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Introduction to Ruth

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ruth

1. How Ruth came to Bethlehem with Naomi (1:1–22)
2. Boaz helps Ruth as she gleans (2:1–23)
3. Boaz and Ruth at the threshing floor (3:1–18)
4. How Ruth became the wife of Boaz (4:1–16)
5. Obed born to Ruth and Boaz; the genealogy of David (4:13–22)

What is the Book of Ruth about?

This book is about a non-Israelite woman named Ruth. It tells how she came to join the people of Yahweh. The book also explains how Ruth became an ancestor of King David.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title Ruth because she is the main person in it. Translators can use a title such as The Book about Ruth. (See: How to Translate Names)

When did the events in the Book of Ruth occur?

The story of Ruth is set during the time when there were judges in Israel. This was after the people of Israel had entered into the land of Canaan, but before they had a king. The “judges” were men and women whom God chose to help the Israelites defeat their enemies. These leaders usually continued to help the people by deciding disputes among them. They also helped them make important decisions. Many of these leaders served all the people of Israel, but some of them may have served only certain tribes.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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

In a period when Israel was often unfaithful to Yahweh, a woman from Moab shows great faith in him. The Israelites’ frequent lack of faith in Yahweh is contrasted with the faith of this woman from a foreign land. (See: faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness, trustworthy)

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

Israelites practiced what is called levirate marriage. In this custom, the closest male relative of a man who died without any children was obligated to provide for his widow by marrying her. Usually this would be one of the man’s brothers. Any children born to them were to be regarded as children of the dead man. They did this so that the dead man would have descendants. If the closest relative did not marry the woman, another relative could fulfill this obligation.

What was a kinsman-redeemer?

A person’s close relative or relatives were expected to act as kinsmen-redeemers (2:20 ULT) for him or her. They were responsible to provide for a relative in need, fulfil obligations of levirate marriage, and buy back land into the family that had been sold to someone outside of the family. In the Book of Ruth, Boaz is one such kinsman-redeemer.
What was gleaning in the Book of Ruth?

In Israel, poor people were allowed to follow after the men who harvested a field. These gleaners picked up stalks of grain that the harvesters missed or dropped. In this way, poor people were able to find some food. Ruth became a gleaner in a field belonging to Boaz.

What is covenant faithfulness or covenant loyalty?

A covenant is a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill. Covenant faithfulness or covenant loyalty is when a person does what they said they would do, according to the covenant that they had made. God made a covenant with Israel, in which he promised that he would love and be faithful to the Israelites. The Israelites were to do the same toward him and toward each other.

The Book of Ruth shows that what kinsmen-redeemers do for their relatives is part of Israel's duties in God's covenant with them. The story of Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi gives examples to all of Israel of the good effects of covenant faithfulness. (See: covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love)

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

City gates in the time of Boaz were meeting places for the city elders. Elders were honored men who decided business matters and legal matters together. The city walls were thick, especially at the entryways, and the gates had guard towers beside and above them. Therefore the gateway opening provided a large shady area for public meetings, and there were places for important people to sit. For this reason, Boaz and the other elders sat in the gateway.

Some English Bible versions speak of Boaz sitting at the city gate, but it may be best for translators to make clear that Boaz sat in the city gateway.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the Book of Ruth change from one topic to another topic?

The Book of Ruth often changes to new topics or new parts of the story. The ULT uses various words to indicate these changes, such as so, then, and now. Translators should use the ways most natural in their own languages to signal these changes.
Ruth 1

Ruth 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

It happened in the days when the judges ruled

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

Special concepts in this chapter

Women without a husband or children

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

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Contrast

The actions of Ruth the Moabite are intended to contrast with the actions of Naomi the Jew. Ruth shows great faith in Naomi's God, while Naomi does not trust in Yahweh. (See: faith and trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)
Ruth 1:1

Now it happened (ULT)
During the time that (UST)

It was or This is what happened. This is a common way of beginning a historical story. (See: Introduction of a New Event)

in the days of the ruling of the judges (ULT)
During the time that...judges ruled (UST)

during the time when judges led and governed Israel (See: Connect - Simultaneous Time Relationship)

in the land (ULT)
Israel...in that country (UST)

This refers to the land of Israel. Alternate translation: “in the land of Israel” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

a certain man (ULT)
A man (UST)

a man. This is a common way of introducing a character into a story. (See: Introduction of New and Old Participants)

Translation Words - ULT

• his...sons
• the judges
• Moab
• Judah
• from Bethlehem of
• a famine

Translation Words - UST

• his...sons
• judges
• Moab
• in the region of Judah in the country of Israel
• from the town of Bethlehem
• a famine

1 Now it happened in the days of the ruling of the judges that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man from Bethlehem of Judah went to live in the fields of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.

1 During the time that judges ruled Israel, there was a famine in that country. A man from the town of Bethlehem in the region of Judah in the country of Israel left there and went to live for a while in the country of Moab. His wife and his two sons went with him.
Ruth 1:2

All of them were Ephrathites from Bethlehem of Judah (ULT)
They were part of the clan of Ephrathah, from Bethlehem, in Judah (UST)

The name Ephrathites refers to the people from the clan of Ephrathah, who lived in the area around Bethlehem. Alternate translation: “from the clan of Ephrathah, from Bethlehem, in Judah.”

Translation Words - ULT

- his...sons
- And the name of...was
- and the name of...was
- and the names of...were
- Moab
- Judah
- All of them were Ephrathites
- from Bethlehem of

Translation Words - UST

- his...sons
- s name
- and...s name
- The names of...were
- Moab
- in Judah
- They were part of the clan of Ephrathah
- from Bethlehem

ULT
2 And the name of the man was Elimelek, and the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. All of them were Ephrathites from Bethlehem of Judah. So they traveled to the fields of Moab and lived there.

UST
2 The man’s name was Elimelek and his wife’s name was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were part of the clan of Ephrathah, from Bethlehem, in Judah. They came to the land of Moab and stayed there.
Ruth 1:3

her and her two sons (ULT)
Naomi...only her two sons (UST)

*Naomi had only her two sons remaining with her*

Translation Words - ULT

* her...sons
  *Then...died

Translation Words - UST

* her...sons
  *Then...died

ULT

3 Then Elimelek, the husband of Naomi, **died**. And she was left, her and **her** two **sons**.

UST

3 Then Naomi's husband, Elimelek, **died**, and Naomi had only **her** two **sons** with her.
Ruth 1:4

And they took wives for themselves (ULT)
The sons married women (UST)

*married women*. This is an idiom for marrying women. They did not take women who were already married. (See: Idiom)

from the women of Moab (ULT)
from Moab (UST)

Naomi's sons married women who were from the tribe of Moab. The Moabites worshiped other gods.

the name of the first woman was...and the name of the second woman was

*the name of one woman was...the name of the other woman was*

for about ten years (ULT)
for about ten years (UST)

About ten years after Elimelek and Naomi came to the country of Moab, their sons Mahlon and Kilion died.

Translation Words - ULT

• the name of...was
• and the name of...was
• Ruth
• from the women of Moab

Translation Words - UST

• name of
• and the name of
• was Ruth
• from Moab
Ruth 1:5

and the woman was left without her two children or her husband (ULT)
So then Naomi was alone without her sons or husband (UST)

Naomi was widowed and both her sons died.

Translation Words - ULT
  • And...died

Translation Words - UST
  • died
Ruth 1:6

and her daughters-in-law (ULT) 
with her two daughters-in-law (UST) 

the women who married Naomi's sons 

she had heard in a field of Moab (ULT) 
One day while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone say (UST) 

she had heard while still in the country of Moab. It is implied that the news came from Israel. Alternate translation: “she had heard from someone who came from Israel while she was in the region of Moab” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information) 

Yahweh (ULT) 
Yahweh (UST) 

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. 

had visited...his people (ULT) 
had helped...his people (UST) 

God saw their need and provided good harvests for them. Alternate translation: “had helped the Israelites” 

giving them bread (ULT) 
and that now there was plenty of food in Israel (UST) 

Bread here refers to food in general. Alternate translation: “giving them abundant harvests, so that they had plenty of food.” (See: Synecdoche) 

Translation Words - ULT 

- his people 
- Yahweh 
- Moab 
- bread 

Translation Words - UST 

- his people 
- Yahweh 
- to Bethlehem 
- One day while Naomi was in Moab 
- plenty of food
Ruth 1:7

And they traveled down the road (ULT)
and started to travel (UST)

and they walked along the road. To walk down a road means to travel along it by foot.

Translation Words - ULT
  • Judah

Translation Words - UST
  • Judah

ULT
7 So she went out from the place where she had been living, and her two daughters-in-law were with her. And they traveled down the road to return to the land of Judah.

UST
7 They left the place where they had been living and started to travel back to the land of Judah.
Ruth 1:8

to her two daughters-in-law (ULT)
to her two daughters-in-law (UST)

her two sons' wives or the widows of her two sons

each woman (ULT)
Each of you (UST)

Naomi was talking to two people, so languages that have a dual form of you would use that throughout her talk. (See: Forms of You)

to the house of her mother (ULT)
to your mother's home (UST)

to the home of each of your mothers

in covenant faithfulness (ULT)
faithful (UST)

covenant faithfulness is what someone does who is fulfilling all of his obligations and loyalties to another person. See the discussion in the introduction.

with the dead (ULT)
to our dead husbands (UST)

to your husbands, who died. Naomi was referring to her two sons that had died. (See: Idiom)

the dead (ULT)
to our dead husbands (UST)

your husbands, who died (See: Nominal Adjectives)

Translation Words - ULT

• in covenant faithfulness
• Yahweh
• the dead
• to the house of

Translation Words - UST

• faithful
• Yahweh
• to our dead husbands
• to...s home
Ruth 1:9

May Yahweh grant to you that you shall find (ULT)  
I am asking Yahweh to allow...of you to have (UST)

May Yahweh give you or May Yahweh allow you to have

that you shall find rest (ULT)  
to have...secure (UST)

Rest here does not refer to sitting down to rest. It means a place where these women would belong, a home for them, which would include the security that comes through marriage. (See: Metaphor)

in the house of her husband (ULT)  
another husband with whom you will have a...home (UST)

This means with new husbands, not with their previous husbands who died or with someone else's husband.  
House refers to both a physical house that belongs to the husband, and to the protection from shame and poverty that a husband provides. (See: Metonymy)

and they lifted up their voices and cried (ULT)  
and they cried aloud (UST)

To raise the voice is an idiom for speaking loudly. The daughters cried out loud or wept bitterly. (See: Idiom)

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- rest
- in the house of

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- secure
- with...you will have a...home
Ruth 1:10

we will return (ULT)
We will return (UST)

When Orpah and Ruth said we, they were referring to themselves and not Naomi. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive we would use the exclusive form here. (See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We')

with you (ULT)
with you (UST)

Here you is the singular form referring to Naomi. (See: Forms of You)

Translation Words - ULT
  • to your people

Translation Words - UST
  • to your relatives

ULT
10 But they said to her, “Rather, we will return with you to your people.”

UST
10 They each said, "No! We will return with you to your relatives."
Ruth 1:11

Why would you go with me (ULT)
It will not do any good for you to come with me (UST)

This is a rhetorical question. Alternate translation: “It does not make sense for you to go with me.” or “You should not go with me.” (See: Rhetorical Question)

Do I still have sons in my womb, that they may become husbands for you (ULT)
It is not possible for me to have more sons who could become your husbands (UST)

This is a rhetorical question. Naomi uses this question to say that she cannot have other sons for them to marry. Alternate translation: “Obviously it is not possible for me to have any more sons who could become your husbands.” (See: Rhetorical Question)

Translation Words - ULT

• sons

Translation Words - UST

• more sons who
Ruth 1:12

I am too old to belong to a husband (ULT)
It is too late for me...to have another husband (UST)

The reason a husband would be important can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “I am too old to marry again and bear more children” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

If I said I have hope, and if I belonged to a husband even tonight, and even if I would give birth to sons (ULT)
Even if I thought that I could have another husband, and was married even tonight and had more sons (UST)

This rhetorical question begins here and continues into the next verse. Naomi uses this question to say that she cannot have other sons for them to marry. Alternate translation: “Even if it were possible that I could expect to marry right away and also give birth to sons right away,...” (See: Rhetorical Question)

I would give birth to sons (ULT)
had more sons (UST)

* bear children or deliver baby boys

Translation Words - ULT

* sons
* hope

Translation Words - UST

* more sons
* that I could have another husband
Ruth 1:13

the time when they are grown? Would you for this reason keep yourselves from belonging to a husband (ULT)
until...they grew up! You could not remain unmarried... until...then (UST)

Naomi completes the rhetorical question she began in the previous verse, and asks a second rhetorical question which emphasizes the same meaning. Alternate translation: "...you would not wait until they were grown up so that you could marry them. You would need to marry a husband before then." (See: Rhetorical Question)

the time when they are grown? Would you for this reason keep yourselves from belonging to a husband (ULT)
until...they grew up! You could not remain unmarried... until...then (UST)

This refers to the practice of levirate marriage, in which it is expected that, if a married man dies, one of his brothers will marry the man's widow. See the introduction for more explanation.

it is exceedingly bitter for me (ULT)
making...my life very...bitter (UST)

Bitterness is a metaphor for grief. Alternate translation: “It greatly grieves me” (See: Metaphor)

the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me (ULT)
Yahweh...has struck me (UST)

The word hand refers to Yahweh's power or influence. Alternate translation: “Yahweh has caused terrible things to happen to me” (See: Metonymy)

the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me (ULT)
Yahweh...has struck me (UST)

What Yahweh has done can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “Yahweh has taken away our husbands” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Translation Words - ULT

• Yahweh
• the hand of

Translation Words - UST

• Yahweh
• has struck me
Then they lifted up their voices and cried (ULT)
Then Ruth and Orpah cried loudly (UST)

This means that they cried out loud or wept bitterly. (See: Idiom)

but Ruth clung to her (ULT)
but Ruth stayed with Naomi (UST)

*Ruth clung to her. Alternate translation: “Ruth refused to leave her” or “Ruth would not leave her” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)*

Translation Words - ULT
- but Ruth

Translation Words - UST
- but Ruth
Then she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has turned back to her people and to her gods. Go back after your sister-in-law.”

Naomi said to her, “Look! Your sister-in-law is going back to her relatives and to her gods! Go back with her!”

Before Orpah and Ruth married Naomi's sons, they worshiped the gods of Moab. During their marriage, they began to worship Yahweh. Now, Orpah was going to worship the gods of Moab again.

**Translation Words - ULT**
- her gods
- her people

**Translation Words - UST**
- her gods
- her relatives
Ruth 1:16

and...in the place where you stay (ULT)
Wherever you stay (UST)

where you live

Your people are my people (ULT)
Your relatives will be my relatives (UST)

Ruth is referring to Naomi's people, the Israelites. Alternate translation: "I will consider the people of your country as being my own people" or "I will consider your relatives as my own relatives" (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Translation Words - ULT

- and your God
- is my God
- Ruth
- to forsake you
- Your people
- are my people

Translation Words - UST

- and...the God you worship
- I will worship
- Ruth
- let you go
- Your relatives
- will be my relatives

ULT

16 But Ruth said, “Do not press me to forsake you or to turn back from following you. For I will go to the place where you go, and I will stay in the place where you stay. Your people are my people, and your God is my God.

