Jewish leaders could not prove he was **guilty** of anything.
- [39:11](#) After speaking with Jesus, Pilate went out to the crowd and said, “I find no **guilt** in this man.” But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “He is not **guilty**.” But they shouted even louder. Then Pilate said a third time, “He is not **guilty!**”
- [40:04](#) Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Don’t you fear God? We are **guilty**, but this man is innocent.
- [49:10](#) Because of your sin, you are **guilty** and deserve to die.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H816, H817, H818, H5352, H5355, G338, G1777, G3784, G5267

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)

## Hades, Sheol

### Definition:

The terms “Hades” and “Sheol” are used in the Bible to refer to death and the place where the souls of people go when they die. Their meanings are similar.

- The Hebrew term “Sheol” is often used in the Old Testament to refer generally to the place of death.
- In the New Testament, the Greek term “Hades” refers to a place for the souls of people who rebelled against God. These souls are referred to as going “down” to Hades. This is sometimes contrasted to going “up” to heaven, where the souls of people who believe in Jesus live.
- The term “Hades” is coupled with the term “death” in the book of Revelation. In the end times, both death and Hades will be thrown into the Lake of Fire, which is hell.

### Translation Suggestions

- The Old Testament term “Sheol” could be translated as “place of the dead” or “place for dead souls.” Some translations translate this as “the pit” or “death,” depending on the context.
- The New Testament term “Hades” could also be translated as “place for unbelieving dead souls” or “place of torment for the dead” or “place for the souls of unbelieving dead people.”
- Some translations keep the words “Sheol” and “Hades,” spelling them to fit the sound patterns of the language of translation. (See: How to Translate Unknowns).
- A phrase could also be added to each term to explain it, examples of doing this are, “Sheol, place where dead people are” and “Hades, place of death.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: death, [heaven](#), hell, tomb)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 02:29-31](#)
- [Genesis 44:27-29](#)
- [Jonah 02:1-2](#)
- [Luke 10:13-15](#)
- [Luke 16:22-23](#)
- [Matthew 11:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 16:17-18](#)
- [Revelation 01:17-18](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7585, G86

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:1-2](#)



## heart, hearts

### 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. That person has 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 literally 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)

### Bible References:

- [1 John 03:16-18](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 02:3-4](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 03:13-15](#)
- [Acts 08:20-23](#)
- [Acts 15:7-9](#)
- [Luke 08:14-15](#)
- [Mark 02:5-7](#)
- [Matthew 05:5-8](#)
- [Matthew 22:37-38](#)

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1079, H2436, H2504, H2910, H3519, H3629, H3820, H3821, H3823, H3824, H3825, H3826, H4578, H5315, H5640, H7130, H7307, H7356, H7907, G674, G1282, G1271, G2133, G2588, G2589, G4641, G4698, G5590

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)

## heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly

### Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually 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 also: kingdom of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 08:22-24
- [1 Thessalonians 01:8-10](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 04:16-18](#)
- Deuteronomy 09:1-2
- [Ephesians 06:9](#)
- Genesis 01:1-2
- Genesis 07:11-12
- [John 03:12-13](#)
- [John 03:27-28](#)
- [Matthew 05:17-18](#)
- [Matthew 05:46-48](#)

**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.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G932, G2032, G3321, G3770, G3771, G3772

**Uses:**

- **Jonah 1:8-10**

## Hebrew, Hebrews

### Facts:

The “Hebrews” were people who were descended from Abraham through the line of Isaac and Jacob. Abraham is the first person in the Bible to be called a “Hebrew.”

- The term “Hebrew” also refers to the language that the Hebrew people spoke. The vast majority of the Old Testament was written in the Hebrew language.
- In different places in the Bible, the Hebrews were also called “Jewish people” or “Israelites.” It is best to keep all three terms distinct in the text, as long as it is clear that these terms refer to the same people group.

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

(See also: Israel, Jew, Jewish leaders)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 26:12-14](#)
- [Genesis 39:13-15](#)
- [Genesis 40:14-15](#)
- [Genesis 41:12-13](#)
- [John 05:1-4](#)
- [John 19:12-13](#)
- [Jonah 01:8-10](#)
- [Philippians 03:4-5](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5680, G1444, G1445, G1446, G1447### Uses:
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)

## **holy, holiness, unholy, sacred**

### **Definition:**

The terms “holy” and “holiness” refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term “unholy” means “not holy.” It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called “unholy” could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term “sacred” describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sacred” was oftentimes used to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as “religious.”
- “Sacred songs” and “sacred music” refer to music that was sung or played for God’s glory. This could be translated as “music for worshiping Yahweh” or “songs that praise God.”
- The phrase “sacred duties” referred to the “religious duties” or “rituals” that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- Ways to translate “holy” might include “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”
- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”
- Ways to translate “unholy” could include “not holy” or “not belonging to God” or “not honoring to God” or “not godly.”

- In some contexts, “unholy” could be translated as “unclean.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, consecrate, sanctify, set apart)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 28:20-22
- 2 Kings 03:1-3
- Lamentations 04:1-2
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- **Matthew 07:6**
- **Mark 08:38**
- **Acts 07:33-34**
- **Acts 11:7-10**
- **Romans 01:1-3**
- **2 Corinthians 12:3-5**
- **Colossians 01:21-23**
- **1 Thessalonians 03:11-13**
- **1 Thessalonians 04:7-8**
- **2 Timothy 03:14-15**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **01:16** He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **09:12** “You are standing on **holy** ground.”
- **13:01** “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation.”
- **13:05** “Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**.”
- **22:05** “So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God.”
- **50:02** As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G37, G38, G39, G40, G41, G42, G462, G1859, G2150, G2412, G2413, G2839, G3741, G3742

**Uses:**

- **Jonah 2:3-4**
- **Jonah 2:7-8**

## Jonah

### Definition:

Jonah was a Hebrew prophet in the Old Testament.

- The book of Jonah tells the story of what happened when God sent Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh.
- Jonah refused to go to Nineveh and instead got on a ship headed for a Tarshish.
- God caused a huge storm to overwhelm that ship.
- He told the men sailing the ship that he was running away from God, and he suggested that they throw him into the sea. When they did the storm stopped.
- Jonah was swallowed by a huge fish, and he was inside the belly of that fish for three days and nights.
- After that, Jonah went to Nineveh and preached to the people there, and they turned from their sins.

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

(See also: disobey, [Nineveh](#), turn)

### Bible References:

- [Jonah 01:1-3](#)
- [Luke 11:29-30](#)
- [Matthew 12:38-40](#)
- [Matthew 16:3-4](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3124, G2495

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 1:11-13](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)



## Joppa

### Facts:

In Bible times, the city of Joppa was an important commercial seaport located on the Mediterranean Sea, south of the Plain of Sharon.

- The ancient site of Joppa is the location of the present-day city of Jaffa, which is now part of the city of Tel Aviv.
- In the Old Testament, Joppa was the city where Jonah got on a boat that was going to Tarshish.
- In the New Testament, a Christian woman named Tabitha died in Joppa, and Peter brought her back to life.

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

(See also: the sea, Jerusalem, Sharon, [Tarshish](#))

### Bible References:

- [Acts 09:36-37](#)
- [Acts 10:7-8](#)
- [Acts 11:4-6](#)
- [Acts 11:11-14](#)
- [Jonah 01:1-3](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3305, G2445

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)

## judge, judges, judgment, judgments

### Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether something is morally right or wrong.

- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate to “judge” could include to “decide” or to “condemn” or to “punish” or to “decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: decree, judge, judgment day, [just](#), law, [law](#))

### Bible References:

- [1 John 04:17-18](#)
- [1 Kings 03:7-9](#)
- [Acts 10:42-43](#)
- [Isaiah 03:13-15](#)
- [James 02:1-4](#)
- [Luke 06:37](#)
- [Micah 03:9-11](#)
- [Psalm 054:1-3](#)

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **19:16** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- **21:08** A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.
- **39:04** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, "We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?"
- **50:14** But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H148, H430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G144, G350, G968, G1106, G1252, G1341, G1345, G1348, G1349, G2917, G2919, G2920, G2922, G2923, G4232

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)

**just, justice, unjust, unjustly, injustice, justly, justify, justification****Definition:**

“Just” and “justice” refer to treating people fairly according to God’s laws. Human laws that reflect God’s standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be “just” is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God’s eyes.
- To act “justly” means to treat people in a way that is right, good, and proper according to God’s laws.
- To receive “justice” means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by the law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term “just” has the broader meaning of “righteous” or “following God’s laws.”

The terms “unjust” and “unjustly” refer to treating people in an unfair and often harmful manner.

- An “injustice” is something bad that is done to someone that the person did not deserve. It refers to treating people unfairly.
- Injustice also means that some people are treated badly while others are treated well.
- Someone who is acting in an unjust way is being “partial” or “prejudiced” because he is not treating people equally.

The terms “justify” and “justification” refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- “Justification” refers to what God does when he forgives a person’s sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

**Translation Suggestions:**

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “just” could include “morally right” or “fair.”
- The term “justice” could be translated as “fair treatment” or “deserved consequences.”
- To “act justly” could be translated as “treat fairly” or “behave in a just way.”
- In some contexts, “just” could be translated as “righteous” or “upright.”
- Depending on the context, “unjust” could also be translated as “unfair” or “partial” or “unrighteous.”
- The phrase “the unjust” could be translated as “the unjust ones” or “unjust people” or “people who treat others unfairly” or “unrighteous people” or “people who disobey God.”
- The term “unjustly” could be translated as, “in an unfair manner” or “wrongly” or “unfairly.”
- Ways to translate “injustice” could include, “wrong treatment” or “unfair treatment” or “acting unfairly.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))

- Other ways to translate “justify” could include “declare (someone) to be righteous” or “cause (someone) to be righteous.”
- The term “justification” could be translated as “being declared righteous” or “becoming righteous” or “causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “resulting in justification” could be translated as “so that God justified many people” or “which resulted in God causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “for our justification” could be translated as “in order that we could be made righteous by God.”

(See also: forgive, **guilt**, **judge**, righteous, righteous)

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 44:16-17
- 1 Chronicles 18:14-17
- Isaiah 04:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:1-3
- Ezekiel 18:16-17
- **Micah 03:8**
- **Matthew 05:43-45**
- **Matthew 11:18-19**
- **Matthew 23:23-24**
- **Luke 18:3-5**
- **Luke 18:6-8**
- **Luke 18:13-14**
- **Luke 21:20-22**
- **Luke 23:39-41**
- **Acts 13:38-39**
- **Acts 28:3-4**
- **Romans 04:1-3**
- **Galatians 03:6-9**
- **Galatians 03:10-12**
- **Galatians 05:3-4**
- **Titus 03:6-7**
- **Hebrews 06:9-10**
- **James 02:21-24**
- **Revelation 15:3-4**

### **Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **17:09** David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- **18:13** Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.

- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H205, H2555, H3477, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, H8636, G91, G93, G94, G1342, G1344, G1345, G1346, G1347, G1738

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)

## king, kings, kingdom, kingdoms, kingship, kingly

### Definition:

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

- A king was usually chosen to rule because of his family relation to previous kings.
- When a king died, it was usually his oldest son who became the next king.
- In ancient times, the king had absolute authority over the people in his kingdom.
- Rarely the term “king” was used to refer to someone who was 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)

### Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 06:15-16](#)
- [2 Kings 05:17-19](#)
- [2 Samuel 05:3-5](#)
- [Acts 07:9-10](#)
- [Acts 13:21-22](#)
- [John 01:49-51](#)
- [Luke 01:5-7](#)
- [Luke 22:24-25](#)
- [Matthew 05:33-35](#)
- [Matthew 14:8-9](#)

### 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!

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H4427, H4428, H4430, G935, G936

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)



## labor, labors, labored, laborer, laborers

### Definition:

The term “labor” refers to doing hard work of any kind.

- In general, labor is any task which uses energy. It is often implied that the task is difficult.
- A laborer is a person who does any type of labor.
- In English, the word “labor” is also used for part of the process of giving birth. Other languages may have a completely different word for this.
- Ways to translate “labor” could include “work” or “hard work” or “difficult work” or to “work hard.”

(See also: hard, labor pains)

### Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 02:7-9](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 03:4-5](#)
- [Galatians 04:10-11](#)
- [James 05:4-6](#)
- [John 04:37-38](#)
- [Luke 10:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 10:8-10](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H213, H3018, H3021, H3022, H3023, H3205, H5447, H4522, H4639, H5445, H5647, H5656, H5998, H5999, H6001, H6089, H6468, H6635, G75, G2038, G2040, G2041, G2872, G2873, G4704, G4866, G4904, G5389

### Uses:

- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)

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

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

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

### Bible References:

- [Acts 15:5-6](#)
- Daniel 09:12-14
- Exodus 28:42-43
- Ezra 07:25-26
- [Galatians 02:15-16](#)
- [Luke 24:44](#)
- [Matthew 05:17-18](#)
- Nehemiah 10:28-29

- [Romans 03:19-20](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:07** God also gave many other **laws** and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these **laws**, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would punish them.\
- **13:09** Anyone who disobeyed **God's law** could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God.\
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.\
- **16:01** After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God's laws**.\
- **21:05** In the New Covenant, God would write **his law** on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins.\
- **27:01** Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"\
- **28:01** Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."\<

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H430, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2710, H3068, H4687, H4872, H4941, H8451, G2316, G3551, G3565

### Uses:

- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)

## 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, Zechariah (OT), Zechariah (NT))

### Bible References:

- [Jonah 01:6-7](#)
- [Luke 01:8-10](#)
- [Luke 23:33-34](#)
- [Mark 15:22-24](#)
- [Matthew 27:35-37](#)
- Psalms 022:18-19

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1486, H2256, H5307, G2624, G2819, G2975, G3091

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:6-7](#)

## mercy, merciful

### Definition:

The terms “mercy” and “merciful” refer to helping people who are in need, especially when they are in a lowly or humbled condition.

- The term “mercy” can also include the meaning of not punishing people for something they have done wrong.
- A powerful person such as a king is described as “merciful” when he treats people kindly instead of harming them.
- Being merciful also means to forgive someone who has done something wrong against us.
- We show mercy when we help people who are in great need.
- God is merciful to us, and he wants us to be merciful to others.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “mercy” could be translated as “kindness” or “compassion” or “pity.”
- The term “merciful” could be translated as “showing pity” or “being kind to” or “forgiving.”
- To “show mercy to” or “have mercy on” could be translated as “treat kindly” or “be compassionate toward.”

(See also: [compassion](#), forgive)

### Bible References:

- [1 Peter 01:3-5](#)
- [1 Timothy 01:12-14](#)
- Daniel 09:17-19
- Exodus 34:5-7
- Genesis 19:16-17
- [Hebrews 10:28-29](#)
- [James 02:12-13](#)
- [Luke 06:35-36](#)
- [Matthew 09:27-28](#)
- [Philippians 02:25-27](#)
- Psalms 041:4-6
- [Romans 12:1-2](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.

- **19:17** He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- **20:12** The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- **27:11** Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- **32:11** But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”
- **34:09** “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2551, H2603, H2604, H2616, H2617, H2623, H3722, H3727, H4627, H4819, H5503, H5504, H5505, H5506, H6014, H7349, H7355, H7356, H7359, G1653, G1655, G1656, G2433, G2436, G3628, G3629, G3741, G4698

**Uses:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 03 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)

## miracle, miracles, wonder, wonders, sign, signs

### Definition:

A “miracle” is something amazing that is not possible unless God causes it to happen.