UST

16 But Ruth replied, “No! Please do not insist that I let you go or that I turn around and stop following you! Wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you stay, I will stay. Your relatives will be my relatives, and I will worship the God you worship."
Ruth 1:17

In the place where you die, I will die (ULT)
Wherever you die, there I will die (UST)

This refers to Ruth’s desire to spend the rest of her life living in the same place and town as Naomi. (See: Idiom)

May Yahweh do...to me, and thus may he add, if (ULT)
May...Yahweh...punish...me severely if (UST)

This is an idiom that Ruth uses to show that she is very committed to doing what she says. She is making a curse on herself, asking God to punish her if she does not do what she has said. Use the form that your language uses to do this. (See: Idiom)

if death separates between me and between you (ULT)
if I leave you before I die (UST)

If anything other than death separates us from each other or if I leave you while you and I are both still alive

separates between me and between you (ULT)
I leave you (UST)

This is an idiom that refers to the space between two people. Alternate translation: “separates the two of us” or “comes between us.” (See: Idiom)

Translation Words - ULT

• Yahweh
• I will be buried
• you die
• I will die
• death

Translation Words - UST

• Yahweh
• they will bury me
• you die
• I will die
• before I die
Ruth 1:18

and she refrained from speaking to her (ULT)
she stopped urging her to return home (UST)

Naomi stopped arguing with Ruth

ULT
18 Then she saw that she was determined to go with her, and she refrained from speaking to her.

UST
18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was set on going with her, she stopped urging her to return home.
Ruth 1:19

And it happened (ULT)
When they got (UST)

This sentence introduces a new event in the story. (See: Introduction of a New Event)

as soon as they came to Bethlehem (ULT)
When they got...there (UST)

This is a background clause, explaining that the new event took place after Naomi had returned to Bethlehem with Ruth. (See: Connect - Background Information)

the entire town (ULT)
many people in the town (UST)

The town refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: “everyone in the town” (See: Metonymy)

the entire town (ULT)
many people in the town (UST)

Here entire is hyperbole. Many of the residents of the town were excited, but some of the residents may not have been excited by this news. (See: Hyperbole)

Is this Naomi (ULT)
It is hard to believe that this is Naomi (UST)

Since it had been many years since Naomi lived in Bethlehem and now she no longer has her husband and two sons, it is likely that the women were expressing doubt that this woman was actually Naomi. Treat this as a real question, not a rhetorical one.

Translation Words - ULT

• Bethlehem
• Bethlehem

Translation Words - UST

• the town of Bethlehem
• there
Ruth 1:20

Do not call me Naomi (ULT)
You should not call me Naomi any more, because it means 'pleasant' (UST)

The name Naomi means my delight. Since Naomi lost her husband and sons, she no longer feels that her life matches her name.

Mara (ULT)
Mara, because it means 'bitter' (UST)

This is a literal rendering of a Hebrew name meaning “bitter." Since it is a name, you may choose to use the English form, which is Bitter, and use a footnote to explain that the English term gives the meaning of the Hebrew name (See: How to Translate Names)

Translation Words - ULT
• the Almighty

Translation Words - UST
• God Almighty

ULT
20 But she said to them, “Do not call me Naomi. Call me Mara, for the Almighty has acted exceedingly bitterly to me.

UST
20 Naomi said to them, ”You should not call me Naomi any more, because it means ‘pleasant.’ Instead, call me Mara, because it means ‘bitter.’ God Almighty has made my life very bitter.
Ruth 1:21

As for me, I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back empty (ULT)
When I left, I had everything I could want, but Yahweh has brought me back without anything (UST)

When Naomi left Bethlehem, she had her husband and her two sons, and she was happy. Naomi blames Yahweh for the death of her husband and sons, saying that he has caused her to return to Bethlehem without them, and now she is bitter and unhappy.

he has testified against me (ULT)
has opposed me (UST)

has judged me guilty

has done evil to me (ULT)
has treated me badly (UST)

has brought calamity on me or has brought tragedy to me

Translation Words - ULT

• he has testified
• and the Almighty
• Yahweh
• But as for Yahweh
• has done evil

Translation Words - UST

• has opposed
• Almighty God
• Yahweh
• Yahweh
• has treated...badly
Ruth 1:22

So Naomi returned, with Ruth (ULT)
So that is how Naomi returned...Ruth (UST)

This begins a summary statement. English marks this by the word So. Determine how your language marks concluding or summary statements and follow that way here. (See: End of Story)

And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the harvest of barley (ULT)
When they arrived in Bethlehem, the barley harvest was just starting (UST)

The sentence gives background information, explaining that Naomi and Ruth had arrived in Bethlehem around the time when the Israelites were starting to harvest their barley. (See: Background Information)

at the beginning of the harvest of barley (ULT)
the barley harvest was just starting (UST)

_the barley harvest_. The phrase _the harvest of barley_ can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “when the farmers were just beginning to harvest barley” (See: Abstract Nouns)

Translation Words - ULT

- with Ruth
- the Moabite woman
- Moab
- Bethlehem
- the harvest of
- barley

Translation Words - UST

- Ruth
- the woman from Moab
- home
- Bethlehem
- harvest
- the barley
Ruth 2

Ruth 2 General Notes

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Do not go to glean in another field

Boaz said this because he could not guarantee Ruth’s safety in another person’s field. It seems that not everyone was as gracious and obedient to the law of Moses as Boaz was. (See: grace, gracious and law of Moses, God’s law, law of Yahweh, the law and Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)
Ruth 2:1

Now Naomi had a relative of her husband (ULT) who was a relative of Naomi's dead husband (UST)

Verse 1 gives background information about Boaz so that the reader will understand who he is. Your language may also have a specific way to give background information. (See: Background Information)

Now Naomi had a relative of her husband (ULT) who was a relative of Naomi's dead husband (UST)

This sentence introduces the next part of the story, in which Ruth meets Boaz. Boaz is introduced here as a new participant in the story. Your language may also have a specific way to introduce new events or new characters in a story. (See: Introduction of New and Old Participants)

a man of great worth (ULT)
There was a man there...He was rich and important (UST)

*a prominent, wealthy man*. This means that Boaz was prosperous and well known in his community, with a good reputation.

from the clan of Elimelek (ULT)
and a member of Elimelek's clan (UST)

The use of the term *clan* here means that Boaz was related to Elimelek but did not have the same parents as Elimelek. The text is not saying that the clan was named after Elimelek or that Elimelek was the patriarch or leader of the clan.

Translation Words - ULT

- And his name was
- Boaz
- from the clan of

Translation Words - UST

- His name was
- Boaz
- and a member of...'s clan
Ruth 2:2

Ruth, the Moabite woman (ULT)
Ruth (the woman from Moab (UST))

Here the story resumes. Indicate this in the way that your language restarts telling the events of a story after giving background information.

the Moabite woman (ULT)
the woman from Moab (UST)

This is another way of saying that the woman was from the country or tribe of Moab.

and glean heads of grain (ULT)
and pick up the grain that the harvesters leave behind (UST)

and gather heads of grain left behind by the harvesters or and pick up heads of grain left behind by the harvesters

in...eyes I find favor (ULT)
gives me permission (UST)

The phrase in whose eyes I will find favor is an idiom which means “whoever will approve of me.” Ruth speaks of gaining someone’s favor as gaining permission or approval. Alternate translation: “who will be kind to me” (See: Idiom)

in...eyes (ULT)
gives me permission (UST)

The eyes are a metonym that represents seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: “who will decide [to be kind to me]” (See: Metaphor)

my daughter (ULT)
my daughter (UST)

Ruth was caring for Naomi as if she were her own mother, and Naomi addressed Ruth affectionately as her daughter. If this is confusing in your language, use the term that would indicate this kind of close relationship between two women in your language.

Translation Words - ULT

• favor
• Ruth
• the Moabite woman
• and glean
• heads of grain

Translation Words - UST

• gives me permission
• Ruth
• the woman from Moab
• and pick up
• the grain that the harvesters leave behind
Ruth 2:3

And by chance, she came to (ULT) just happened (UST)

This means that Ruth was not aware that the field that she picked to glean in belonged to Naomi’s relative Boaz.

was from the clan of Elimelek (ULT) Elimelek...s relative (UST)

The use of the term clan here means that Boaz was related to Elimelek but did not have the same parents as Elimelek. The text is not saying that the clan was named after Elimelek or that Elimelek was the patriarch or leader of the clan.

Translation Words - ULT

• belonging to Boaz
• was from the clan of
• the reapers
• to glean

Translation Words - UST

• to belong to Boaz
• s relative
• the harvesters
• she...and picked up grain
Ruth 2:4

Then behold (ULT)
Then (UST)

The word **behold** alerts us to the important event of Boaz arriving at the field and seeing Ruth for the first time. Your language may also have a specific way of alerting someone to pay careful attention to what happens next in the story. (See: Phrases that Inform or Remind)

**coming from Bethlehem (ULT)**
**returned from town (UST)**

The fields were an unspecified distance outside of Bethlehem.

**May Yahweh bless you (ULT)**
**May Yahweh bless (UST)**

*May Yahweh do good things for you.* This is a general blessing.

**Translation Words - ULT**

- May...bless you
- Yahweh
- Yahweh
- Boaz
- from Bethlehem
- to the reapers

**Translation Words - UST**

- May...bless
- Yahweh
- Yahweh
- Boaz
- from town
- the harvesters
Ruth 2:5

Who does this young woman belong to (ULT)
Ruth...Who is that young woman related to (UST)

In that culture, women were under the authority of their male relatives. Boaz was asking who Ruth's husband or father might be. He did not think that Ruth was a slave.

to his servant (ULT)
the foreman (UST)

This servant was a young man who worked for Boaz and who told the rest of Boaz's workers what to do.

who was set over (ULT)
the foreman (UST)

who was in charge of or who was managing

Translation Words - ULT

• Boaz
• the reapers
• to his servant

Translation Words - UST

• Boaz
• the foreman
• the foreman
Ruth 2:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Moabite
- Moab
- the reapers
- the servant

Translation Words - UST

- from Moab
- from there
- The foreman replied
- The foreman replied

ULT
6 Then the servant who was set over the reapers answered and said, “She is a young Moabite woman, the woman who came back with Naomi from the land of Moab.

UST
6 The foreman replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who returned from there with Naomi.
Ruth 2:7

Please let me glean (ULT)
Please let me pick up (UST)

To *glean* meant to pick up grain or other produce that the workers dropped or missed as they were harvesting. This was part of the law that God gave to Moses, that the workers should not go back over the field for this produce, so that it would be left in the field for the poor or for foreign travelers to pick up. See verses such as Leviticus 19:10 and Deuteronomy 24:21.

in the house (ULT)
under the shelter (UST)

the hut or the shelter. This was a temporary shelter or garden hut in the field that provided shade from the sun where the workers could rest.

Translation Words - ULT

- the reapers
- let me glean
- in the house

Translation Words - UST

- that the men who are harvesting
- Please let me pick up
- under the shelter
Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Will you not listen to me, my daughter? Do not go to glean in another field, and do not even go away from here. But do this: stick closely to my young female workers.

This can be stated as a command. Alternate translation: “Listen to me, my daughter!” or “Note well what I am telling you, my daughter!” (See: Rhetorical Question)

This was a kind way to address a younger woman. Ruth was not the actual daughter of Boaz, but he was treating her kindly and respectfully. Use the term that communicates this in your language. (See: Idiom)

**Translation Words - ULT**
- Ruth
- Boaz
- to glean
- my young female workers

**Translation Words - UST**
- Ruth
- Boaz
- to gather grain
- my servant girls
Ruth 2:9

Keep your eyes on the field (ULT)
Watch where (UST)

The eyes are a metonym that represents seeing. Alternate translation: “Watch only the field” or “Pay attention only to the field” (See: Metonymy)

Have I not instructed the young men not to touch you (ULT)
I have told the men who are harvesting not to assault you (UST)

Boaz used this question to emphasize his hospitality - that he had already made provision to help Ruth. Alternate translation: “I have given the men strict instructions not to harm you.” (See: Rhetorical Question)

the young men (ULT)
the men who are harvesting (UST)

young male workers or servants. The words young men are used three times to refer to the young men who are harvesting in the field.

not to touch you (ULT)
not to assault you (UST)

This was a polite way of saying that the men were not to harm Ruth physically or assault her sexually, and possibly also that the men were not to stop her from gleaning in his field. (See: Euphemism)

from what the young men draw (ULT)
that the men have filled (UST)

To draw water means to pull up water from a well or to take it out of a storage vessel.

Translation Words - ULT

- they are reaping
- the young men
- the young men

Translation Words - UST

- the men are harvesting
- the men who are harvesting
- the men
Ruth 2:10

Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground (ULT)
Then she knelt...with her face touching the ground (UST)

These are acts of respect and reverence. She was showing honor to Boaz out of gratefulness for what he had done for her. It was also a posture of humility. (See: Symbolic Action)

Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground (ULT)
Then she knelt...with her face touching the ground (UST)

These are two descriptions of a single action. If this is confusing in your language, use only one description, as in the UST. (See: Doublet)

Then she fell on her face (ULT)
Then she knelt...with her face touching (UST)

This is an idiom that means that she bowed low with her face to the ground. (See: Idiom)

Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner (ULT)
Why are you being so kind to me? I did not think you would pay any attention to me, since I am a foreigner (UST)

Ruth is asking a real question.

have I found favor in your eyes (ULT)
are you being so kind to me (UST)

The phrase found favor in your eyes is an idiom which means “you have approved of” someone. Ruth speaks of gaining someone's favor as gaining their kindness or approval. Alternate translation: “you have been kind to me” (See: Idiom)

in your eyes (ULT)
are you being so kind to me (UST)

The eyes are a metonym that represents seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: “in your judgment” or “that you decided” (See: Metaphor)

a foreigner (ULT)
am a foreigner (UST)

A foreigner is someone from another country. Even though Ruth had pledged her loyalty to the God of Israel in private, everyone knew that she was from Moab, not Israel. Often Israelis were not kind to foreigners, even though God wanted them to be kind to them. This shows that Boaz was living to please God.
Translation Words - ULT

• favor
• her face
• a foreigner
• and bowed down

Translation Words - UST

• are you being so kind to me
• Then she knelt...with her face touching
• am a foreigner
• Then she knelt...with her face touching
Ruth 2:11

Then Boaz answered and said (ULT)
Boaz replied (UST)

Both answered and said describe the same action. If this is confusing in your language, you may want to use only one verb for this, as in the UST. (See: Doublet)

has been fully reported to me (ULT)
People have told me...They told me (UST)

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: People have reported to me or People have told me (See: Active or Passive)

has been fully reported (ULT)
People have told...They told me (UST)

Here two forms of the word for report are repeated in the original Hebrew text to emphasize the certainty or extent of the statement. (See: Idiom)

and you came to a people (ULT)
and you came here to live among people (UST)

Boaz is referring to Ruth coming to dwell with Naomi in a village and community, a country, and religion that she did not know. (See: Metonymy)

the day before yesterday (ULT)
previously (UST)

This is an idiom that means “recently” or “previously”

Translation Words - ULT

• Boaz
• a people
• the death of

Translation Words - UST

• Boaz replied
• to live among people
• died
Ruth 2:12

May Yahweh reward your work (ULT)
I pray that Yahweh will fully repay you for what you have done (UST)

May Yahweh repay you or May Yahweh pay you back

your work (ULT)
you for what you have done (UST)

This refers to everything that Boaz has just described in verse 11.
Alternate translation: “your good deeds.”

and may your full wages come from Yahweh (ULT)
Yes, may Yahweh...reward you in full (UST)

This is a poetic expression that is very similar to the previous sentence. Alternate translation: “May Yahweh fully give to you everything that you deserve” (See: Parallelism, Doublet)

under whose wings you have come for refuge (ULT)
the one whom you are trusting to protect you (UST)

This is a metaphor that uses the picture of a mother bird gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them as a way to describe God's protection for those who trust in him. Alternate translation: “in whose safe care you have placed yourself” (See: Metaphor)

Translation Words - ULT

• the God of
• your work
• Yahweh
• Yahweh
• Israel
• for refuge

Translation Words - UST

• the God of
• you for what you have done
• Yahweh
• Yahweh
• Israel
• you are trusting to protect you
Ruth 2:13

May I find favor (ULT)
I hope I will continue to please you (UST)

Here find favor is an idiom that means be approved of or that he is pleased with her. Alternate translation: “May you continue to approve of me” or “May you continue to be pleased with me” (See: Idiom)

in your eyes (ULT)
I hope I will continue to please you (UST)

The eyes are a metonym that represents seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: “and accept me” (See: Metaphor)

my lord (ULT)
Sir (UST)

Boaz is not Ruth’s master, but he is the owner of the field where she is gleaning. He is also a Jew and a prominent man in the city. Therefore, Ruth is honoring him by calling him her lord, and speaking of herself as his servant. Alternate translation: “Sir” or “master”

But as for me, I am not even like one of your female servants (ULT)
and yet I am not even one of your servant girls (UST)

Ruth is expressing surprise and gratitude that Boaz is treating her as if she belongs among his workers, when she does not.