- Examples of miracles that Jesus did include calming a storm and healing a blind man.
- Miracles are sometimes called “wonders” because they cause people to be filled with wonder or amazement.
- The term “wonder” can also refer more generally to amazing displays of God’s power, such as when he created the heavens and the earth.
- Miracles can also be called “signs” because they are used as indicators or evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.
- Some miracles were God’s acts of redemption, such as when he rescued the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt and when he protected Daniel from being hurt by lions.
- Other wonders were God’s acts of judgment, such as when he sent a worldwide flood in Noah’s time and when he brought terrible plagues on the land of Egypt during the time of Moses.
- Many of God’s miracles were the physical healings of sick people or bringing dead people back to life.
- God’s power was shown in Jesus when he healed people, calmed storms, walked on water, and raised people from the dead. These were all miracles.
- God also enabled the prophets and the apostles to perform miracles of healing and other things that were only possible through God’s power.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Possible translations of “miracles” or “wonders” could include “impossible things that God does” or “powerful works of God” or “amazing acts of God.”
- The frequent expression “signs and wonders” could be translated as “proofs and miracles” or “miraculous works that prove God’s power” or “amazing miracles that show how great God is.”
- Note that this meaning of a miraculous sign is different from a sign that gives proof or evidence for something. The two can be related.

(See also: power, [prophet](#), apostle, sign)

### Bible References:

- [2 Thessalonians 02:8-10](#)
- [Acts 04:15-18](#)
- [Acts 04:21-22](#)
- Daniel 04:1-3
- Deuteronomy 13:1-3

- Exodus 03:19-22
- [John 02:11](#)
- [Matthew 13:57-58](#)

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **16:08** Gideon asked God for two **signs** so he could be sure that God would use him to save Israel.
- **19:14** God did many **miracles** through Elisha.
- **37:10** Many of the Jews believed in Jesus because of this **miracle**.
- **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."
- **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.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H226, H852, H2368, H2858, H4150, H4159, H4864, H5251, H5824, H5953, H6381, H6382, H6383, H6395, H6725, H7560, H7583, H8047, H8074, H8539, H8540,, G880, G1213, G1229, G1411, G1569, G1718, G1770, G1839, G2285, G2296, G2297, G3167, G3902, G4591, G4592, G5059

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)



## 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, [Jonah](#), [repent](#), turn)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 10:11-14
- [Jonah 01:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 03:1-3](#)
- [Luke 11:32](#)
- [Matthew 12:41](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5210, G3535, G3536

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 3:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)

## **obey, obeys, obeyed, obeying, obedience, obedient, obediently, disobey, disobeys, disobeyed, disobedience, disobedient**

### **Definition:**

The term “obey” means to do what is required or commanded. The term “obedient” describes someone who obeys. “Obedience” is the characteristic that an obedient person has. Sometimes the command is about not doing something, as in “do not steal.”

- Usually the term “obey” is used in the context of obeying the commands or laws of a person in authority.
- For example, people obey laws which are created by the leaders of a country, kingdom, or other organization.
- Children obey their parents, slaves obey their masters, people obey God, and citizens obey the laws of their country.
- When someone in authority commands people not to do something, they obey by not doing that.
- Ways to translate obey could include a word or phrase that means “do what is commanded” or “follow orders” or “do what God says to do.”
- The term “obedient” could be translated as “doing what was commanded” or “following orders” or “doing what God commands.”

(See also: citizen, command, disobey, kingdom, law)

### **Bible References:**

- [Acts 05:29-32](#)
- [Acts 06:7](#)
- [Genesis 28:6-7](#)
- [James 01:22-25](#)
- [James 02:10-11](#)
- [Luke 06:46-48](#)
- [Matthew 07:26-27](#)
- [Matthew 19:20-22](#)
- [Matthew 28:20](#)

### **Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **03:04** Noah **obeyed** God. He and his three sons built the boat just the way God had told them.
- **05:06** Again Abraham **obeyed** God and prepared to sacrifice his son.
- **05:10** “Because you (Abraham) have **obeyed** me, all the families of the world will be blessed through your family”
- **05:10** But the Egyptians did not believe God or **obey** his commands.
- **13:07** If the people **obeyed** these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them.

obey, obeys, obeyed, obeying, obedience, obedient, obediently, disobey, disobeys, disobeyed, disobedience, disobedie

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1697, H2388, H3349, H4928, H6213, H7181, H8085, H8086, H8104, G191, G544, G3980, G3982, G4198, G5083, G5084, G5218, G5219, G5255, G5292, G5293, G5442

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:1-3](#)

## pray, prayer, prayers, prayed

### Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: [false god](#), forgive, praise)

### Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 03:8-10](#)
- [Acts 08:24](#)
- [Acts 14:23-26](#)
- [Colossians 04:2-4](#)
- [John 17:9-11](#)
- [Luke 11:1](#)
- [Matthew 05:43-45](#)
- [Matthew 14:22-24](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

**\*06:05** Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins. **\*13:12** But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them. **\*19:08** Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!” **\*21:07** Priests also **prayed** to God for the people. **\*38:11** Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation. **\*43:13** The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other. **\*49:18** God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H559, H577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H5315, H5375, H6293, H6419, H6739, H6963, H7121, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G154, G1162, G1189, G1783, G2065, G2171, G2172, G3870, G4335, G4336

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:1-2](#)
- [Jonah 2:7-8](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)

## **proclaim, proclaims, proclaimed, proclaiming, proclamation, proclamations**

### **Definition:**

To proclaim is to announce or declare something publicly and boldly.

- Often in the Bible, “proclaim” means to announce publicly something that God has commanded, or to tell others about God and how great he is.
- In the New Testament, the apostles proclaimed the good news about Jesus to many people in many different cities and regions.
- The term “proclaim” can also be used for decrees made by kings or for denouncing evil in a public way.
- Other ways to translate “proclaim” could include “announce” or “openly preach” or “publicly declare.”
- The term “proclamation” could also be translated as “announcement” or “public preaching.”

(See also: preach)

### **Bible References:**

- [Acts 09:20-22](#)
- [Acts 13:38-39](#)
- [Jonah 03:1-3](#)
- [Luke 04:18-19](#)
- [Mark 01:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 10:26-27](#)

### **Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1319, H1696, H1697, H2199, H3045, H3745, H4161, H5046, H5608, H6963, H7121, H7440, H8085, G518, G591, G1229, G1861, G2097, G2605, G2782, G2784, G2980, G3142, G3853, G4135

### **Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 3:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)

## prophet, prophets, 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, [false god](#), false prophet, fulfill, [law](#), vision)

### Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 02:14-16](#)
- [Acts 03:24-26](#)
- [John 01:43-45](#)
- [Malachi 04:4-6](#)
- [Matthew 01:22-23](#)

- [Matthew 02:17-18](#)
- [Matthew 05:17-18](#)
- Psalm 051:1-2

#### 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. \*

#### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2372, H2374, H4853, H5012, H5013, H5016, H5017, H5029, H5030, H5031, H5197, G2495, G4394, G4395, G4396, G4397, G4398, G5578

#### Uses:

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)



## **punish, punishes, punished, punishing, punishment, unpunished**

### **Definition:**

The term “punish” means to cause someone to suffer a negative consequence for doing something wrong. The term “punishment” refers to the negative consequence that is given as a result of that wrong behavior.

- Often punishment is intended to motivate a person to stop sinning.
- God punished the Israelites when they disobeyed him, especially when they worshiped false gods. Because of their sin, God allowed their enemies to attack and capture them.
- God is righteous and just, so he has to punish sin. Every human being has sinned against God and deserves punishment.
- Jesus was punished for all the evil things that every person has ever done. He received each person’s punishment on himself even though he did nothing wrong and did not deserve that punishment.
- The expressions “go unpunished” and “leave unpunished” mean to decide not to punish people for their wrongdoing. God often allows sin to go unpunished as he waits for people to repent.

(See also: [just](#), [repent](#), righteous, sin)

### **Bible References:**

- [1 John 04:17-18](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 01:9-10](#)
- [Acts 04:21-22](#)
- [Acts 07:59-60](#)
- [Genesis 04:13-15](#)
- [Luke 23:15-17](#)
- [Matthew 25:44-46](#)

their

### **Examples from the Bible stories:**

**\*13:07** God also gave many other laws and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would **punish** them. **\*16:02** Because the Israelites kept disobeying God, he **punished** them by allowing their enemies to defeat them. **\*19:16** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would judge them as guilty, and he would **punish** them. **\*48:06** Jesus was the perfect high priest because he took the **punishment** for every sin that anyone has ever committed. **\*48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the blood of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s **punishment** passes over him. **\*49:09** But God loved everyone in the world so much that

he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be **punished** for his sins, but will live with God forever. \*49:11 Jesus never sinned, but he chose to be **punished** and die as the perfect sacrifice to take away your sins and the sins of every person in the world.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3027, H3256, H4148, H4941, H5221, H5414, H6031, H6064, H6213, H6485, H7999, H8199, G1349, G1556, G1557, G2849, G3811, G5097

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 3:10](#)

## repent, repents, repented, repentance

### Definition:

The terms “repent” and “repentance” refer to turning away from sin and turning back to God.

- To “repent” literally means to “change one’s mind.”
- In the Bible, “repent” usually means to turn away from a sinful, human way of thinking and acting, and to turn to God’s way of thinking and acting.
- When people truly repent of their sins, God forgives them and helps them start obeying him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “repent” can be translated with a word or phrase that means “turn back (to God)” or “turn away from sin and toward God” or “turn toward God, away from sin.”
- Often the term “repentance” can be translated using the verb “repent.” For example, “God has given repentance to Israel” could be translated as “God has enabled Israel to repent.”
- Other ways to translate “repentance” could include “turning away from sin” or “turning to God and away from sin.”

(See also: forgive, sin, turn)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 03:19-20](#)
- [Luke 03:3](#)
- [Luke 03:8](#)
- [Luke 05:29-32](#)
- [Luke 24:45-47](#)
- [Mark 01:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 03:1-3](#)
- [Matthew 03:10-12](#)
- [Matthew 04:17](#)
- [Romans 02:3-4](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:02** After many years of disobeying God and being oppressed by their enemies, the Israelites **repented** and asked God to rescue them.
- **17:13** David **repented** of his sin and God forgave him.
- **19:18** They (prophets) warned people that God would destroy them if they did not **repent**.
- **24:02** Many people came out to the wilderness to listen to John. He preached to them, saying, “**Repent**, for the kingdom of God is near!”

- **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. ”
- **44:05** “So now, **repent** and turn to God so that your sins will be washed away.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5150, H5162, H5164, G278, G3338, G3340, G3341

**Uses:**

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

## sackcloth

### Definition:

Sackcloth was a coarse, scratchy type of cloth that was made from goat hair or camel hair.

- A person who wore clothing made from it would be uncomfortable. Sackcloth was worn to show mourning, grief, or humble repentance.
- The phrase “sackcloth and ashes” was a common term referring to a traditional expression of grief and repentance.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “coarse cloth from animal hair” or “clothes made of goat hair” or “rough, scratchy clothing.”
- Another way to translate this term could be “rough, scratchy mourning clothes.”
- The phrase “sit in sackcloth and ashes” could be translated as “show mourning and humility by wearing scratchy cloth and sitting in ashes.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: ash, camel, goat, humble, mourn, [repent](#), sign)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 03:31-32
- Genesis 37:34-36
- Joel 01:8-10
- [Jonah 03:4-5](#)
- [Luke 10:13-15](#)
- [Matthew 11:20-22](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H8242, G4526

### Uses:

- [Jonah 3:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)

## sacrifice, sacrifices, sacrificed, sacrificing, offering, offerings

### Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “sacrifice” and “offering” refer to special gifts given to God as an act of worshiping him. People also offered sacrifices to false gods.

- The word “offering” generally refers to anything that is offered or given. The term “sacrifice” refers to something that is given or done at great cost to the giver.
- Offerings to God were specific things that he commanded the Israelites to give in order to express devotion and obedience to him.
- The names of the different offerings, such as “burnt offering” and “peace offering,” indicated what kind of offering was being given.
- Sacrifices to God often involved the killing of an animal.
- Only the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s perfect, sinless Son, can completely cleanse people from sin; animal sacrifices could never do that.
- The figurative expression “offer yourselves as a living sacrifice” means, “live your life in complete obedience to God, giving up everything in order to serve him.”

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “offering” could also be translated as “a gift to God” or “something given to God” or “something valuable that is presented to God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sacrifice” could also be translated as “something valuable given in worship” or “a special animal killed and presented to God.”
- The action to “sacrifice” could be translated as to “give up something valuable” or to “kill an animal and give it to God.”
- Another way to translate “present yourself as a living sacrifice” could be “as you live your life, offer yourself to God as completely as an animal is offered on an altar.”

(See also: altar, burnt offering, drink offering, **false god**, fellowship offering, freewill offering, peace offering, priest, sin offering, worship)

### Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 04:6-8](#)
- [Acts 07:41-42](#)
- [Acts 21:25-26](#)
- [Genesis 04:3-5](#)
- [James 02:21-24](#)
- [Mark 01:43-44](#)
- [Mark 14:12-14](#)
- [Matthew 05:23-24](#)

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **03:14** After Noah got off the boat, he built an altar and **sacrificed** some of each kind of animal which could be used for a **sacrifice**. God was happy with the **sacrifice** and blessed Noah and his family.
- **05:06** "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a **sacrifice** to me." Again Abraham obeyed God and prepared to **sacrifice** his son.
- **05:09** God had provided the ram to be the **sacrifice** instead of Isaac.
- **13:09** Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the Tent of Meeting as a **sacrifice** to God. A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was **sacrificed** covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- **17:06** David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him **sacrifices**.
- **48:06** Jesus is the Great High Priest. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only **sacrifice** that could take away the sin of all the people in the world.
- **48:08** But God provided Jesus, the Lamb of God, as a **sacrifice** to die in our place.
- **49:11** Because Jesus **sacrificed** himself, God can forgive any sin, even terrible sins.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H801, H817, H819, H1685, H1890, H1974, H2076, H2077, H2281, H2282, H2398, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2409, H3632, H4394, H4469, H4503, H4504, H5066, H5068, H5069, H5071, H5257, H5258, H5261, H5262, H5927, H5928, H5930, H6453, H6944, H6999, H7133, H7311, H8002, H8426, H8548, H8573, H8641, G266, G334, G1049, G1435, G1494, G2378, G2380, G3646, G4376, G5485

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)
- [Jonah 2:9-10](#)

## save, saves, saved, safe, salvation

### Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”
- The term “salvation” could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: cross, deliver, [punish](#), sin, Savior)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 49:16-18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 080:1-3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- [Micah 06:3-5](#)
- [Luke 02:30-32](#)



- Luke 08:36-37
- Acts 04:11-12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 02:20-21
- Romans 01:16-17
- Romans 10:8-10
- Ephesians 06:17-18
- Philippians 01:28-30
- 1 Timothy 01:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:08** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:02** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:05** Moses told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you."
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:08** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be **saved**?" Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**."
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H983, H2421, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8668, G803, G804, G806, G1295, G1508, G4982, G4991, G4992, G5198

### Uses:

- Jonah 02 General Notes
- Jonah 2:9-10

## soul, souls

### Definition:

The soul is the inner, invisible, and eternal part of a person. It refers to the non-physical part of a person.

- The terms “soul” and “spirit” may be two different concepts, or they may be two terms that refer to the same concept.
- When a person dies, his soul leaves his body.
- The word “soul” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to the whole person. For example, “the soul who sins” means “the person who sins” and “my soul is tired” means, “I am tired.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “soul” could also be translated as “inner self” or “inner person.”
- In some contexts, “my soul” could be translated as “I” or “me.”
- Usually the phrase “the soul” can be translated as “the person” or “he” or “him,” depending on the context.
- Some languages might only have one word for the concepts “soul” and “spirit.”
- In Hebrews 4:12, the figurative phrase “dividing soul and spirit” could mean “deeply discerning or exposing the inner person.”