Translation Words - ULT

- my lord
- favor
- the heart of
- you have comforted me
- your female servant
- your female servants

Translation Words - UST

- Sir
- I hope I will continue to please you
- by being so kind to me
- You have comforted me
- your servant
- your servant girls
Ruth 2:14

at the time of the meal (ULT)
When it was time to eat (UST)

This refers to the midday meal.

and dip your piece in the vinegar (ULT)
and dip it in the vinegar (UST)

This was a simple meal eaten in the field. People would sit on the ground around a cloth that had a bowl of wine vinegar on it and pieces of broken bread. They would take a piece of bread and dip it in the wine vinegar to add flavor before they ate it.

in the vinegar (ULT)
in the vinegar (UST)

The vinegar was a sauce into which they dipped bread. The Israelites made vinegar from grape juice that was fermented beyond the point of being wine. At the vinegar stage, the juice becomes very sour and acidic.

Translation Words - ULT

• Boaz
• the bread
• the reapers

Translation Words - UST

• Boaz
• food...this bread
• the harvesters
Ruth 2:15

Then she got up to glean. Then Boaz commanded his young men (ULT)
After she stood up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his workers (UST)

When Boaz spoke to his workers, it is likely that Ruth was far enough away not to hear Boaz's instructions. Alternate translation: “And when Ruth got up to gather up grain, Boaz privately told his young men” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Then she got up (ULT)
After she stood up (UST)

Even if...near the bundles of grain that you have cut (UST)

Here, the word even lets the workers know that they are to do above and beyond what they normally do. People who were gleaning were normally forbidden from working close to the harvested grain for fear that they might steal from the grain that was already harvested. But Boaz instructs his workers to let Ruth glean close to the bundles of grain.

Translation Words - ULT

• Then...commanded
• Boaz
• shame her
• to glean
• Let her glean
• his young men

Translation Words - UST

• ordered
• Boaz
• do...try to stop her
• to go back to work
• she gathers some grain
• his workers
Ruth 2:16

be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her (ULT)
I want you to pull out some stalks of grain from the bundles...for her (UST)

take some stalks of grain out of the bundles and leave them for her
or leave behind stalks of grain for her to collect. Here Boaz goes another step beyond what is normal, and tells his workers to drop some of the grain that was already harvested for Ruth to glean.

and do not rebuke her (ULT)
and do not scold her (UST)

do not cause her shame or do not speak harshly to her

Translation Words - ULT

• for her to glean
• rebuke

Translation Words - UST

• to pick up
• do...scold
Ruth 2:17

Then she beat out (ULT)
Then she threshed the barley...to separate the kernels from the stalks (UST)

She separated the edible part of the grain from the hull and stalk, which are thrown away.

about an ephah of barley (ULT)
The barley kernels...to fill a large basket (UST)

An ephah is a unit of measurement equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: “about 22 liters of barley.” Use the normal measurement for grain in your language. (See: Biblical Volume)

Translation Words - ULT

- So she gleaned
- she had gleaned
- barley

Translation Words - UST

- So Ruth gathered grain
- she had gathered
- The barley kernels

ULT
17 So she gleaned in the field until the evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.

UST
17 So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley that she had gathered, to separate the kernels from the stalks. The barley kernels were enough to fill a large basket.
Ruth 2:18

And she lifted it up and went into the city (ULT)
She carried it back to town (UST)

It is implied that Ruth carried the grain home. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

and her mother-in-law saw (ULT)
and showed her mother-in-law (UST)

Then Naomi saw

Translation Words - ULT
• she had gleaned

Translation Words - UST
• she had gathered
Ruth 2:19

Where did you glean today, and where did you work (ULT)
Where did you gather all this grain today? In whose field did you work (UST)

Naomi asked the same thing in two different ways to show that she was very interested in knowing what had happened to Ruth that day. Use the way that your language shows excitement and interest. (See: Parallelism)

the one who noticed you (ULT)
the man who was so kind to you (UST)

Here noticed is a metonymy that stands for not only seeing Ruth, but also doing something for her. Alternate translation: “the one who helped you” (See: Metonymy)

Translation Words - ULT

• blessed
• The name of...is
• Boaz
• did you glean

Translation Words - UST

• God will bless
• The name of
• is Boaz
• did you gather all this grain
Ruth 2:20

May he be blessed by Yahweh (ULT)
May Yahweh bless him! Yahweh (UST)

Naomi is asking God to reward Boaz for his kindness to Ruth and herself.

who has not forsaken his covenant faithfulness (ULT)
has not stopped acting faithfully (UST)

This can be stated positively: who has continued to be loyal. (See: Double Negatives)

who has not forsaken (ULT)
has not stopped (UST)

The word who is most probably referring to Yahweh, who has continued to be faithful to the living and the dead by acting through Boaz. A less likely possibility is that it is referring to Boaz.

with the living (ULT)
toward us who are still living (UST)

Naomi and Ruth were the living. This can be stated differently to remove the nominal adjective the living. Alternate translation: “to the people who are still living” (See: Nominal Adjectives)

both...and with the dead (ULT)
and to our husbands who have died (UST)

Naomi’s husband and sons were the dead. This can be stated differently to remove the nominal adjective the dead. Alternate translation: “the people who have already died” (See: Nominal Adjectives)

That man is closely related to us. He is one of our kinsman-redeemers (ULT)
That man is a close relative of Elimelek; in fact, he is one of those responsible for taking care of our family (UST)

The second phrase repeats and expands the first. This is a Hebrew style of emphasis. (See: Parallelism)

one of our kinsman-redeemers (ULT)
in fact...one of those responsible for taking care of our family (UST)

A kinsman-redeemer was a close male relative who had the responsibility to take care of any widows in the family. If one of his brothers died having had no children, he had the responsibility to marry the widow, if she was still of child-bearing age, to raise a child for his brother. He would also reacquire the land his relatives had lost due to poverty and redeem family members who had sold themselves into slavery. See the Introduction for more information.

Translation Words - ULT

- the living
- May...be blessed
• his covenant faithfulness
• one of our kinsman-redeemers
• by Yahweh
• has...forsaken
• the dead

Translation Words - UST

• us who are still living
• May...bless
• acting faithfully
• in fact...one of those responsible for taking care of our family
• Yahweh...Yahweh
• stopped
• our husbands who have died
Ruth 2:21

In addition, he said to me (ULT)
He also told me (UST)

He even said to me. This indicates that what follows is beyond what they would have expected a landowner to say to Ruth.

You should keep close by the servants who belong to me (ULT)
Stay with my workers (UST)

Boaz was expressing confidence that his workers would not harm Ruth.

Translation Words - ULT

• Ruth
• the Moabite woman
• the harvest
• the servants

Translation Words - UST

• Ruth
• the woman from Moab
• bringing in...grain from the field
• workers
Ruth 2:22

you go out with (ULT)
you to go to his field with (UST)

you work with

so that they do not harm you (ULT)
because if...someone might assault you (UST)

Possible meanings are 1) other workers might abuse Ruth or try to rape her or 2) in another field, the owner might interfere or stop her from gleaning while they are harvesting.

so that they do not harm you (ULT)
because if...someone might assault you (UST)

This is the reason why Ruth should continue to work with Boaz's servants. If it is more clear in your language to state the reason before the result, you can state this part of the sentence first, as in the UST. (See: Connect - Reason-and-Result Relationship)

Translation Words - ULT

• It is good
• Ruth
• his young female workers

Translation Words - UST

• it will be good
• Ruth
• his servant girls
Ruth 2:23

So she stayed close (ULT)
So Ruth worked alongside of...She (UST)

Ruth worked in Boaz’s fields with his workers during the day, so she would be safe.

And she lived with her mother-in-law (ULT)
During that time, she continued to live with Naomi (UST)

Ruth went to Naomi’s home to sleep at night.

Translation Words - ULT

• Boaz
• the harvest of
• and the harvest of
• wheat
• to glean
• barley
• by the young female workers of

Translation Words - UST

• Boaz
• harvesting
• both...and
• the wheat
• gathered heads of grain
• the barley
• s servant girls

ULT
23 So she stayed close by the young female workers of Boaz to glean until the harvest of barley and the harvest of wheat were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

2:1 [1] or perhaps an acquaintance of her husband (Hebrew Ketiv)


UST
23 So Ruth worked alongside of Boaz’s servant girls. She gathered heads of grain until the workers had finished harvesting both the barley and the wheat. During that time, she continued to live with Naomi.
Ruth 3

Ruth 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Boaz’s integrity

Boaz showed great integrity in this chapter by not having sexual relations with Ruth until they were married. He was also concerned with preserving Ruth’s good reputation. Displaying Boaz’s good character is an important point in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

So that it may be well with you

Naomi wanted Ruth to have a secure home with a good husband who would care for her. She could see that Boaz would be the best husband for her. She also thought that Boaz, as a kinsman-redeemer, had an obligation to marry her. This could be true because, even though Ruth was a Gentile by birth, she had become part of Naomi’s family and part of the nation of Israel. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)
Ruth 3:1

Then Naomi...said to her (ULT)
One day, Naomi said to Ruth (UST)

This sentence introduces the next part of the story, in which Ruth asks Boaz to perform the role of kinsman-redeemer for her and Naomi. (See: Introduction of a New Event)

her mother-in-law (ULT)
Naomi (UST)

Naomi is the mother of Ruth's dead husband.

My daughter (ULT)
My daughter (UST)

Ruth became part of Naomi's family by marrying her son and became like a daughter to her by her actions in caring for Naomi after returning to Bethlehem.

should I not seek a resting place for you, that will be good for you (ULT)
I want to arrange for you to have a secure home with a good husband (UST)

Naomi uses this question to tell Ruth what she planned to do. Alternate translation: “I must look for a place for you to rest, so that you will be taken care of.” or “I must find a husband to care for you, so that you can live without worry.” (See: Rhetorical Question)

a resting place for you (ULT)
for you to have a secure home (UST)

This does not mean a place to rest temporarily from being tired. It means a place of permanent comfort and security, in a good home with a husband. (See: Metaphor)

Translation Words - ULT

• her mother-in-law
• a resting place

Translation Words - UST

• Naomi
• to have a secure home
Ruth 3:2

**So now (ULT)**
**Now...So (UST)**

Naomi’s rhetorical question in verse 1 gave the reason for the advice that she is about to give to Ruth in verses 2-4. This word marks what follows as the result of verse 1. In other words, Naomi advises Ruth what to do (3:2-4) because she desires to find a good, secure home for Ruth (3:1) If it is more clear in your language to state the reason after the result, you may want to put verse 1 after verses 2-4, marked as verses 1-4 together. (See: Connect - Reason-and-Result Relationship)

is not Boaz our relative (ULT)
Boaz...As you know, he is a close relative of ours (UST)

Naomi used this question to remind Ruth of something she had already told her (See 2:20), to introduce the reason for what she is about to say. Alternate translation: “As you know, Boaz is our relative.” (See: Rhetorical Question)

with...young female workers you have been working (ULT)
you have been working...with...s servant girls (UST)

If it helps for understanding, the translation can make explicit that she was working in the fields with these female workers. Alternate translation: “female workers you have been with in the fields” (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Look (ULT)
listen carefully (UST)

The word Look indicates that the following statement is very important. (See: Phrases that Inform or Remind)

will be winnowing (ULT)
will be separating the grain from the chaff (UST)

he will be winnowing To winnow means to separate grain from the unwanted chaff by tossing both the grain and chaff into the air, allowing the wind to blow the chaff away.

Translation Words - ULT

- Boaz
- will be winnowing
- at the threshing floor
- barley
- young female workers

Translation Words - UST

- Boaz...he
- will be separating the grain from the chaff
- will be at the place where they thresh
- the barley
• s servant girls
Ruth 3:3

and anoint yourself (ULT)
and put on some perfume (UST)

This is probably a reference to rubbing sweet-smelling oil on oneself, as a kind of perfume.

and go down to the threshing floor (ULT)
Then go down to the place where they thresh the grain (UST)

This refers to leaving the city and going to the open, flat area where workers could thresh and winnow grain.

Translation Words - ULT

- Now wash yourself
- and anoint yourself
- to the threshing floor

Translation Words - UST

- Bathe yourself
- and put on some perfume
- to the place where they thresh the grain

ULT

3 Now wash yourself, and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak, and go down to the threshing floor. Do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. [1]

UST

3 Bathe yourself and put on some perfume. Put on your full outer cloak. Then go down to the place where they thresh the grain. But do not let him know that you are there until he is finished eating and drinking.
And let it be that (ULT)
When he lies down to sleep (UST)

Then do like this: This is a general instruction that introduces the next series of specific instructions that Naomi is about to give to Ruth. Translate this in the way that people would say this in your language. (See: Imperatives - Other Uses)

when he lies down (ULT)
When he lies down to sleep (UST)

This is a background clause, explaining when Ruth should watch to see where Boaz sleeps. (See: Connect - Background Information)

and uncover his feet (ULT)
uncover his feet (UST)

This means to remove the cloak or blanket covering his feet (or legs). Perhaps this action by a woman could be interpreted as a proposal of marriage. (See: Symbolic Action)

his feet (ULT)
his feet (UST)

The word used here could refer to his feet or his legs.

and lie down (ULT)
and lie down (UST)

and lie down there

Then he, himself, will tell you what you should do (ULT)
When he wakes up, he will tell you what to do (UST)

The specific custom of that time is unclear, but Naomi appears to believe that Boaz will understand Ruth's action as a proposal of marriage. Boaz will then either accept or reject her offer.

Then he, himself, will tell (ULT)
When he wakes up, he will tell (UST)

When he wakes up, he will tell
Ruth 3:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT
5 And she said to her, “Everything that you say, I will do.”