(See also: spirit)

### Bible References:

- [2 Peter 02:7-9](#)
- [Acts 02:27-28](#)
- [Acts 02:40-42](#)
- Genesis 49:5-6
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- [James 01:19-21](#)
- Jeremiah 06:16-19
- [Jonah 02:7-8](#)
- [Luke 01:46-47](#)
- [Matthew 22:37-38](#)
- Psalms 019:7-8
- [Revelation 20:4](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5082, H5315, H5397, G5590

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:7-8](#)

## Tarshish

### Facts:

Tarshish was the name of two men in the Old Testament. It was also the name of a city.

- One of Japheth's grandsons was named Tarshish.
- Tarshish was also the name of one of the wise men of King Ahashuerus.
- The city of Tarshish was a very prosperous port city, whose ships carried valuable products to buy, sell, or trade.
- This city was associated with Tyre and is thought to have been a Phoenician city that was somewhat distant from Israel, perhaps on the southern coast of Spain.
- The Old Testament prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for the city of Tarshish instead of obeying God's command to go preach to Nineveh.

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

(See also: Esther, Japheth, [Jonah](#), [Nineveh](#), Phoenicia, wise men)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 10:2-5
- Isaiah 02:14-16
- Jeremiah 10:8-10
- [Jonah 01:1-3](#)
- Psalms 048:7-8

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H8659

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)

## temple

### Facts:

The temple was a building surrounded by walled courtyards where the Israelites came to pray and to offer sacrifices to God. It was located on Mount Moriah in the city of Jerusalem.

- Often the term “temple” referred to the whole temple complex, including the courtyards that surrounded the main building. Sometimes it referred only to the building.
- The temple building had two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
- God referred to the temple as his dwelling place.
- King Solomon built the Temple during his reign. It was supposed to be the permanent place of worship in Jerusalem.
- In the New Testament, the term “temple of the Holy Spirit” is used to refer to believers in Jesus as a group, because the Holy Spirit lives in them.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Usually when the text says that people were “in the temple,” it is referring to the courtyards outside the building. This could be translated as “in the temple courtyards” or “in the temple complex.”
- Where it refers specifically to the building itself, some translations translate “temple” as “temple building,” to make it the reference clear.
- Ways to translate “temple” could include, “God’s holy house” or “sacred worship place.”
- Often in the Bible, the temple is referred to as “the house of Yahweh” or “the house of God.”

(See also: [sacrifice](#), Solomon, Babylon, Holy Spirit, tabernacle, courtyard, Zion, house)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 03:1-3](#)
- [Acts 03:7-8](#)
- Ezekiel 45:18-20
- [Luke 19:45-46](#)
- Nehemiah 10:28-29
- Psalm 079:1-3

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:06** David wanted to build a **temple** where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- **18:02** In Jerusalem, Solomon built the **Temple** for which his father David had planned and gathered materials. Instead of at the Tent of Meeting, people now worshiped God and offered

sacrifices to him at the **Temple**. God came and was present in the **Temple**, and he lived there with his people.

- **20:07** They (Babylonians) captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the **Temple**, and took away all the treasures.
- **20:13** When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they rebuilt the **Temple** and the wall around the city of the city and the **Temple**.
- **25:04** Then Satan took Jesus to the highest point on the **Temple** and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘God will command his angels to carry you so your foot does not hit a stone.’”
- **40:07** When he died, there was an earthquake and the large curtain that separated the people from the presence of God in the **Temple** was torn in two, from the top to the bottom.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1004, H1964, H1965, H7541, G1493, G2411, G3485

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)
- [Jonah 2:7-8](#)

## throne, thrones, enthroned

### Definition:

A throne is a specially-designed chair where a ruler sits when he decides important matters and listens to requests from his people.

- A throne is also a symbol of the authority and power that a ruler has.
- The word “throne” is often used figuratively to refer to the ruler, his reign, or his power. (See: [metonymy](#))
- In the Bible, God was often portrayed as a king who sits on his throne. Jesus was described as sitting on a throne at the right hand of God the Father.
- Jesus said that heaven is God’s throne. One way to translate this could be, “where God reigns as king.”

(See also: [authority](#), power, [king](#), reign)

### Bible References:

- [Colossians 01:15-17](#)
- [Genesis 41:39-41](#)
- [Luke 01:30-33](#)
- [Luke 22:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 05:33-35](#)
- [Matthew 19:28](#)
- [Revelation 01:4-6](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3427, H3676, H3678, H3764, H7675, G968, G2362

### Uses:

- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)

**vow, vows, vowed****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."
- A vow is a special kind of oath that is made to God.

(See also: promise, oath)

**Bible References:**

- [1 Corinthians 07:27-28](#)
- [Acts 21:22-24](#)
- Genesis 28:20-22
- Genesis 31:12-13
- [Jonah 01:14-16](#)
- [Jonah 02:9-10](#)
- Proverbs 07:13-15

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5087, H5088, G2171

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)
- [Jonah 2:9-10](#)



## **will of God**

### **Definition:**

The “will of God” refers to God’s desires and plans.

- God’s will especially relates to his interactions with people and how he wants people to respond to him.
- It also refers to his plans or desires for the rest of his creation.
- The term to “will” means to “determine” or to “desire.”

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- The “will of God” could also be translated as “what God desires” or “what God has planned” or “God’s purpose” or “what is pleasing to God.”

### **Bible References:**

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 04:3-6](#)
- [Colossians 04:12-14](#)
- [Ephesians 01:1-2](#)
- [John 05:30-32](#)
- [Mark 03:33-35](#)
- [Matthew 06:8-10](#)
- [Psalms 103:20-22](#)

### **Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H6310, H6634, H7522, G1012, G1013, G2307, G2308, G2309, G2596

### **Uses:**

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)

## **word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture, scriptures**

### **Definition:**

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term “word of truth” is another way of referring to “God’s word,” which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God’s word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”
- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.
- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”
- “Word of truth” could be translated as “God’s true message” or “God’s word, which is true.”
- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: [prophet](#), true, word, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- Genesis 15:1-3
- 1 Kings 13:1-3
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 08:11-13
- John 05:39-40
- Acts 06:2-4
- Acts 12:24-25
- Romans 01:1-3
- 2 Corinthians 06:4-7
- Ephesians 01:13-14
- 2 Timothy 03:16-17
- James 01:17-18
- James 02:8-9

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:07** In **God's word** he commands his people, 'Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.'
- **33:06** So Jesus explained, 'The seed is the **word of God**.'
- **42:03** Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:07** Jesus said, 'I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word**.
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H561, H565, H1697, H3068, G3056, G4487

### Uses:

- Jonah 1:1-3
- Jonah 3:1-3

## 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 translates 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.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.
- By adding the pronoun “I” or “me,” the ULB indicates to the reader that God is the speaker.

### 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.
- It is best if possible to keep the name Yahweh where it literally occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places, to make the text more natural and clear.
- Introduce the quote with something like, “This is what Yahweh says.”

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

(See also: [God](#), lord, Lord, Moses, reveal)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 21:19-20
- 1 Samuel 16:6-7
- Daniel 09:3-4
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 02:4-6
- Genesis 04:3-5
- Genesis 28:12-13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:3-4
- Isaiah 38:7-8
- Job 12:9-10
- Joshua 01:8-9
- Lamentations 01:4-5
- Leviticus 25:35-38
- Malachi 03:4-5
- Micah 02:3-5
- Micah 06:3-5
- Numbers 08:9-11
- Psalm 124:1-3
- Ruth 01:19-21
- Zechariah 14:5

**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."

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

**Uses:**

- **Jonah 1:1-3**

- *Jonah 1:4-5*
- *Jonah 1:8-10*
- *Jonah 1:14-16*
- *Jonah 1:17*
- *Jonah 2:1-2*
- *Jonah 2:5-6*
- *Jonah 2:7-8*
- *Jonah 2:9-10*
- *Jonah 4:1-3*
- *Jonah 4:4-5*
- *Jonah 4:10-11*

## translationAcademy

### Abstract Nouns

This page answers the question: *What are abstract nouns and how do I deal with them in my translation?*

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even to relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, injury, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it. For example, "What is its weight?" could be expressed as "How much does it weigh?" or "How heavy is it?"