UST
5 Ruth replied, "I will do everything that you have told me to do."
Ruth 3:6

and did according to everything that her mother-in-law had instructed her (ULT)
she did everything that her mother-in-law had told her to do (UST)

This statement summarizes the actions that Ruth will do in verse 7. If people understand from this that Ruth did these actions in verse 6 and then did them again in verse 7, then you could translate this sentence as and she obeyed her mother-in-law. Or if it would make the order of events more clear, you could move this sentence to the end of verse 7, then combine the verse numbers as a verse bridge (6-7). (See: Order of Events)

Translation Words - ULT

• to the threshing floor

Translation Words - UST

• to the place where they thresh the grain. There
Ruth 3:7

and his heart was good (ULT)
he was feeling good (UST)

Here heart stands for “emotions” or “disposition.” Boaz’s emotions or feelings were good. This does not imply that Boaz was drunk. Alternate translation: “and he felt good” or “and he was in a good mood” (See: Metonymy)

Then she came secretly (ULT)
Then Ruth stealthily approached him (UST)

Then she sneaked in or Then she came in quietly so that no one would hear her

and uncovered his feet (ULT)
She took the covering off his feet (UST)

and removed the covering from his legs

and lay down (ULT)
and lay down (UST)

and lay down there

Translation Words - ULT

• his heart
• Boaz

Translation Words - UST

• he was feeling good
• Boaz
Then it happened in the middle of the night (ULT)
In the middle of the night (UST)

This clause introduces a new event in the story, explaining when Boaz woke up. (See: Introduction of a New Event)

that...was startled (ULT)
woke up suddenly (UST)

It is not clear what startled Boaz. Perhaps he suddenly felt the cold air on his feet or legs.

And behold (ULT)
and realized that (UST)

This word shows that what follows was very surprising to Boaz. Use your language's way of expressing surprise.

a woman was lying at his feet (ULT)
a woman was lying at his feet (UST)

The woman was Ruth, but Boaz could not recognize her in the darkness.
Ruth 3:9

**your female servant (ULT)**
**your servant (UST)**

Ruth was not one of Boaz's servants, but she referred to herself as Boaz's servant as a polite way to express respect to Boaz. Use your language's way of expressing humility and respect.

**And you can spread the edge of your cloak over your female servant (ULT)**
**please make me secure by marrying me (UST)**

This was a cultural idiom for marriage. Alternate translation: “Please marry me” (See: Idiom)

**a kinsman-redeemer (ULT)**
**are the one responsible for my dead husband's family (UST)**

See how you translated this term in 2:20.

**Translation Words - ULT**
- a kinsman-redeemer
- Ruth
- your female servant
- your female servant

**Translation Words - UST**
- are the one responsible for my dead husband's family
- am...Ruth
- your servant
- me
Then he said, “Blessed be you by Yahweh, my daughter! You have made your covenant faithfulness better at the end than at the beginning by not going after the young men, either poor or rich.”

Boaz replied, “May Yahweh bless you, my dear! Previously, you were very faithful to your mother-in-law, but you are acting even more faithfully now by not chasing after a young man to marry, whether rich or poor.

This refers to Ruth asking Boaz to marry her. Boaz sees this as Ruth showing unselﬁsh kindness and family loyalty to Naomi. By marrying Naomi’s relative, Ruth would also provide for Naomi, honor Naomi’s son, and continue Naomi’s family line.

Previously, you were very faithful to your mother-in-law (ULT)

This refers to the way that Ruth had earlier provided for her mother-in-law by staying with her and gleaning grain for food for them.

You are demonstrating even more loving kindness now than before (ULT)

You have made your covenant faithfulness better at the end (ULT)

You are acting even more faithfully now (UST)

by not going after (ULT)

because you have not looked for marriage among. Ruth could have ignored Naomi’s need and looked for a young and handsome husband for herself outside of Naomi’s relatives, but she did not. (See: Idiom)

Translation Words - ULT

• Blessed be
• your covenant faithfulness
• by Yahweh

Translation Words - UST

• May...bless
• but you are acting...faithfully
• Yahweh
Ruth 3:11

So now (ULT)
Now (UST)

This phrase indicates that what came before in verse 10 is the reason for what follows in verse 11. This can be indicated with a word like Therefore. If it is clearer in your language to put the reason after the result, the order would be: Boaz is motivated to perform the role of kinsman-redeemer (verse 11) because he has seen how much kindness Ruth has shown to Naomi (verse 10). If you choose this order, you will need to combine the verses and the verse numbers (See: Connect - Reason-and-Result Relationship).

my daughter (ULT)
my dear (UST)

Boaz used this expression as a sign of respect toward Ruth as a younger woman. Use the form of address that would be appropriate in your language.

the whole gate of my people (ULT)
all the people in this town (UST)

The gate was an area of the city where people gathered to do business, and the leaders met there to make decisions. So this was an idiom meaning “all of the important people in my city” (See: Idiom).

a woman of worth (ULT)
are an honorable woman (UST)

a woman of good character, a good woman

Translation Words - ULT

- be afraid

Translation Words - UST

- Do...be afraid
Ruth 3:12

And now (ULT)
However (UST)

This phrase indicates that what follows is something else important that Ruth should pay attention to. Alternate translation: “You also need to know that” a contrast between Boaz’s willingness to marry Ruth and the possibility of another man marrying her instead. (See: Connect - Contrast Relationship)

but there is...even (ULT)
there is another (UST)

This phrase indicates a contrast between Boaz’s willingness to marry Ruth (verse 11) and the possibility of another man marrying her instead (verse 12). Alternate translation: “Even so, there is’ (See: Connect - Contrast Relationship).

a kinsman-redeemer...nearer than I (ULT)
man who is more responsible for you than I am because he is more closely related to Naomi (UST)

It was the duty of the male relative who was closest in family relationship to the man who died to help his widow. See how you translated kinsman-redeemer in 2:20 and make sure that it also makes sense here.

Translation Words - ULT

• it is...true
• am a kinsman-redeemer
• a kinsman-redeemer

Translation Words - UST

• while
• one of Naomi's close relatives and, therefore, responsible for you both
• man who is...responsible for you
Ruth 3:13

if he will redeem you (ULT)
If he says that he will take care of you (UST)

redeem here means “marry according to our custom concerning widows.” Boaz is referring to the expectation that the closest male relative of Ruth’s dead husband would marry her and raise a son to carry on the dead man’s family name. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

as Yahweh lives (ULT)
solemnly promise that, as surely as Yahweh lives (UST)

as surely as Yahweh lives or by the life of Yahweh. This was a common Hebrew vow that obligated the speaker to perform what he said. Use the normal phrasing for a vow in your language.

Translation Words - ULT

• as...lives
• he will redeem you
• let him redeem you
• to redeem you
• then I will redeem you
• Yahweh
• good

Translation Words - UST

• solemnly promise that, as surely as...lives
• he says that he will take care of you
• he can marry you
• to take care of you
• I will marry you and take care of you
• Yahweh
• fine
Ruth 3:14

So she lay at his feet (ULT)
So she lay at his feet (UST)

Ruth slept at Boaz's feet. They did not have sex.

before a man could recognize his friend (ULT)
before it was light enough that people would be able to recognize her (UST)

This is an idiom that referred to a condition of darkness. Alternate translation: "while it was still dark" (See: Idiom).

Translation Words - ULT

• to the threshing floor

Translation Words - UST

• here
Ruth 3:15

the cloak (ULT)
your cloak (UST)

a thick piece of cloth worn over the shoulders for warmth

six measures of barley (ULT)
a generous amount of barley (UST)

The actual amount is not stated. It was enough to be considered generous, yet small enough for Ruth to carry alone. Most scholars think it was around 25 to 30 kilograms.

and put it on her (ULT)
and put it on her back (UST)

The amount of grain was heavy, so Boaz put it on Ruth's back so she could carry it.

Then he went into the city (ULT)
Then he went into town (UST)

Most ancient copies have he went, referring to Boaz, but some have she went, referring to Ruth. Some English versions have "he" and some have "she" here. Most scholars believe that he went is the original meaning.

Translation Words - ULT

• measures of barley

Translation Words - UST

• a generous amount of barley
Ruth 3:16

Who are you, my daughter (ULT)
Is that you, my daughter (UST)

This appears to be an idiom that probably means *What is your status, my daughter?* In other words, Naomi is probably asking if Ruth is now a married woman. Alternatively, the question could mean simply *Is that you, my daughter?* (See: *Idiom*)

my daughter (ULT)
my daughter (UST)

Ruth is actually Naomi’s daughter-in-law, but Naomi calls her *my daughter* as an endearment. Keep this translation if it is acceptable in your culture. Otherwise, use “daughter-in law.”

everything that the man had done for her (ULT)
everything that Boaz had said and done for her (UST)

*all that Boaz had done for her*
Ruth 3:17

six measures of barley (ULT)
all this barley (UST)

See how you translated this in 3:15.

You must not go empty (ULT)
I do not want you to return...with nothing (UST)

To *go empty-handed* is an idiom that means to go to someone with nothing to offer that person. Alternate translation: *Do not go empty-handed* or *Do not go with nothing* or *You must take something* (See: Idiom).

Translation Words - ULT

• measures of barley

Translation Words - UST

• all this barley
Ruth 3:18

Sit, my daughter (ULT)
My daughter, just wait here (UST)

Sit is an idiom that means that Ruth should calmly wait. Alternate translation: “Wait here” or “Be patient” (See: Idiom)

my daughter (ULT)
My daughter (UST)

See how you translated this in 1:11-13; 2:2, 8, 22; 3:1, 10, 11, 16.

how the matter falls (ULT)
what happens (UST)

This is an idiom that means “how the situation will turn out” or “what will happen.” (See: Idiom)

the man will not rest unless he has finished this matter (ULT)
That man...will certainly...take care of this (UST)

This can be stated positively: the man will certainly settle this matter or the man will surely resolve this issue. (See: Double Negatives)

unless...he has finished this matter (ULT)
take care of...this (UST)

This matter refers to the decision about who will buy Naomi’s property and marry Ruth.

Translation Words - ULT

• will...rest

Translation Words - UST

• will certainly
Ruth 4

Ruth 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

King David

Despite being a Moabitess, Ruth became an ancestress of David. David was Israel's greatest king. It may be surprising that a Gentile would become a part of such an important lineage, but it reminds us that God loves all people. Ruth had great faith in Yahweh. This shows us that God welcomes all who trust in him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

You must also acquire Ruth the Moabite woman

With the privilege of using the family's land came the responsibility to take care of the widows of the family. Therefore, the relative who wanted to use Naomi's land had to also help Ruth to have a son who would carry on the family name and inheritance and provide for her.

This was the custom in former times

This is a comment made by the writer of the text. This indicates that there was a considerable period of time between the events that occurred and the time when they were written down.
Ruth 4:1

Now Boaz had gone up to the gate (ULT)
Meanwhile, Boaz went up to the place inside the town gate where people conducted their official business (UST)

This clause introduces the next part of the story, in which Boaz takes the leading role as kinsman-redeemer and marries Ruth. Use your language's way of introducing a new part of a story (See: Introduction of a New Event)

to the gate (ULT)
to the place inside the town gate where people conducted their official business (UST)

To the gate of the city or to the gate of Bethlehem. This was the main entrance to the walled town of Bethlehem. Inside the gate was an open area that was used as a meeting place to discuss community matters.

And behold (ULT)
Before long (UST)

The word behold alerts us to the important event of Boaz seeing the exact person whom he wanted to see walking by. Your language may also have a specific way of alerting someone to pay careful attention to what happens next in the story. (See: Phrases that Inform or Remind)

the kinsman-redeemer (ULT)
the close relative (UST)

This was the closest living male relative to Elimelek. See how you translated kinsman-redeemer in 2:20.

a certain someone (ULT)
by name (UST)

Boaz did not actually say these words; instead, he called the kinsman-redeemer by his name. This is an idiom that means that this is a specific person but the name is not given. The narrator has substituted this general term for the person's name either because the specific name is not important for the story or the man's name had been forgotten. If your language has an idiom to refer to a specific person without using his name, use that here. (See: Idiom).

a certain someone (ULT)
by name (UST)

In many languages, this is an awkward and unnatural way for someone to address another person. A way to make this more natural could be to turn this into an indirect quotation as in the UST. A combination of indirect and direct quotation is also possible: “Boaz called him by name, and said, 'Turn aside and sit down here.'” (See: Direct and Indirect Quotations).
Translation Words - ULT

- the kinsman-redeemer
- Now Boaz
- Boaz
- to the gate

Translation Words - UST

- the close relative
- Meanwhile, Boaz
- Boaz
- to the place inside the town gate where people conducted their official business
Then he took ten men (ULT)

Boaz then gathered ten men (UST)

Then he chose ten men

from the elders of the city (ULT)

of the older, well-respected...from the town (UST)

from the leaders of the city

Translation Words - UST

- of the older, well-respected...from

ULT

2 Then he took ten men from the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down.

UST

2 Boaz then gathered ten of the older, well-respected men from the town, and said to them, “Please sit here so you can witness our business.” So they sat down.
Ruth 4:3

the portion of the field...Naomi...is selling (ULT)
the field...it...Did you know that...is for sale? Naomi...is
selling (UST)

It was the responsibility of the nearest kinsman to Elimelek to buy back the land that had belonged to Elimelek and to care for Elimelek's family.

Translation Words - ULT

• our brother
• to the kinsman-redeemer
• Moab

Translation Words - UST

• belonged to our relative
• to his relative
• Moab
Ruth 4:4

I should uncover your ear (ULT)
I should tell you (UST)

This is an idiom that means “I should tell you” or “I should let you know” (See: Idiom).

in the presence of (ULT)
who have agreed to be witnesses (UST)

in the presence of. Having these men as witnesses would make the transaction legal and binding.

redeem it (ULT)
then do so (UST)

redeem means to buy the land to keep it within the family.

there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you (ULT)
you are the closest relative to Elimelek, and I am next after you (UST)

In some languages, it may be confusing to say these things together: 1) there is no one to redeem the land, 2) only you can redeem the land, 3) then I can redeem the land. If that is so in your language, see the UST for a way that is more clear. (See: Connect - Exception Clauses)

and I am after you (ULT)
and I am next after you (UST)

Boaz was the next nearest kinsman to Elimelek, and so had the second right to redeem the land.