#### Description

Remember that nouns are words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea. **Abstract Nouns** are the nouns that refer to ideas. These can be attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even relationships among these ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, and weight.

Using abstract nouns allows people to express thoughts about ideas in fewer words than if they did not have those nouns. It is a way of giving names to actions or qualities so that people can talk about them as though they were things. It is like a short-cut in language. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." But if the language did not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," then they would have to make a longer sentence to express the same meaning. They would have to say, for example, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned," using verb phrases instead of nouns for those ideas.

#### Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas; instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will use other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs to express the meaning of the abstract noun.

#### Examples from the Bible

*...from childhood you have known the sacred writings ...* (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)

The abstract noun "childhood" refers to when someone is a child.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)

The abstract nouns “godliness” and “contentment” refer to being godly and content. The abstract noun “gain” refers to something that benefits or helps someone.

Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “salvation” here refers to being saved.

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider slowness to be (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)

The abstract noun “slowness” refers how slowly something is done.

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)

The abstract noun “purposes” refers to the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

### Translation Strategies

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

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun..

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun.
  - **... from childhood you have known the sacred writings ...** (2 Timothy 3:15 ULB)
    - Ever since you were a child you have known the sacred writings.
  - **But godliness with contentment is great gain.** (1 Timothy 6:6 ULB)
    - But being godly and content is very beneficial.
    - But we benefit greatly when we are godly and content.
    - But we benefit greatly when we honor and obey God and when we are happy with what we have.
  - **Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.** (Luke 19:9 ULB)
    - Today the people in this house have been saved...
    - Today God has saved the people in this house...
  - **The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider slowness to be.** (2 Peter 3:9 ULB)



- The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider moving slowly to be.
- **He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart.** (1 Corinthians 4:5 ULB)
  - He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:9-10](#)

## Active or Passive

This page answers the question: *What do active and passive mean, and how do I translate passive sentences?*

Some languages have both active and passive sentences. In active sentences, the subject does the action. In passive sentences, the subject is the one that receives the action. Here are some examples with their subjects underlined:

- **ACTIVE:** My father built the house in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built in 2010.

Translators whose languages do not have passive sentences will need to know how they can translate passive sentences that they find in the Bible. Other translators will need to decide when to use a passive sentence and when to use the active form.

### Description

Some languages have both active and passive forms of sentences.

- In the **ACTIVE** form, the subject does the action and is always mentioned.
- In the **PASSIVE** form, the action is done to the subject, and the one who does the action is *not always* mentioned.

In the examples of active and passive sentences below, we have underlined the subject.

- **ACTIVE:** My father built the house in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built by my father in 2010.
- **PASSIVE:** The house was built in 2010. (This does not tell who did the action.)

### Reasons this is a translation issue

All languages have active forms. Some languages have passive forms, and some do not. The passive form is not used for the same purposes in all of the languages that have it.

### Purposes for the passive

- The speaker is talking about the person or thing the action was done to, not about the person who did the action.
- The speaker does not want to tell who did the action.
- The speaker does not know who did the action.

### Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

- Translators whose language does not use passive forms will need to find another way to express the idea.

- Translators whose language has passive forms will need to understand why the passive is used in a particular sentence in the Bible and decide whether or not to use a passive form for that purpose in his translation of the sentence.

### Examples from the Bible

And their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed, and your servant Uriah the Hittite was killed too. (2 Samuel 11:24 ULB)

This means that the enemy's shooters shot and killed some of the king's servants, including Uriah. The point is what happened to the king's servants and Uriah, not who shot them. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on the king's servants and Uriah.

In the morning when the men of the town got up, the altar of Baal was broken down ... (Judges 6:28 ULB)

The men of the town saw what had happened to the altar of Baal, but they did not know who broke it down. The purpose of the passive form here is to communicate this event from the perspective of the men of the town.

It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea (Luke 17:2 ULB)

This describes a situation in which a person ends up in the sea with a millstone around his neck. The purpose of the passive form here is to keep the focus on what happens to this person. Who does these things to the person is not important.

### Translation Strategies

If you decide that it is better to translate without a passive form, here are some strategies you might consider.

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who or what did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.
2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who or what did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."
3. Use a different verb.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the same verb in an active sentence and tell who did the action. If you do this, try to keep the focus on the person receiving the action.

- **A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)

- The king's servants gave Jeremiah a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.
2. Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like “they” or “people” or “someone.”
- **It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.** (Luke 17:2 ULB)
    - It would be better for him if they were to put a millstone around his neck and throw him into the sea.
    - It would be better for him if someone were to put a heavy stone around his neck and throw him into the sea.
3. Use a different verb in an active sentence.
- **A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers.** (Jeremiah 37:21 ULB)
    - He received a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)

## Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

This page answers the question: *How can I be sure that my translation communicates the assumed knowledge and implicit information along with the explicit information of the original message?*

- **Assumed knowledge** is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker gives the audience information in two ways:
- **Explicit information** is what the speaker states directly.
- **Implicit information** is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from what he says.

### Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know or do or think about. He normally states this directly. This is **explicit information**.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will need to think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, because they already know them. This is called **assumed knowledge**.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly is **implicit information**.

Often, the audience understands this **implicit information** by combining what they already know (**assumed knowledge**) with the **explicit information** that the speaker tells them directly.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

All three kinds of information are part of the speaker's message. If one of these kinds of information is missing, then the audience will not understand the message. Because the target translation is in a language that is very different than the biblical languages and made for an audience that lives in a very different time and place than the people in the Bible, many times the **assumed knowledge** or the **implicit information** is missing from the message. In other words, modern readers do not know everything that the original speakers and hearers in the Bible knew. When these things are important for understanding the message, you can include this information in the text or in a footnote.

### Examples from the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULB)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**.

Jesus did not directly say here “I am the Son of Man” but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Also, Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. (Matthew 11:21, 22 ULB)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the people he was talking to believed that they were good and did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that because the people he was speaking to did not repent, they would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat. (Matthew 15:2 ULB)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. By saying this, they were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions, and thus not being righteous. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

### Translation Strategies

If readers have enough assumed knowledge to be able to understand the message, along with any important implicit information that goes with the explicit information, then it is good to leave that knowledge unstated and leave the implicit information implicit. If the readers do not understand the message because one of these is missing for them, then follow these strategies:

1. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
2. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.

- **Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:20 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.
  - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes to live in, and the birds of the sky have nests to live in, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."
- **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.
  - ... it will be more tolerable for those cities Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked, at the day of judgment than for you
    - ◇ Or:
  - ... it will be more tolerable for those wicked cities Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you
- **Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.** (Matthew 15:2 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.
  - Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness when they eat.

2. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

- **Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:19, 20 ULB) - Implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, he would have to live like Jesus without a house.
  - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live."
- **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.
  - At the day of judgment, God will punish Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked, less severely than he will punish you

- At the day of judgment, God will punish you more severely than Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked.

Modern readers may not know some of the things that the people in the Bible and the people who first read it knew. This can make it hard for them to understand what a speaker or writer says, and to learn things that the speaker left implicit. Translators may need to state some things explicitly in the translation that the original speaker or writer left unstated or implicit.### Uses:

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 1:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 1:11-13](#)
- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)
- [Jonah 3:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 3:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 3:10](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)



## Background Information

This page answers the question: *What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?*

### Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called **background information**. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

**Example** - The underlined sentences in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because their village was going to have a a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day! They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope they had brought with them, and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a feast the next day" and "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," "that they had brought with them," and "Peter had mistakenly killed his cousins's pig."

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were", rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "Peter was the best hunter in the village" and "it was his own pig."

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are "because," "once," and "had."

### A writer may use background information

- To help their listeners be interested in the story
- To help their listeners understand something in the story
- To help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- To tell the setting of a story
- Setting includes:
  - where the story takes place
  - when the story takes place
  - who is present when the story begins
  - what is happening when the story begins

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- Translators need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- Translators will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that their own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

### Examples from the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULB)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

Now Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULB)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story starts up again in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Now it happened on a Sabbath that Jesus was going through the grain fields and his disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating the grain. But some of the Pharisees said... (Luke 6:1-2a ULB)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the sentence, "But some of the Pharisees said."

### Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study how people tell stories in your language. Observe how your language marks background information. You may need to write down some stories in order to study this. Observe what kind of verbs your language uses for background information and what kinds of words or other markers signal that something is background information. Do these same things when you translate, so that your translation is clear and natural and people can understand it easily.

1. Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.
2. Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULB English translations.

- **Now Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli.** (Luke 3:23 ULB) English uses the word "now" to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb "was" shows that it is background information.
- **With many other exhortations also, he preached good news to the people. John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch for marrying his brother's wife, Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.** (Luke 3:18-20 ULB) The underlined phrases happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb "had" in "had done" shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first.

- **Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.** (Genesis 16:16 ULB)
  - "When Abram was eighty-six years old, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael."
- **John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch for marrying his brother's wife, Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.** (Luke 3:18-20) - The translation below reorders John's rebuke and Herod's actions.
  - "Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, Herodias, and he did many other evil things, so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison."

#### Uses:

- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)

## Doublet

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

### Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or very short phrases that mean the same thing or very close to the same thing and that are used together. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Often they are used to emphasize or intensify the idea expressed by the two words.

### Reason this is a translation issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. In either case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

### Examples from the Bible

King David was old and advanced in years. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

The underlined words mean the same thing. Together they mean that he was “very old.”

... he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself ... (1 Kings 2:32 ULB)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

This means that they had prepared “many false things to say.”

... as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any blemish—not even one.

### Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using one. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

**Translation Strategies Applied**

1. Translate only one of the words.
  - **You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words** (Daniel 2:9 ULB)
    - "You have decided to prepare false things to say."
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."
  - **King David was old and advanced in years.** (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)
    - "King David was very old."
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.
  - **... a lamb without blemish and without spot...** (1 Peter 1:19 ULB) - English can emphasize this with "any" and "at all."
    - " ... a lamb without any blemish at all ..."

**Uses:**

- **Jonah 2:3-4**

## How to Translate Names

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

### Description

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.

### Meaning of names

Most 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 7:1 ULB)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

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, because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

### 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. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- 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 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 instead of copying the name.
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 tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
5. Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

### 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 instead of copying 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 Living 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 tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given 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<sup>1</sup> The footnote would look like:
      - ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>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)
    - 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 gives the other name. 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 The footnote would look like:



- ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.
- **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
  - 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** (Acts 14:1 ULB)
  - It came about in Iconium that Paul<sup>1</sup> and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue The footnote would look like:
    - ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>This is the man that was called Saul before Acts 13.

**Uses:**

- [Introduction to Jonah](#)
- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)

## Idiom

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. 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 who use it. Its meaning is different than 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 phrase “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. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

### 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 produced 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.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

### 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 children of Israel went out with a high hand. (Exodus 14:8 ASV)

This means, "The Israelites went out defiantly."

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 6:7 ULB)
    - I am crying my eyes out

### Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)

- Jonah 1:1-3
- Jonah 1:6-7
- Jonah 1:6-7
- Jonah 3:1-3
- Jonah 3:1-3
- Jonah 3:1-3
- Jonah 3:1-3

## **Irony**

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

### **Description**

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

Jesus answered them, "People who are in good health do not need a physician, only people who are sick need one. I did not come to call righteous people to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31-32 ULB)

When Jesus spoke of "righteous people," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

### **Reason this is a translation issue**

- If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

### **Examples from the Bible**

How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9 ULB)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. "Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled." (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?  
 Can you find the way back to their houses for them?  
 Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;  
 "the number of your days is so large!" (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two underlined phrases above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you have all you could want! Already you have become rich! You began to reign—and that quite apart from us! (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULB)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

### Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

1. Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
2. Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. The actual meaning of the irony is not found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

- **How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!** (Mark 7:9 ULB)
  - You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!
  - You act like it is good to reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!
- **I did not come to call righteous people to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.** (Luke 5:32 ULB)
  - I did not come to call people who think that they are righteous to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.

2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

- **How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!** (Mark 7:9 ULB)

- You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!
- **“Present your case,” says Yahweh; “present your best arguments for your idols,” says the King of Jacob. “Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.” (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)**
  - ‘Present your case,’ says Yahweh; ‘present your best arguments for your idols,’ says the King of Jacob. Your idols cannot bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen so we may know these things well. We cannot hear them because they cannot speak to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.
- **Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?**

**Can you find the way back to their houses for them?**

**Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;  
the number of your days is so large!” (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)**

- Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 01 General Notes](#)

## Metaphor

This page answers the question: *What is a metaphor and how can I translate a sentence that has one?*

### Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one concept (the “image”) stands for another concept (the “topic”). That is, the topic is spoken of as if it were the image. For example, someone might say,

- The girl I love is a red rose.

Here the topic is “the girl I love,” and the image is “a red rose.” The girl is spoken of as if she were a red rose.

Anything in a language can serve as a metaphor. For example, verb forms can be used in unusual ways, as in,

- The Apostle Paul tells us that Christians will rise to life again.

In this case, the English present tense form “tells” is a metaphor for the past tense form “told,” because the Apostle Paul lived long ago.

Sometimes speakers use metaphors that are very common in their language. However, sometimes speakers use metaphors that are uncommon, and even some metaphors that are unique.

Speakers most often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

### Kinds of Metaphors

There are several kinds of metaphors: “live” metaphors, “dead” metaphors, and patterned metaphors.

#### Live Metaphors

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept. People also easily recognize them as giving strength and unusual qualities to the message. For this reason, people pay attention to these metaphors. 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 in order to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. He also 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.



Here is another example: Jesus said, ‘Go and tell that fox...,’ where “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was referring to Herod either as a very evil, cunning person or as a king who was only pretending to be great.

### Dead Metaphors

A dead metaphor is a metaphor that has been used so much in the language that its speakers no longer regard it as one concept standing for another. Examples in English are “table leg,” “family tree,” “leaf” meaning a page in a book, and “crane” meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads. English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples in Biblical Hebrew are probably “heal” meaning “repair,” and “sick” meaning “spiritually powerless because of sin.”

### Patterned Pairs of Concepts acting as Metaphors

Many ways of metaphorical speaking depend on pairs of concepts, where one underlying concept frequently stands for a different underlying concept. For example, in English, the direction UP often stands for the concept of MORE. Because of this pair of underlying concepts, we can make sentences such as “The price of gasoline is going *up*,” “A *highly* intelligent man,” and also the opposite kind of idea: “The heat is going *down*,” and “The stock market *took a tumble*.”

Patterned pairs of concepts are constantly used for metaphorical purposes in the world’s languages, because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, people like to speak of abstract qualities, such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities, as if they were objects that could be seen or held, as if they were body parts, or as if they were events that could be watched as they happened.

When these metaphors are used in normal ways, it is rare that the speaker and audience regard them as figurative speech. Examples of metaphors in English that go unrecognized are:

- “Turn the heat *up*.” MORE is spoken of as UP.
- “Let us *go ahead* with our debate.” DOING WHAT WAS PLANNED is spoken of as WALKING or ADVANCING.
- “You *defend* your theory well.” ARGUMENT is spoken of as WAR.
- “A *flow* of words” WORDS are spoken of as LIQUIDS.