Translation Words - ULT

• you will redeem it
• redeem it
• you will...redeem it
• to redeem it
• I will redeem it
• my people
• the elders of

Translation Words - UST

• you wish to buy it back into the family
• then do so
• you do...wish to buy it back
• you are the closest relative to Elimelek
• will take it
• here in front of these respected men
• here in front of these respected men
Ruth 4:5

On the day that you buy...also...you...acquire (ULT)
When you buy...also...you will...need to marry (UST)

Boaz uses this expression to inform his relative of the additional responsibility he will have if he buys the land. Alternate translation: “When you buy the land, you also get”

from the hand of Naomi (ULT)
from Naomi (UST)

Here the word hand represents Naomi, who owns the field. Alternate translation: “from Naomi” (See: Synecdoche)

also...Ruth...you...acquire (ULT)
also...Ruth...you will...need to marry (UST)

you must also marry Ruth (See: Idiom)

the wife of the dead man (ULT)
our relative's widow (UST)

the widow of Elimelek's son who died

in order to raise up the name of the dead over his inheritance (ULT)
in order that she may have a son to inherit the property and carry on the name of her dead husband (UST)

that she may have a son to inherit the property and carry on her dead husband's family name

the dead (ULT)
her dead husband (UST)

Ruth’s husband was the dead. This can be stated differently to avoid the nominal adjective the dead. Alternate translation: “the man who died” or “her husband who died” (See: Nominal Adjectives)

Translation Words - ULT

- his inheritance
- the name of
- Ruth
- Boaz
- the Moabite woman
- from the hand of
- the dead man
- the dead
- in order to raise up

Translation Words - UST

- to inherit the property
- the name of
• Ruth
• Boaz
• from Moab
• from
• our relative
• her dead husband
• in order that she may have a son...and carry on
Ruth 4:6

damaging my own inheritance (ULT)
I would ruin my own son's inheritance (UST)

The man would need to give some of his wealth in exchange for the property. Then if he were to marry Ruth, that property would belong to her son, not to his own children. In that way, he would be taking away from the wealth that his own children would inherit from him and giving it instead to the children that Ruth might bear. Alternate translation: “taking away from my own children's inheritance.”

my own inheritance. You redeem for yourself...my right of redemption (ULT)
my own son's inheritance. You may be responsible for the land and the woman...in my place (UST)

You yourself redeem it instead of me

Translation Words - ULT

- my own inheritance
- the kinsman-redeemer
- to redeem it
- redeem
- my right of redemption
- to redeem it

Translation Words - UST

- my own son's inheritance
- the nearer relative
- Then...buy it back
- You may be responsible for the land and the woman
- in my place
- do it
Now...this is (ULT)
At that time, it was the custom (UST)

Now this was the custom. The writer of the book stops telling the story in order to give some background information that explains the custom of exchange during the time of Ruth. Use your language's way of giving background information in a story. (See: Background Information)

in earlier times (ULT)
At that time, it was the custom (UST)

in earlier times or long ago. This implies that this custom was no longer practiced when the book of Ruth was written. (See: Background Information)

to his friend (ULT)
to the other man (UST)

to the other person. This refers to the person with whom he was making the agreement. In this situation the near kinsman gave Boaz his sandal. (See: Idiom).

Translation Words - ULT

- redemption
- in Israel
- how...was confirmed
- the form of legal agreement
- his sandal...it

Translation Words - UST

- to redeem
- in Israel
- that, when two people agreed...between them
- was the way they completed transactions
- one of his sandals
Ruth 4:8

So the kinsman-redeemer said (ULT)
So the relative said (UST)

The events of the story start again here after the background information of verse 7. Use your language's way of starting to tell the events of the story again.

Translation Words - ULT

• the kinsman-redeemer
• to Boaz
• his sandal

Translation Words - UST

• the relative
• to Boaz
• one of his sandals

ULT
8 So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” and he took off his sandal.

UST
8 So the relative said to Boaz, “You buy the field yourself!” And he took off one of his sandals and gave it to Boaz.
Ruth 4:9

to the elders and to all the people (ULT)
to the respected men and to all the other people who were there (UST)

This refers to all the people who were present at the meeting place, not to everyone in the town. (See: Hyperbole)

from the hand of Naomi (ULT)
from Naomi (UST)

The hand of Naomi represents Naomi. Since her husband and sons had died, the right to the property belonged to her. Alternate translation: “from Naomi” (See: Synecdoche)

everything that belonged to Elimelek and everything that belonged to Kilion and Mahlon

This refers to all the land and possessions of Naomi's dead husband and sons.

Translation Words - ULT

• witnesses
• Boaz
• from the hand of
• to the elders...to

Translation Words - UST

• have...seen
• Boaz
• from
• to the respected men
Ruth 4:10

And...also (ULT)
also (UST)

This connecting phrase indicates that the people sitting at the gate are witnesses to the fact that Boaz is buying back Elimelek's family land for Naomi (4:9) and also to the fact that Boaz is claiming Ruth to be his wife (4:10). (See: Connecting Words and Phrases)

in order to raise up the name of the dead man over his inheritance (ULT)
This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will be considered Mahlon's son. He will inherit the property (UST)

See how you translated this phrase in 4:5. Alternate translation: “so that I might give her a son who will inherit the dead man's property”

so that the name of the dead man will not be cut off from among his brothers (ULT)
and carry on the family name among his relatives (UST)

Being forgotten is spoken of as if one's name were being cut off from a list of people who had lived earlier. Alternate translation: “so that he will not be forgotten by his brothers' descendants and by the people of this town” (See: Metaphor)

the name of...so that...the dead man will not be cut off (ULT)
This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will be considered Mahlon's son...and carry on the family (UST)

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: “so that his name will be preserved” (See: Double Negatives)

and from the gate of his place (ULT)
and here in his hometown (UST)

The gate of the town is where the leaders gathered and made important legal decisions, such as decisions about who owns a piece of land. Alternate translation: “and among the important people of his town” (See: Metonymy)

Today you are witnesses (ULT)
Today you have seen and heard these things, and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them (UST)

You have seen and heard these things today, and can speak of them tomorrow

Translation Words - ULT

• his inheritance
• his brothers
• witnesses
• the name of
• the name of (2)
• Ruth
• the Moabite woman
• and from the gate of
• the dead man
• the dead man
• in order to raise up

Translation Words - UST

• He will inherit the property
• his relatives
• have seen and heard these things, and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them
• This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will be considered Mahlon's son
• name (2)
• Ruth
• from Moab
• and here in his hometown
• This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will be considered Mahlon's son
• the family
• This is in order that she may give birth to a son who will be considered Mahlon's son
Ruth 4:11

the people who were in the gate (ULT)
and the others who were sitting at the town gate (UST)

the people who were meeting together near the gate

who is coming into your house (ULT)
who will be coming into your home (UST)

This has both a literal and a figurative meaning. As Ruth marries Boaz, she will move into his house. “House” can be a metonym the represents “family,” so this also refers to becoming part of Boaz’s family by being his wife. Alternate translation: “who is becoming part of your family” (See: Metonymy)

like Rachel and Leah (ULT)
like Rachel and Leah (UST)

These were the two wives of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel.

built up…the house of Israel (ULT)
bore our ancestors and started…our people, Israel (UST)

bore many children who became the nation of Israel

Achieve honor in Ephrathah, and be renowned in Bethlehem (ULT)
We desire that you become rich in the clan of Ephrathah and famous here in Bethlehem (UST)

These two phrases are similar in meaning. The second phrase repeats somewhat and adds to the meaning of the first. This is a Hebrew style of emphasis. Alternate translation: “May you do good things in Bethlehem and become well-known for them.” (See: Parallelism).

Achieve honor in Ephrathah, and be renowned in Bethlehem (ULT)
We desire that you become rich in the clan of Ephrathah and famous here in Bethlehem (UST)

These phrases are a form of blessing. Use the style of blessing that is appropriate in your language. Alternate translation: “May you do good things in Bethlehem and may you become well-known for them.” (See: Imperatives - Other Uses).

Achieve honor in Ephrathah (ULT)
We desire that you become rich in the clan of Ephrathah (UST)

The area around the town of Bethlehem was known as Ephrathah, and that became another name for the town. Presumably this name came from the Israelite clan that settled in and around the city of Bethlehem.
Translation Words - ULT

- We are witnesses
- Yahweh
- Israel
- and Leah
- in Ephrathah
- like Rachel
- in Bethlehem
- in the gate
- honor
- and the elders
- your house
- the house of

Translation Words - UST

- Yes, we have seen and heard
- Yahweh
- Israel
- and Leah
- in the clan of Ephrathah
- like Rachel
- here in Bethlehem
- were sitting at the town gate
- become rich
- the respected men
- your home
- our people
Ruth 4:12

And may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah (ULT)
We pray that your family will be like the family of your ancestor Perez, son of Judah and Tamar (UST)

*house* stands for “family” or “clan.” Perez had many descendants who became large clans in Israel, including the clan of Ephrathah. Also, many of his descendants became important people. The people were asking God to bless Boaz in a similar way through Ruth’s children. (See: *Metonymy*)

Tamar bore to Judah (ULT)
son of Judah and Tamar (UST)

Tamar, like Ruth, was also a widow. Judah fathered a son with Tamar, who continued the family name of her dead husband.

from the offspring that Yahweh gives you (ULT)
because of the many descendants that Yahweh will give to you (UST)

The people are asking for a blessing from Yahweh, that he would give Boaz many children through Ruth who would do good things, just as he did for Perez. Use the form of blessing that is appropriate in your language.

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- the offspring
- to Judah
- Tamar
- your house
- like the house of

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- the many descendants
- of Judah
- and Tamar
- your family
- like the family of
Ruth 4:13

So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife (ULT)
So Boaz took Ruth to be his wife (UST)

These two phrases mean very much the same thing, as the second phrase repeats and expands the first. This is a Hebrew poetic style. The two phrases can be combined as in the UST. (See: Parallelism)

So Boaz took Ruth (ULT)
So Boaz took Ruth (UST)

This phrase indicates that Boaz did what he said he would do in verse 10. It does not imply any form of violence. Along with the following phrase, it simply means, So Boaz married Ruth or So Boaz took Ruth as a wife. Use a connecting word (like “so”) that indicates that this action by Boaz is a result of the agreement in verse 10. (See: Connect - Reason-and-Result Relationship)

and he went in to her (ULT)
and had sex with her (UST)

This is a euphemism that refers to having sexual intercourse. Alternate translation: “He had sexual relations with her” (See: Euphemism)

Translation Words - ULT

• a son
• Yahweh
• Ruth
• Boaz
• conception

Translation Words - UST

• a son
• Yahweh
• Ruth
• Boaz
• to become pregnant
Ruth 4:14

the women (ULT)
The women of Bethlehem (UST)

These are the women of the town as mentioned in 1:19. This can be made clear if necessary. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Blessed be Yahweh (ULT)
Praise Yahweh (UST)

The women are praising God for what he has done for Naomi and Ruth. If it does not make sense in your language to “bless” God, use a word like “praise” or “we give thanks.” See the UST.

has not left you today without a kinsman-redeemer (ULT)
giving you a man to preserve your family today (UST)

This phrase can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “who has provided you today with a kinsman to redeem you” (See: Double Negatives)

May his name be renowned (ULT)
We desire that people...will know his name (UST)

This is a blessing, stating that the women desire that Naomi's grandson will have a good reputation and character. Use the form of blessing that is appropriate in your language.

Translation Words - ULT

- Blessed be
- a kinsman-redeemer
- Yahweh
- his name
- in Israel

Translation Words - UST

- Praise
- a man to preserve your family
- Yahweh
- his name
- throughout Israel
Ruth 4:15

a restorer of life (ULT)
feel young again (UST)

This phrase refers to how Naomi will again experience joy and hope in her life as a result of having this grandson. Alternate translation: “one who brings joy to you again” or “one who will make you feel young/strong again”

and a nourisher of your old age (ULT)
and he will take care of you when you become old (UST)

For (ULT)
Therefore (UST)

We know this because Use a connecting word or phrase that indicates that what follows (the fact that Ruth has borne him) is the reason for the women’s confident prediction of his character. If it makes more sense to put the reason first, then follow the order in the UST.

is better to you than seven sons (ULT)
has been better to you than if you had seven sons (UST)

seven represented the idea of completeness or perfection. This is a way to praise Ruth for how she has provided for Naomi by bearing a grandson for her by Boaz, when Naomi’s sons could not provide for her because they had died. Alternate translation: “better to you than any son” or “worth more to you than many sons” (See: Idiom)

Translation Words - ULT

• life
• loves you
• sons
• a restorer of
• is better

Translation Words - UST

• feel young again
• loves you
• sons
• feel young again
• has been better
Ruth 4:16

And Naomi took the child (ULT)
Then Naomi picked up the baby (UST)

_**Naomi picked up the child**_ This refers to Naomi holding the child. Make sure it does not sound like she took him away from Ruth in any hostile way.

and she became his nurse (ULT)
and became a second mother for him (UST)

and _took care of him_

**Translation Words - ULT**

- the child

**Translation Words - UST**

- the baby
Ruth 4:17

So the neighbor women called out a name for him...
And they called his name Obed (ULT)
The women who were living nearby...They named him Obed (UST)

The first phrase introduces the naming event, and the second repeats it in order to report the event. If this is confusing, the two phrases can be combined. So the neighbor women gave him the name Obed or The women of the neighborhood said...and they named him Obed

A son has been born to Naomi (ULT)
It is as though Naomi now has a son (UST)

It is as though Naomi has a son again. It was understood that the child was Naomi's grandson, not her physical son, but he would carry on the family line of both Naomi and Ruth.

He was the father of Jesse (ULT)
Later, Obed became the father of Jesse (UST)

Later, he became the father of Jesse It may be necessary to make it clear that much time passed between the births of Obed, Jesse, and David.

The father of David (ULT)
who became the father of David (UST)

father of King David. Though King is not stated, it was clear to the original audience that this David was King David. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Translation Words - ULT

• A son
• a name
• his name
• David
• Jesse
• the father of
• the father of

Translation Words - UST

• a son
• The women who were living nearby
• They named him
• David
• Jesse
• became the father of
• who became the father of
Ruth 4:18

the generations of Perez (ULT)
a list of the descendants of Perez (UST)

the successive descendants of our clan, starting with Perez. Because it was mentioned earlier that Perez was the son of Judah, the writer continues listing the family line that came from Perez. Verse 17 was the end of the story about Naomi and Ruth, and verse 18 begins a final section that lists the family line of the clan of Ephrathah, showing how important Obed was as the grandfather of King David. Use a connecting word that signals that this is a new section. You may also need to make it clear that this verse refers to a much earlier time than the time period of the story.

Translation Words - ULT

• the generations of

Translation Words - UST

• a list of the descendants of
Ruth 4:19

and Hezron...Amminadab (ULT)
Hezron...Amminadab (UST)

Use forms of these names that are natural in your language. (See: How to Translate Names)

ULT
19 and Hezron fathered Ram; and Ram fathered Amminadab;

UST
19 Hezron's son was Ram. Ram's son was Amminadab.
Ruth 4:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT
20 and Amminadab fathered Nahshon; and Nahshon fathered Salmon;

UST
20 Amminadab’s son was Nahshon. Nahshon’s son was Salmon.
Ruth 4:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

• Boaz
• and Boaz

Translation Words - UST

• Boaz
• Boaz

ULT
21 and Salmon fathered Boaz; and Boaz fathered Obed;

UST
21 Salmon's son was Boaz. Boaz's son was Obed.
Ruth 4:22

Jesse...David (ULT)
Jesse...David (UST)

King David. See the note about David on 4:17

Translation Words - ULT

• David
• Jesse
• and Jesse

Translation Words - UST

• David
• Jesse
• Jesse

ULT
22 and Obed fathered Jesse; and Jesse fathered David.
4:4 (1) or perhaps if he will not redeem it (variant Hebrew manuscripts)
4:4 (2) or perhaps and let me know (Hebrew Qere)
4:5 (3) or perhaps then I am acquiring (Hebrew Ketiv)

UST
22 Obed's son was Jesse. Jesse's son was David.
Abstract Nouns

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, or situations. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, 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.

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, weight, and many, many more.

Some languages, such as Biblical Greek and English, use abstract nouns a lot. It is a way of giving names to actions or qualities so that people who speak these languages can talk about them as though they were things. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, “I believe in the forgiveness of sin.” But some languages do not use abstract nouns very much. In these languages, they may not have the two abstract nouns “forgiveness” and “sin,” but they would express the same meaning in other ways. They would 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. For example, “What is its weight?” could be expressed as “How much does it weigh?” or “How heavy is it?”

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

Ever since you were a child you have known the sacred writings.

But godliness

with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the things that people want to do and the reasons that they want to do them.