English speakers do not view them as unusual expressions, so it would be wrong to translate them into other languages in a way that would lead people to pay special attention to them as figurative speech.

For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor in biblical languages, please see [Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns](#) and the pages it will direct you to.

### Parts of a Metaphor

When talking about metaphors, it can be helpful to talk about their parts. A metaphor has three parts.

1. **Topic** - The thing someone speaks of is called the topic.

2. **Image** - The thing he calls it is the image.
3. **Points of Comparison** - The ways in which the author claims that the topic and image are similar in some manner are their points of comparison.

In the metaphor below, the speaker describes the woman he loves as a red rose. The woman (his “love”) is the **topic**, and “red rose” is the **image**. Beauty and delicacy are the points of comparison that the speaker sees as similarities between both the topic and image. Note, however, that a rose’s beauty is not identical to a woman’s beauty. Neither are the two kinds of delicacy the same. So these points of comparison are not built upon identical characteristics, but rather upon characteristics that are seen by the writer as similar in some way.

- My love is a red, red rose.

Often, as in the metaphor above, the speaker explicitly states the **topic** and the **image**, but he does not state the points of comparison. The speaker leaves it to the hearer to think of those points of comparison. Because the hearers must do that, the speaker’s message tends to be more powerful.

Also in the Bible, normally the **topic** and the **image** are stated clearly, but not the points of comparison. The writer hopes that the audience will understand the points of comparison that are implied.

Jesus said to them. “I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” (John 6:35 ULB)

In this metaphor, 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. The point of comparison between bread and Jesus is that people needed bread every day for nourishment. In a similar way, people need Jesus every day in order to live spiritually.

Note that this metaphor is really several metaphors. The first metaphor is that bread is used to represent Jesus. The second metaphor, which is inside the first one, is that physical life represents the spiritual life, which consists of living with God forever. The third metaphor is that eating bread represents benefitting from Jesus, who enables us to live with God forever.

### Purposes 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 do 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 about the other.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not recognize that something is a metaphor. In other words, they may mistake a metaphor for a literal statement, and thus misunderstand it.

- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image, and so not be able to understand the metaphor.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know the points of comparison that the speaker is thinking of and wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.

### 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 you think it was to the original audience.

### Examples from the Bible

Listen to this word, you cows of Bashan, (Amos 4:1 ULB)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria (the topic is “you”) with as if they were cows (the image). Amos does not say what points of comparison between these women and the cows he has in mind, but from the context it seems that he means that both the women and the cows are fat and interested only in eating.

Note, however, that Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows, for he speaks to them as human beings.

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 related metaphors. The topics are “we” and “you,” and the images are “clay and ”potter.” The intended point of comparison between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish: the potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people Israel. The point of comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that both the clay and the people of Israel are made into something different from what they were before.

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 here, 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, and the topic was the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples (the original audience) 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 probably understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language. (See Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns for lists of some of these patterned pairs of concepts.)
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
3. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.” See Simile.
4. If the target audience would not know the image, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
5. 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.
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 will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and topic, then state them clearly.
8. If none of these strategies is satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.
  - **Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, fell at his feet.** (Mark 5:22 ULB)
    - Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, immediately bowed down in front of him.
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
  - **It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,** (Mark 10:5 ULB)
    - It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,

There is no change to this one - but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

1. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “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.
2. 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.
3. 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.”
4. 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.
5. If the target audience will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and the topic, then state them 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 he is the rock under which I can hide 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.
6. If none of these strategies are satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

- **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.

*To learn more about specific metaphors read:*

- Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:14-16](#)
- [Jonah 02 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 2:1-2](#)
- [Jonah 2:5-6](#)
- [Jonah 2:5-6](#)
- [Jonah 2:7-8](#)
- [Jonah 3:10](#)
- [Jonah 3:10](#)

## Metonymy

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

### 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

- to a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a physical object associated with it

### Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible uses metonymy very often. Speakers of some languages are not used to metonymy and they may not recognize it when they read it in the Bible. If they do not recognize the metonymy, they will not understand the passage or, worse yet, they will get a wrong understanding of the passage. Whenever 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 that would 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 are some options.

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
2. Use only 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, see *Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies*.

## Uses:

- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 3:1-3](#)



## Numbers

This page answers the question: *How do I translate numbers?*

### Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words, such as “five” or as numerals, such as “5.” Some numbers are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), “twenty-two thousand” (22,000), or “one hundred million” (100,000,000.) Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULB)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

That day about three thousand men out of the people died. (Exodus 32:28 ULB)

Here the number three thousand is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word “about” shows that it is not an exact number.

**Reason this is a translation issue:** Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

### Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

### Examples from the Bible

When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived 962 years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULB)

The numbers 162, eight hundred, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands (Genesis 24:60 ULB)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

## Translation Strategies

1. Write numbers using numerals.
2. Write numbers using your language's words or the gateway language words for those numbers.
3. Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.
4. Combine words for large numbers.
5. Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house 100,000 talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14 ULB)

1. Write numbers using numerals.
  - I have prepared for Yahweh's house 100,000 talents of gold, 1,000,000 talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.
2. Write numbers using your language's words or the gateway language words for those numbers.
  - I have prepared for Yahweh's house one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.
3. Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.
  - I have prepared for Yahweh's house one hundred thousand (100,000) talents of gold, one million (1,000,000) talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.
4. Combine words for large numbers.
  - I have prepared for Yahweh's house one hundred thousand talents of gold, a thousand thousand talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.
5. Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.
  - I have prepared for Yahweh's house a great amount of gold (100,000 talents), ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents), and bronze and iron in large quantities.

## Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

### **Consistency in the ULB and UDB**

The *Unlocked Literal Bible* (ULB) and the *Unlocked Dynamic Bible* (UDB) use words for numbers that have only one or two words (nine, sixteen, three hundred). They use numerals for numbers that have more than two words (the numerals “130” instead of “one hundred thirty”).

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

- [Jonah 3:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)

## Parallelism

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

### 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. This is also called synonymous parallelism.
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, but adds to the same idea.

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.

Synonymous parallelism (the kind in which the two phrases mean the same thing) in the poetry of the original languages has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and above the ordinary way of speaking.

### Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it is confusing, rather than beautiful.

Note: We use the term “synonymous parallelism” for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term **Doublet** for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

### Examples from the Bible

#### The second clause or phrase means the same as the first.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULB)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live.

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.

**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.

**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.

**The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.**

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

For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases. For synonymous parallelism, it is good to translate both clauses if people in your language understand that the purpose of saying something twice is to strengthen a single idea. But if your language does not use parallelism in this way, then consider using one of the following translation strategies.

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
  - **Until now you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13, ULB) - Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.
    - “Until now you have deceived me with your lies.”

- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB) - The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”
    - “Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.”
  - **For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel.** (Micah 6:2 ULB) - This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:
    - “For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.”
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
    - “Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”
- **you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13 ULB)
    - “All you have done is lie to me.”
  - **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
    - “Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.”

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)

## Rhetorical Question

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. 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 surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

### Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all, but if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?" (Acts 23:4 ULB)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking about his way of insulting God's high priest. Rather they used this question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. Some of the purposes of these rhetorical questions are to express attitudes or feelings, to rebuke people, to teach something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, and to introduce something they want to talk about.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are more limited or different than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

### 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. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. 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 had the power 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 young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her 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 deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses 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. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

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 that 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**

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, is the one who asked it bothered that he did not get an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that 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?



When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

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.
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

### 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, do you not?
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

- **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)
  - If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, would you give him a stone?
- **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
  - What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 1:6-7](#)
- [Jonah 1:8-10](#)
- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)
- [Jonah 3:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 04 General Notes](#)
- [Jonah 4:1-3](#)
- [Jonah 4:4-5](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)
- [Jonah 4:10-11](#)

## Synecdoche

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

### 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,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, 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 arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments.

### 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

**Uses:**

- [Jonah 2:3-4](#)
- [Jonah 4:8-9](#)