(Go back to: Ruth 1:22)
Active or Passive

Some languages use 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 use 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 use active forms. Some languages use passive forms, and some do not. Some languages use passive forms only for certain purposes, and the passive form is not used for the same purposes in all of the languages that use 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 ULT)
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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 your language would use a passive form for the same purpose as in the passage that you are translating, then use a passive form. If you decide that it is better to translate without a passive form, here are some strategies that 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

He received a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.
Next we recommend you learn about:

Abstract Nouns
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-order]]

(Go back to: Ruth 2:11)
**Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information**

- **Assumed knowledge** is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker does not give the audience this information because he believes that they already know it.
- When the speaker does give the audience information, he can do so 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. **Implicit information** is information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly.

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 is 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, it is helpful if you 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 the people he was speaking to would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged because they did not repent.

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

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 ULT) - The 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 ULT) - The 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 ULT) - The assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a
routine 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 ULT) - The 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 ULT) - The 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.

or:
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.

Next we recommend you learn about:
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo]]
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 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;” “He once killed three wild pigs in one day;” “that they had brought with them;” and “Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin’s pig.”

Often background information uses “be” verbs like “was” and “were”, rather than action verbs. Examples of these are “Peter was the best hunter in the village” and “it was his own pig.”

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.
• You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
• You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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...

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 ULT 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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.

“When Abram was eighty-six years old, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael.”

John also rebuked Herod the tetrarch for marrying his brother’s wife, Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20)

The translation below reorders John’s rebuke and Herod’s actions.

“Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother’s wife, Herodias, and he did many other evil things, so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison.”

(Next we recommend you learn about:
- Connecting Words and Phrases
- Introduction of a New Event)

(Go back to: Ruth 1:22; 2:1; 4:7)
Biblical Volume

Description

The following terms are the most common units of volume used in the Bible to state how much a certain container could hold. The containers and measurements are given for both liquids (such as wine) and dry solids (such as grain). The metric values are not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact amount from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Original Measure</th>
<th>Liters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>omer</td>
<td>2 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>ephah</td>
<td>22 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>homer</td>
<td>220 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>cor</td>
<td>220 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>seah</td>
<td>7.7 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>lethek</td>
<td>114.8 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>metrete</td>
<td>40 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>bath</td>
<td>22 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>hin</td>
<td>3.7 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>kab</td>
<td>1.23 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>log</td>
<td>0.31 liters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Translation Principles

- The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
- Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
- Whatever measures you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kinds of measures in the text or a footnote.
- If you do not use the Biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one hin as “3.7 liters”, readers might think that the measurement is exactly 3.7 liters, not 3.6 or 3.8. It would be better to use a more approximate measure such as “three and a half liters” or “four liters”.
- When God tells people how much of something to use, and when people use those amounts in obedience to him, do not say “about” in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how much they used.
When the unit of measure is stated

Translation Strategies

1. Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)

2. Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

3. Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

4. Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.

5. Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Isaiah 5:10 below.

For four hectares of vineyard will yield only one bath, and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah. (Isaiah 5:10 ULT)

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)

“For four hektares of vineyard will yield only one bat, and one homer of seed will yield only an efa.”

(2) Use the measurements given in the UST. Usually they are metric measurements. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

“For four hectares of vineyard will yield only twenty-two liters and 220 liters of seed will yield only twenty-two liters.”

“For four hectares of vineyard will yield only twenty-two liters, and ten baskets of seed will yield only one basket.”

(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

“For four hectares of vineyard will yield only six gallons, and six and a half bushels of seed will yield only twenty quarts.”

(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

“For four hectares of vineyard will yield only one bath (six gallons), and one homer (six and a half bushels) of seed will yield only an ephah (twenty quarts).”

(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in footnotes.

“For four hectares of vineyard will yield only twenty-two liters ¹, and 220 liters ² of seed will yield only twenty-two liters ³.”

The footnotes would look like:
When the unit of measure is implied

Sometimes the Hebrew does not specify a particular unit of volume but only uses a number. In these cases, many English versions, including the ULT and UST, add the word “measure”.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty measures

of grain, there were only ten, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures of wine, there were only twenty. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

Translation Strategies

1. Translate literally by using the number without a unit.
2. Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount”.
3. Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.
4. Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Haggai 2:16 below.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty measures

of grain, there were only ten, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures of wine, there were only twenty. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

(1) Translate literally by using the number without a unit.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty of grain, there were only ten, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty of wine, there were only twenty.

(2) Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount”.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty amounts of grain, there were only ten, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty amounts of wine, there were only twenty.

(3) Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty baskets of grain, there were only ten, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty jars of wine, there were only twenty.

(4) Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

whenever anyone came to the grainery for twenty liters of grain, there were only ten liters, and whenever someone came to the wine vat to draw out fifty liters of wine, there were only twenty liters.
Connect - Background Information

Time Relationship

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

Background Clause

Definition

A background clause is one that describes something that is ongoing, and then another clause indicates an event that begins to happen during that time. These events are also simultaneous events, but they have the further relationship of background event and main event, because the event that is already happening serves as the background for the other event, which is the one that is in focus. The background event simply provides the time frame or other context for the main event or events.

Reason this is a translation issue

Languages indicate a shift in time in different ways. You (the translator) need to understand how these shifts in time are indicated in the original languages in order to communicate them clearly in your own language. Background clauses often indicate a time that began long before the event that is in focus. Translators need to understand how both the source language and the target language communicate background events. Some English words that indicate background events are "now", "when", "while", and "during". Those words can also indicate simultaneous events. To tell the difference, ask yourself if all of the events seem to be equal in importance and started at about the same time. If so, they are probably simultaneous events. But if an event(s) is ongoing and another event(s) just started, then the ongoing event(s) is probably background to the other event(s). Some common phrases that indicate background events are "in those days" and "at that time".

Examples from OBS and the Bible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Solomon was old, he also worshiped their gods. (OBS Story 18 Frame 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Solomon began to worship foreign gods at a time when he was old. Being old is the background event. Worshipping other gods is the main event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now</th>
<th>his parents went every year to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they again went up at the customary time for the feast. (Luke 2:41-42 ULT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The first event—going to Jerusalem—is ongoing and started long ago. We know this because of the words “every year.” Going to Jerusalem is the background event. Then an event begins that started during the time “when he was twelve years old.” So the main event is the specific time Jesus and his family traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover festival when he was twelve years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now</th>
<th>it came about that while they were there, the time came for the birth of her baby. (Luke 2:6 ULT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Being in Bethlehem is the background event. The birth of the baby is the main event.

| ...while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT) |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
This example begins with five background clauses (marked by commas), signalled as background by the words “while” and “during.” Then the main event happens: “the word of God came to John.”

Translation Strategies

If the way that the Background Clauses are marked is also clear in your language, then translate the Background Clauses as they are.

1. If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a Background Clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
2. If your language marks Background Clauses in a different way than using connecting words (such as by using different verb forms), then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

...while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a Background Clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.

...It happened during the time that Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and during the time that Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and during the time that his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and during the time that Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, and also during the time that Annas and Caiaphas were high priests—that the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

(2) If your language marks Background Clauses in a different way than using connecting words, such as with different verb forms, then use that way.

...Pontius Pilate was governing Judea, and Herod was ruling over Galilee, and his brother Philip was ruling over the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruling over Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were being high priests—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.
Example of differences in Time Relationship Connecting Words:

- **Background setting**: The word of Yahweh was rare in those days;
- **Background repeated**: there was no vision breaking through.
- **Introduction of main event**: It happened at that time,
- **Background when**: Eli was lying down in his place
- **Simultaneous background and**: his eyes had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well,
- **Simultaneous background and**: the lamp of God had not yet gone out,
- **Simultaneous background and**: Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh,
- **Simultaneous background where**: the ark of God was.
- **Main event**: Yahweh called to Samuel,
- **Sequential event who said**: “here I am.” (1 Sam 3:1-4 ULT)

In the above example, the first two lines talk about a condition that was going on for a long time. This is the general, long-term background. We know this from the phrase “in those days.” Then there are several lines of short-term background. The first one is introduced by “when,” and then three more are connected to the first one by “and.” The background clause introduced by “where” explains a little more about the background clause before it. Then the main event happens, followed by more events. Translators will need to think about the best way to show these relationships in their language.

*(Go back to: Ruth 1:19; 3:4)*
Connect - Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

Contrast relationship

Definition

A Contrast relationship is a logical relationship in which one event or item is in contrast or opposition to another.

Reason this is a translation issue

In Scripture, many events do not happen as the people involved intend or expect them to happen. Sometimes people act in ways that were not expected, whether good or bad. Often it is God at work changing the events. These events are often pivotal and it is important that translators understand and communicate these contrasts. In English Contrast Relationships are often indicated by the words “but,” “although,” “even though,” “though,” “yet,” or “however.”

Examples from OBS and the Bible

You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for good! (Story 8 Frame 12 OBS)

Joseph’s brothers’ evil plan to sell Joseph is contrasted with God’s good plan to save many people. The word “but” marks the contrast.

For who is greater, the one who reclines at table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? Yet I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave and the humble way that he behaves, marked by the word “yet.”

...and though he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and he would be driven by the demon into the wilderness. (Luke 8:29 ULT)

It is unexpected that someone who is bound with chains will be able to break them. The word “though” marks the contrast of an unexpected event.

[David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. However, Solomon built the house for God. However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, (Acts 7:46-48 ULT)

There are two contrasts here, both marked with “however.” The first contrast shows that even though David asked to find a place for God’s house, it was Solomon who built it. But then there is another contrast. Even though Solomon built a house for God, God does not live in houses that people build.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses Contrast Relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

1. If the Contrast Relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.
2. If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the Contrast Relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

3. If your language shows a Contrast Relationship in a different way, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the Contrast Relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

   For who is greater, the one who reclines at table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? Yet I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

   For who is greater, the one who reclines at table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? Unlike that person, I am among you as one who serves.

2. If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the Contrast Relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

   ...and though he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and he would be driven by the demon into the wilderness. (Luke 8:29 ULT)

   ...and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, but even so, he had broken his chains and he would be driven by the demon into the wilderness.

3. If your language shows a Contrast Relationship in a different way, then use that way.

   [David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. However, Solomon built the house for God. However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, (Acts 7:46-48 ULT)

   [David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was, Solomon, not David, who built the house for God. But even though Solomon built him a house, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands,

(Go back to: Ruth 3:12)
Connect - Exception Clauses

Exceptional relationship

Definition

Exceptional relationship connectors exclude an item(s) or person(s) from a group.

Reason this is a translation issue

English indicates exceptional relationships by first describing a group (Part 1) and then stating what is not in that group using words like “except,” “but not” “other than,” “besides,” “unless,” “however...not,” and “only” (Part 2). Some languages do not indicate that one or more items or people are excluded from a group in this way, but instead have other ways of doing this. In some languages this type of construction does not make sense, because the exception in Part 2 seems to contradict the statement in Part 1. Translators need to understand who (or what) is in the group and who (or what) is excluded in order to be able to accurately communicate this in their language.

Examples from OBS and the Bible

God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you." (Ruth 4:4 ULT)

David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. Not a man escaped except for four hundred young men, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If the way that Exceptional Clauses are marked in the source language is also clear in your language, then translate the Exceptional Clauses in the same way.

1. Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like “only.”

2. Reverse the order of the clauses, so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

Examples of Translation Strategy Applied

(1) Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like “only.”

David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. Not a man escaped except for four hundred young men, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

• Part 1: (Not a man escaped)
• Part 2: (except for four hundred young men)
David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. Only four hundred young men escaped, who rode on camels and fled.

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you.” (Ruth 4:4 ULT)

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for you are first in line to redeem it [only you can redeem it], and I am after you.”

The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will let you go only if you bless me."

(2) Reverse the order of the clauses, so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

God told Adam that he could not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but he could eat from any other tree in the garden.

(Go back to: Ruth 4:4)
Connect - Reason-and-Result Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, of chunks of text.

Reason-and-Result Relationships

Definition

A Reason-and-Result Relationship is a logical relationship in which one event is the reason or cause for another event. The second event, then, is the result of the first event.

Reason this is a translation issue

A Reason-and-Result Relationship can look forward - "I did Y because I wanted X to happen." But usually it is looking backward - "X happened, and so I did Y." Also, it is possible to state the Reason either before or after the Result. Many languages have a preferred order for the Reason and the Result, and it is confusing for the reader if they are in the opposite order. Common words used to indicate a Reason-and-Result Relationship in English are “because,” “so,” “therefore,” and “for.” Some of these words can also be used to indicate a Goal relationship, so translators need to be aware of the difference between a Goal relationship and a Reason-and-Result relationship. It is necessary for translators to understand how the two events are connected and then communicate them clearly in their language.

If the reason and result are stated in different verses, it is still possible to put them in a different order. If you change the order of the verses, then put the verse numbers together at the beginning of the group of verses that were rearranged like this: 1-2. This is called a Verse Bridge.

Examples from OBS and the Bible

The Jews were amazed, because Saul had tried to kill believers, and now he believed in Jesus! (Story 46 Frame 6 OBS)

The Reason is the change in Saul - that he had tried to kill people who believed in Jesus, and now he himself believed in Jesus. The Result is that the Jews were amazed. “Because” connects the two ideas and indicates that what follows it is a Reason.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. (Matthew 8:24 ULT)

The Reason is the great storm, and the Result is that the boat was covered with the waves. The two events are connected by “so that.” Notice that the term “so that” often indicates a Goal relationship, but here the relationship is Reason-and-Result. This is because the sea cannot think and therefore does not have a Goal.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

The Result is that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The Reason is because he rested on the seventh day from his work.

“Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20 ULT)

The Result is that the poor are blessed. The Reason is that the kingdom of God is theirs.
It was their children that Yahweh raised up in their place that Joshua circumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way (Joshua 5:7 ULT)

The Result is that Joshua circumcised the boys and men who had been born in the wilderness. The Reason was that they had not been circumcised while they were journeying.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses Reason-and-Result relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

1. If the order of the clauses is confusing for the reader, then change the order.
2. If the relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a more clear Connecting Word.
3. If it is more clear to put a Connecting Word in the clause that does not have one, then do so.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

(1) God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done in his creation. That is why he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.

(2) The kingdom of God belongs to you who are poor. Therefore, the poor are blessed.

(3) The reason that the poor are blessed is because yours is the kingdom of God.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. (Matthew 8:24 ULT)

(1) Behold, the boat was covered with the waves because a great storm arose on the sea.

(2) Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, with the result that the boat was covered with the waves.

(3) Behold, because a great storm arose on the sea, the boat was covered with the waves.

Since the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress. (Acts 21:34 ULT)

(1) The captain ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress, because he could not tell anything because of all the noise.

(2) Because the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.

(3) The captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, so he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.

(Go back to: Ruth 2:22; 3:2; 3:11; 4:13)
Connect - Simultaneous Time Relationship

Time Relationships

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, of chunks of text.

Simultaneous Clause

Definition

A simultaneous clause is a time relationship that connects two or more events that occur at the same time.

Reason this is a translation issue

Languages indicate that events occur simultaneously in many different ways. These may vary based on whether or not something is causing them to occur simultaneously. Connecting words that may indicate simultaneous events are words such as "while," "as," and "during". Often the Bible does not state a relationship between the events but simply says they occurred at the same time. It is important that you (the translator) know when a time relationship is implied and when it is not so that you can communicate it clearly. A Simultaneous Clause communicates that events happened at the same time but it does not indicate that one event caused the other. That would be a Reason-and-Result relationship.

Examples from OBS and the Bible

Joseph served his master well, and God blessed Joseph. (OBS Story 8 Frame 4)

Two events happened while Joseph was a slave to a wealthy government official: Joseph served well and God blessed Joseph. There is no indication of a Reason-and-Result (cause and effect) relationship between the two, or that the first event happened, and then the second event happened.

But in truth I tell you that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah... (Luke 4:25 ULT)

This tells us clearly that two things happened at the same time, because of the connecting word, during. But one event did not cause the other.

Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

The people were both waiting and wondering at the same time. The general connector, and, indicates this.

And while they were looking intently into heaven as he was going up, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

Three events happened at the same time - the disciples looking, Jesus going up, and two men standing. The connector words "while " and "as " tell us this.

Translation Strategies

If the way that the Simultaneous Clauses are marked also is clear in your language, then translate the Simultaneous Clauses as they are.

1. If the connecting word does not make it clear that the Simultaneous Clauses are happening at the same time, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
2. If it is not clear which clause the Simultaneous Clause is connected to, and that they are happening at the same time, mark all of the clauses with a connecting word.
3. If your language marks events as simultaneous in a different way than using connecting words, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Below, each Bible verse will be restated in three different ways, according to the Translation Strategies in the list above. Each restatement will have the same number as the Translation Strategy that it is using.

Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

(1) Now while the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were wondering at his delay in the temple.
(2) Now while the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were also wondering at his delay in the temple.
(3) Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering at his delay in the temple.

And they were looking intently into heaven as he was going up, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

(1) And during the time they were looking intently into heaven while he was going up, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing.
(2) And while they were looking intently into heaven as he was going up, behold, at that same time two men stood by them in white clothing.
(3) They were looking intently into heaven, he was going up, when they saw two men standing by them in white clothing.

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1)
Connecting Words and Phrases

Description

As humans, we write our thoughts in phrases and sentences. Usually, we want to communicate a series of thoughts that are connected to each other in different ways. Connecting Words and Phrases show how these thoughts are related to each other. For example, we can show how the following thoughts are related by using the underlined Connecting Words:

- It was raining, so I opened my umbrella.
- It was raining, but I did not have an umbrella. So I got very wet.

Connecting Words or Phrases can connect phrases or clauses within a sentence. They can connect sentences to each other. They can also connect entire chunks to one another in order to show how the chunk before relates to the chunk after. Very often, the Connecting Words that connect entire chunks to one another are either conjunctions or adverbs.

It was raining, but I did not have an umbrella. So I got very wet.

Now I must change my clothes. Then I will drink a cup of hot tea and warm myself by the fire.

In the above example, the word "now" connects the two short chunks of text, showing the relationship between them. The speaker must change his clothes, drink hot tea, and warm himself because of something that happened earlier (that is, he got wet in the rain).

Sometimes people might not use a Connecting Word because they expect the readers to understand the relationship between the thoughts because of the context. Some languages do not use Connecting Words as much as other languages do. They might say:

- It was raining. I did not have an umbrella. I got very wet.

You (the translator) will need to use the method that is most natural and clear in the target language. But in general, using Connecting Words whenever possible helps the reader to understand the ideas in the Bible most clearly.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- You need to understand the relationship between paragraphs, between sentences, and between parts of sentences in the Bible, and how Connecting Words and Phrases can help you to understand the relationship between the thoughts that it is connecting.
- Each language has its own ways of showing how thoughts are related.
- You need to know how to help readers understand the relationship between the thoughts in a way that is natural in your language.

Translation Principles

- You need to translate in a way that readers can understand the same relationship between thoughts that the original readers would have understood.
- Whether or not a Connecting Word is used is not as important as readers being able to understand the relationship between the ideas.

The Different Types of Connections

Listed below are different types of connections between ideas or events. These different types of connections can be indicated by using different Connecting Words. When we write or translate something, it is important to use the
right Connecting Word so that these connections are clear for the reader. If you would like additional information simply click the colored word to be directed to a page containing definitions and examples for each type of connection.

- **Sequential Clause** – a time relationship between two events in which one happens and then the other happens.
- **Simultaneous Clause** – a time relationship between two or more events that occur at the same time.
- **Background Clause** – a time relationship in which the first clause describes a long event that is happening at the time when the beginning of the second event happens, which is described in the second clause.
- **Exceptional Relationship** – one clause describes a group of people or items, and the other clause excludes one or more items or people from the group.
- **Hypothetical Condition** – the second event will only take place if the first one takes place. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.
- **Factual Condition** – a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true so that the condition is guaranteed to happen.
- **Contrary to Fact Condition** – a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain that it is not true. See also: Hypothetical Statements.
- **Goal Relationship** – a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first.
- **Reason and Result Relationship** – a logical relationship in which one event is the reason for the other event, which is the result.
- **Contrast Relationship** – one item is being described as different or in opposition to another.

**Examples from the Bible**

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me, but instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days. (Galatians 1:16-18 ULT)

The word “but” introduces something that contrasts with what was said before. The contrast here is between what Paul did not do and what he did do. The word “then” introduces a sequence of events. It introduces something that Paul did after he returned to Damascus.

Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

The word “Therefore” links this section with the section before it, signalling that the section that came before gave the reason for this section. “Therefore” usually links sections larger than one sentence. The word “and” links only two actions within the same sentence, that of breaking commandments and teaching others. In this verse the word “But” contrasts what one group of people will be called in God’s kingdom with what another group of people will be called.

We do not place a stumbling block in front of anyone, for we do not wish our ministry to be brought into disrepute. Instead, we prove ourselves by all our actions, that we are God’s servants. (2 Corinthians 6:3-4 ULT)

Here the word “for” connects what follows as the reason for what came before; the reason that Paul does not place stumbling blocks is that he does not want his ministry brought into disrepute. “Instead” contrasts what Paul does (proving by his actions that he is God’s servant) with what he said he does not do (placing stumbling blocks).
General Translation Strategies

See each type of Connecting Word above for specific strategies

If the way the relationship between thoughts is shown in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).
2. Do not use a connecting word if it would be strange to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.
3. Use a different connecting word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).

   Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”
   Immediately they left the nets and went after him. (Mark 1:17-18 ULT)

They followed Jesus because he told them to. Some translators may want to mark this clause with the connecting word “so”.

   Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” So immediately they left the nets and went after him.

(2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.

   Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Some languages would prefer not to use connecting words here, because the meaning is clear without them and using them would be unnatural. They might translate like this:

   Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments, teaching others to do so as well, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

   I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me, but instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days. (Galatians 1:16-18 ULT)

Some languages might not need the words “but” or “then” here. They might translate like this:

   I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. Instead I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him fifteen days.

(3) Use a different connecting word.

   Therefore
whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the
kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
(Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Instead of a word like “therefore,” a language might need a phrase to indicate that there was a section before it
that gave the reason for the section that follows. Also, the word “but” is used here because of the contrast between
the two groups of people. But in some languages, the word “but” would show that what comes after it is surprising
because of what came before it. So “and” might be clearer for those languages. They might translate like this:

| Because of that, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments
| And whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the
| kingdom of heaven.

(Go back to: Ruth 4:10)
Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotation and indirect quotation.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker’s exact words. In the example below, John would have said “I” when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John’s words, uses the word “I” in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John’s exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: “”.

- John said, “I do not know at what time I will arrive.”

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead of from the original person’s point of view. This kind of quotation usually features changes in pronouns, and it often features changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as “he” in the quotation and uses the word “would”, to replace the future tense indicated by “will”.

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Why this is a translation issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one rather than the other, or there is a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or an indirect quotation.

Examples from the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have underlined the quotations.

| He instructed him to tell no one, but told him, “Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULT) |

- Indirect quote: He instructed him to tell no one,
- Direct quote: but told him, “Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest...”

| Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them and said, “The kingdom of God is not something that can be observed. Neither will they say, ‘Look here!’ or, ‘Look there!’ because the kingdom of God is among you.” (Luke 17:20-21 ULT) |

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come,
- Direct quote: Jesus answered them and said, “The kingdom of God is not something that can be observed. Neither will they say, ‘Look here!’ or, ‘Look there!’ because the kingdom of God is among you.”
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, ‘Look here!’ or, ‘Look there!’
Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

1. If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
2. If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

He instructed him to tell no one, but told him, “Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

“(Luke 5:14 ULT)

(2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

He instructed him, “Tell no one. Just go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

(Go back to: Ruth 4:1)
Double Negatives

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each express the meaning of “not.” Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples in English are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not” such as the underlined parts of these words: “unhappy,” “impossible,” and “useless.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

It is not that we do not have authority... (2 Thessalonians 3:9 ULT)

And this better confidence did not happen without the taking of an oath,... (Hebrews 7:20 ULT.)

Be sure of this—wicked people will not go unpunished (Proverbs 11:21 ULT)

Reason this is a translation issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

• In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The following Spanish sentence No ví a nadie is literally, “I did not see no one”. It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one”. The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone”.
• In some languages, a second negative cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent”.
• In some languages the double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent”.
• In some languages, such as the languages of the Bible, the double negative can create a positive sentence, and often strengthens the statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is intelligent” or “He is very intelligent”.

To translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know both what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples from the Bible

...in order not to be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14 ULT)

This means “so that they will be fruitful”.

All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

By using a double negative, John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything. The double negative makes a stronger statement than the simple positive.
Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

1. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
2. If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as "very" or "surely" or "absolutely."

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

For we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15 ULT)

“For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”

...in order not to be unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14 ULT)

“...so that they may be fruitful.”

(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely” or "absolutely."

Be sure of this—wicked people will not go un punished... (Proverbs 11:21 ULT)

“Be sure of this—wicked people will certainly be punished...”

All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

“All things were made through him. He made absolutely everything that has been made.”

(Next we recommend you learn about: [[rca/en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]])

(Go back to: Ruth 2:20; 3:18; 4:10; 4:14)
Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike Hendiadys, in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

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. People might think that the verse is describing two ideas or actions, when it is only describing one. In this 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 ULT)
  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 ULT)
  This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.
- You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words (Daniel 2:9 ULT)
  This means that they had decided to lie, which is another way of saying that they intended to deceive people.
- ...as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:19 ULT)
  This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any defect—not even one.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words or phrases.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words or phrases 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 ULT)
- “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 ULT)

- “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 ULT) - English can emphasize this with “any” and “at all.”

- “…a lamb without any blemish at all…”

(Go back to: Ruth 2:10; 2:11)
End of Story

Description

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

Different purposes for end of story information

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

Different languages have different ways of presenting these kinds of information. If you (the translator) do not use your language's ways of doing this, readers may not know these things:

- That this information is ending the story
- What the purpose of the information is
- How the information is related to the story

Principles of translation

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

Examples from the Bible

1. To summarize the story

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

1. To give a comment about what happened in the story

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

1. To tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends
Mary said, “My soul praises the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior…” Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her house. (Luke 1:46-47, 56 ULT)

1. To tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends

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

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

“Woe to you teachers of Jewish laws, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering.” After Jesus left there, the scribes and the Pharisees opposed him and argued with him about many things, trying to trap him in his own words. (Luke 11:52-54 ULT)

(Go back to: Ruth 1:22)
Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

Definition

...they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8 ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons "were dead". It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

Reason this is a translation issue

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples from the Bible

...where there was a cave. Saul went inside to relieve himself...(1 Samuel 24:3 ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so he did not say specifically what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen, since I have not slept with any man?” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order to be polite, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Use a euphemism from your own culture.
2. State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

...where there was a cave. Saul went inside to relieve himself.

(1 Samuel 24:3 ULT) - Some languages might use euphemisms like these:

“...where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to dig a hole”
“...where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to have some time alone”

Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen, since I have not slept with any man?” (Luke 1:34 ULT)
Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen, since I do not know a man?” - (This is the euphemism used in the original Greek)

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8 ULT)

“they found Saul and his sons dead on Mount Gilboa.”

(Go back to: Ruth 2:9; 4:13)
Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you". The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for “us”, “our”, “ours”, and “ourselves”. Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we.” If your language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we”, then you will need to understand what the speaker meant so that you can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples from the Bible

They said, “We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish, unless we went and bought food for all this crowd of people.” (Luke 9:13 ULT)

In the first clause, the disciples are telling Jesus how much food they have among them, so this “we” could be the inclusive form or the exclusive form. In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food, so that “we” would be the exclusive form, since Jesus would not go to buy food.

we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us (1 John 1:2 ULT)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the exclusive forms in this verse.

...the shepherds said one to each other, “Let us now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said “us”, they were including the people they were speaking to - one another.

Now it happened on one of those days that Jesus and his disciples entered into a boat, and he said to them, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.” Then they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULT)
When Jesus said “us”, he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so this would be the inclusive form.

Next we recommend you learn about:
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations]]

(Go back to: Ruth 1:10)
Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The singular form refers to one person, and the plural form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a dual form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

• Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the formal form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the informal form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

• Forms of “You” - Formal or Informal

(Go back to: Ruth 1:8; 1:10)
How to Translate Names

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)
Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out”.

She named him Moses and said, “Because I drew him from the water.” (Exodus 2:11 ULT)

(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 (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

 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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.

Saul was in agreement with his death (Acts 8:1 ULT)

It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.
...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 ULT)

...a young man named Paul \(^1\)

The footnote would look like:

\[1\] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

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 ULT)

a young man named Saul

The footnote would look like:

\[1\] Most versions say Saul here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called Paul.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

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;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)

It came about in Iconium that Paul \(^1\) and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:
Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate]]

(Go back to: Introduction to Ruth; Ruth 1:20; 4:19)
Hyperbole

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something that he means as completely true, or as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement. For example, the sentence below could mean three different things.

- It rains here every night.
  1. The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.
  2. The speaker means this as a generalization if he means that it rains here most nights.
  3. The speaker means this as a hyperbole if he wants to say that it rains more than it actually does, usually in order to express a strong attitude toward the amount of rain, such as being annoyed or being happy about it.

Hyperbole: This is a figure of speech that uses exaggeration. A speaker deliberately describes something by an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it. He expects people to understand that he is exaggerating.

- They will not leave one stone upon another (Luke 19:44 ULT)
  - This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.
- Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22 ULT)
  - This hyperbole means that he had learned much of what the Egyptians knew and taught, and thus was as educated as any Egyptian.

Generalization: This is a statement that is true most of the time or in most situations that it could apply to.

- The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame, but honor will come to him who learns from correction. (Proverbs 13:18)
  - These generalizations tell about what normally happens to people who ignore instruction and what normally happens to people who learn from correction. There may be some exceptions to these statements, but they are generally true.
  - And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. (Matthew 6:7)
  - This generalization tells about what Gentiles were known for doing. Many Gentiles did this. It does not matter if a few did not. The point was that the hearers should not join in this well-known practice.

Even though a hyperbole or a generalization may have a strong-sounding word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” it does not necessarily mean exactly “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never.” It simply means “most,” “most of the time,” “hardly any,” or “rarely.”

Reason this is a translation issue

1. Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.
2. If readers realize that a statement is not literally true, they need to be able to understand whether it is a hyperbole, a generalization, or a lie. (Though the Bible is completely true, it tells about people who did not always tell the truth.)
Examples from the Bible

Examples of Hyperbole

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

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

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

The underlined phrase is an exaggeration for the purpose of expression the emotion that the Philistine army was overwhelming in number. It means that there were many, many soldiers in the Philistine army.

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

This is a hyperbole. It expresses the assurance that God's Spirit teaches us about all things that we need to know. God's Spirit does not teach us about everything that it is possible to know.

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

The disciples probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for Jesus, but that many people were looking for him, or that all of Jesus’ closest friends there were looking for him. This is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that they and many others were worried about him.

Examples of Generalization

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46 ULT)

This rhetorical question is meant to express the generalization that there is nothing good in Nazareth. The people there had a reputation for being uneducated and not strictly religious. Of course, there were exceptions.

One of them, of their own prophets, has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies.” (Titus 1:12 ULT)

This is a generalization that means that Cretans had a reputation to be like this because, in general, this is how Cretans behaved. It is possible that there were exceptions.

A lazy hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes him rich. (Proverbs 10:4 ULT)

This is generally true, and reflects the experience of most people. It is possible that there are exceptions in some circumstances.

Caution

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

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

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

Do not assume that the word “all” is always a generalization that means “most.”
Yahweh is righteous in all his ways and gracious in all he does. (Psalms 145:17 ULT)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole or generalization would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here are other options.

1. Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
2. For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
3. For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.
4. For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.

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

(2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases”.

The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame... (Proverbs 13:18 ULT)

In general, the one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame.

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. (Matthew 6:7)

“And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles generally do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.”

(3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.

The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5 ULT)

Almost all the country of Judea and almost all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”

or:

Many of the country of Judea and many of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”

(4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5 ULT)
The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(Go back to: Ruth 1:19; 4:9)
Idiom

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

...Look, we all belong to the same nation.

He resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51 ULT)

He started to travel to Jerusalem, determined to reach it.

I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. (Luke 7:6 ULT)

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 ULT)

Be all ears when I say these words to you.

“My eyes grow dim from grief (Psalm 6:7 ULT)

I am crying my eyes out

Imperatives - Other Uses

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples from the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land that I tell you to live in.” (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command “Be clean” means to “be healed” so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

“I am willing. Be clean.” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3 ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general second-person command, as in the ULT:

God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like, “light must be”.

Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the condition under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen if they love wisdom.
The purpose of Proverbs 22:6 below is teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

**Teach** a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

**Translation Strategies**

1. If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
2. If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
3. If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

**Examples of Translation Strategies Applied**

(1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

**Be clean.** (Matthew 8:3 ULT)

- “You are now clean.”
- “I now cleanse you.”

God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God blessed them and said to them, **“There is now light”** and there was light.

God blessed them and said to them, **“My will for you is that you be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. I want you to have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”** (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

(2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, ‘Let there be light,’ so there was light.
God said, “Light must be,” as a result, there was light.

(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Teach a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

“If you teach a child the way he should go,
then when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”
(Go back to: Ruth 3:4; 4:11)
Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

Examples from the Bible

_In the days of Herod_, king of Judea, **there was a certain priest named Zechariah**, from the division of Abijah. **His wife was** from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULT)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first underlined phrase tells when it happened, and the next two underlined phrases introduce the main people. The next two verses go on to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not have any children. All of this is the setting. Then the phrase “One day” in Luke 1:8 helps to introduce the first event in this story:

*One day* while Zechariah was performing his duties as a priest before God in the order of his division, the priests followed their custom and chose him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULT)

_The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way._ His mother Mary was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULT)

The underlined sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

_After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king_, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying,... (Matthew 2:1 ULT)

The underlined phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened after Jesus was born.

_In those days_ John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying,... (Matthew 3:1-22 ULT)

The underlined phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

_Then_ Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. (Matthew 3:13 ULT)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

Now there was a **Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Council**. This man came to Jesus at night time (John 3:1-2 ULT)
The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a summary of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

**Translation Strategies**

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies.

1. Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
2. If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: “another time” or “someone.”
3. If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.
4. If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event would actually happen later in the story.

**Examples of Translation Strategies Applied**

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

   Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Council. This man came to Jesus at night time and said to him... (John 3:1,2)

   There was a man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council. One night he came to Jesus and said...

   One night a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council, came to Jesus and said...

   **As he passed by**, he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, who was sitting at the tax collecting place, and he said to him... (Mark 2:14 ULT)

   As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collecting place. Jesus saw him and said...

   As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collecting place. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him...

   As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collecting place. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him...

(2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as: another time, someone.

   Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) - If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase “after that” can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.
After that, when Noah was six hundred years old, the flood came upon the earth.

Again he began to teach beside the lake. (Mark 4:1 ULT) - In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone’s house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the lake.

Another time Jesus began to teach people again beside the lake.

Jesus went to the lake and began to teach people again there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was six hundred years old and the flood came upon the earth.

This part tells about what happened when the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was six hundred years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was six hundred years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because God had said that the waters of the flood would come.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- Background Information
- Introduction of New and Old Participants

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:19; 3:1; 3:8; 4:1)
Introduction of New and Old Participants

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are new participants. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are old participants.

Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus...This man came to Jesus at night time...
Jesus replied to him (John 3:1)

The first underlined phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. He is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he is an old participant.

Reason this is a translation issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

Examples from the Bible

New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man” in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who is family was, and what his name was.

There was a man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important one is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah's wife is simply referred to as “his wife”. This phrase shows her relationship to him.

There was a man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was not able to become pregnant and so she had not given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

When King David was very old, they covered him with blankets, but he could not keep warm. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his”, and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she”.

His wife was not able to become pregnant and so she had not given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)
Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah's wife is referred to with the noun phrase “the woman”.

The angel of Yahweh appeared to the woman and said to her, (Judges 13:3 ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant's name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh... (Judges 13:8 ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See Verbs.)

**Translation Strategies**

1. If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.
2. If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
3. If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

**Examples of Translation Strategies Applied**

(1) If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.

Joseph, a Levite, a man from Cyprus, was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of encouragement). (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) - Starting the sentence with Joseph's name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.

There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of encouragement).

There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

(2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

It happened when he finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1 ULT) - Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who “he” refers to.

It happened when Jesus finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.

(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20 ULT) - Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might find it unnatural or confusing to use his name so much. They might prefer a pronoun.

Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and he stayed there in the prison.
Next we recommend you learn about: [rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-pronouns]

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:15; 2:1)
Metaphor

Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of one thing as if it were a different thing because he wants people to think about how those two things are alike.

For example, someone might say:

- The girl I love is a red rose.

A girl and a rose are very different things, but the speaker considers that they are alike in some way. The hearer's task is to understand in what way they are alike.

The Parts of a Metaphor

The example above shows us that a metaphor has three parts. In this metaphor, the speaker is talking about "the girl I love". This is the Topic. The speaker wants the hearer to think about what is similar between her and "a red rose." The red rose is the Image to which he compares the girl. Most probably, he wants the hearer to consider that they are both beautiful. This is the Idea that the girl and the rose both share, and so we may also call it the Point of Comparison.

Every metaphor has three parts:

- The Topic, the item being immediately discussed by the writer/speaker.
- The Image, the physical item (object, event, action, etc.) which the speaker uses to describe the topic.
- The Idea, the abstract concept or quality that the physical Image brings to the mind of the hearer when he thinks of how the Image and the Topic are similar. Often, the Idea of a metaphor is not explicitly stated in the Bible, but it is only implied from the context. The hearer or reader usually needs to think of the Idea himself.

Using these terms, we can say that a metaphor is a figure of speech that uses a physical Image to apply an abstract Idea to the speaker's Topic.

Usually, a writer or speaker uses a metaphor in order to express something about a Topic, with at least one Point of Comparison (Idea) between the Topic and the Image. Often in metaphors, the Topic and the Image are explicitly stated, but the Idea is only implied. The writer/speaker often uses a metaphor in order to invite the readers/listeners to think about the similarity between the Topic and the Image and to figure out for themselves the Idea that is being communicated.

Speakers often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to make their language more vivid, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

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. When a metaphor has become very common in a language, often it becomes a "passive" metaphor, in contrast to uncommon metaphors, which we describe as being "active." Passive metaphors and active metaphors each present a different kind of translation problem, which we will discuss below.

Passive Metaphors

A passive 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. Linguists often call these "dead metaphors." Passive metaphors are extremely common. Examples in English include the terms “table leg”, “family tree”, “book leaf” (meaning a page in
a book), or the word “crane” (meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads). English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples of passive metaphors in Biblical Hebrew include using the word “hand” to represent “power,” using the word “face” to represent “presence,” and speaking of emotions or moral qualities as if they were “clothing.”

**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 (the Image) often represents the concepts of MORE or BETTER (the Idea). 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 temperature is going down,” and “I am feeling very low.”

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 body parts, or as if they were objects that could be seen or held, 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 these as metaphorical expressions or figures of speech, 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.

When translating something that is a passive metaphor into another language, do not treat it as a metaphor. Instead, just use the best expression for that thing or concept in the target language.

**Active Metaphors**

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept, or one thing for another thing. They make people think about how the one thing is like the other thing, because in most ways the two things are very different. People also easily recognize these metaphors 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 ULT)

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...,” (Luke 13:32 ULT)

Here, “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was intending for them to apply certain characteristics of a fox to Herod. They probably understood that Jesus intended to communicate that Herod was evil, either in a cunning way or as someone who was destructive, murderous, or who took things that did not belong to him, or all of these.

Active metaphors are the metaphors that need special care to translate correctly. To do so, you need to understand the parts of a metaphor and how they work together to produce meaning.
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 ULT)

In this metaphor, Jesus called himself the bread of life. The **Topic** is “I” (meaning Jesus himself) and the **Image** is “bread.” Bread was the primary food that people ate in that place and time. The similarity between bread and Jesus is that people need both to live. Just as people need to eat food in order to have physical life, people need to trust in Jesus in order to have eternal life. The **Idea** of the metaphor is “life.” In this case, Jesus stated the central **Idea** of the metaphor, but often the **Idea** is only implied.

**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 (the **Topic**) has a particular quality (the **Idea**) or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about the **Topic** as they would feel about the **Image**.

**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 wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.
- People may think that they understand the metaphor, but they do not. This can happen when they apply points of comparison from their own culture, rather than from the biblical culture.

**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 ULT)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria (“you”, the **Topic**) as if they were cows (the **Image**). Amos does not say what similarity(s) he intends between these women and cows. He wants the reader to think of them, and he fully expects that readers from his culture will easily do so. From the context, we can see that he means that the women are like cows in that they are fat and interested only in feeding themselves. If we were to apply similarities from a different culture, such as that cows are sacred and should be worshipped, we would get the wrong meaning from this verse.

**NOTE:** Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows. 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 ULT)

The example above has two related metaphors. The **Topic(s)** are “we” and “you,” and the **Image(s)** are “clay” and “potter.” The similarity between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish out of their material. The potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people. The **Idea** being expressed by the comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that **neither the clay nor God’s people have a right to complain about what they are becoming.**
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 would have understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it in the right way.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

1. If the metaphor is a common expression in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, it is a passive metaphor), then express the *Idea* in the simplest way preferred by your language.
2. If the metaphor seems to be an active metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible. 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 would not know the intended similarity (the *Idea*) between the topic and the image, then state it 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 in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, a passive metaphor), then express the *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 ULT)

(2) If the metaphor seems to be an active metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible. 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 ULT)
We made no change to this one, but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

(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."

   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 ULT)

(4) 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 ULT)

(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.

   And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the wood. You are our carver; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

(6) If the target audience would not know what the Topic is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)

   Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted. (Psalm 18:46 ULT)

(7) If the target audience would not know the intended similarity between the Topic and the Image, then state it clearly.

   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 ULT)

(8) 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 ULT)

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, see Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns.

(Go back to: Ruth 1:9; 1:13; 2:2; 2:10; 2:12; 2:13; 3:1; 4:10)
Metonymy

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an item (either physical or abstract) 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 that it is associated with.

and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 ULT)

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 ULT)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

• as a shorter way of referring to something
• to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a 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 ULT)

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 a king who would follow King David.

Immediately his mouth was opened (Luke 1:64 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

“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 ULT)

“The Lord God will give him the kingly authority of his father, David.”

or:

“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 ULT)

“who warned you to flee from God’s coming punishment?”

To learn about some common metonyms, see Biblical Imagery - Common Metonyms.

(Go back to: Ruth 1:9; 1:13; 1:19; 2:9; 2:11; 2:19; 3:7; 4:10; 4:11; 4:12)
Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

- The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds... (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man”.

- He will not be rich; his wealth will not last... (Job 15:29 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He”.

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

- ...the rich must not give more than the half shekel, and the poor must not give less. (Exodus 30:15 ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich”, and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples from the Bible

- The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of the righteous. (Psalms 125:3 ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

- Blessed are the meek (Matthew 5:5 ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

1. Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

- The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of the righteous

(Psalms 125:3 ULT)
The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of righteous people.

Blessed are the meek...

... (Matthew 5:5 ULT)

Blessed are people who are meek...

(Go back to: Ruth 1:8; 2:20; 4:5)
Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

Reason this is a translation issue: Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples from the Bible

But then Herod...had John locked up in prison. Now it came about, while all the people were being baptized by John, that Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets... But Joshua commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout.” (Joshua 6:8-10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2 ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

1. If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
2. If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)
3. If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

But then Herod...had John locked up in prison. Now it came about, while all the people were being baptized by John, that Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

Before John was put in prison, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.
Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2 ULT)

Who is worthy to open the scroll after breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets... 10 But Joshua commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout.” (Joshua 6:8-10 ULT)

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets... 10 But Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout.

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets... 10 But Joshua commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout.” Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2 ULT)

Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_events.

Next we recommend you learn about:

- Background Information
- Connecting Words and Phrases
- Introduction of a New Event

[(Go back to: Ruth 3:6)]
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

(1) 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything.

(2) The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.

The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
keeping watch over the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3 ULT)

The second line tells more specifically what Yahweh watches.

(3) The second completes what is said in the first.


I lift up my voice to Yahweh,
and he answers me from his holy hill. (Psalm 3:4 ULT)

The second line tells what Yahweh does in response to what the person does in the first clause.

(4) The second says something that contrasts with the first, 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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, ULT) - 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 ULT) - 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 ULT) - 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 ULT)

“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 ULT)

“All you have done is lie to me.”

**Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

“Allah sees absolutely everything that a person does.”

(Go back to: Ruth 2:12; 2:19; 2:20; 4:11; 4:13)
Phrases that Inform or Remind

Some languages can use a word or phrase with a noun to give information about that noun or to remind people of something about it.

- Mary gave some of the food to her sister, who was very thankful.

The phrase “who was very thankful” immediately follows the word “sister” and informs us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish this sister from another sister that Mary might have. It simply gives added information about that sister.

Description

Some languages can use a word or phrase with a noun to give information about that noun or to remind people of something about it.

- Mary gave some of the food to her sister, who was very thankful.

The phrase “who was very thankful” immediately follows the word “sister” and informs us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish this sister from another sister that Mary might have.

Reason people use these phrases: People often present either reminders or new information in a weak way. They do this when they want their listener to give most of his attention to something else they are saying. In the example above, the speaker wants most attention to be given to what Mary did, NOT to how her sister responded.

Reason this is a translation Issue: Languages have different ways of signaling the parts of communication that the listener should pay most attention to.

Translation Principles

- If your language does not use phrases with a noun for new information or a reminder, you may need to put that information or reminder in a different part of the sentence.
- Try to present it in a weak way.
- Ask yourself: In our language, how do we express information in a strong way, and how do we express it in a weaker way?

Examples from the Bible

The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. (Genesis 2:14 ULT)

There is only one Tigris River. The phrase “which flows east of Asshur” gives more information about where the Tigris River was. This would have been helpful to the original audience, because they knew where Asshur was.

I will wipe away mankind whom I have created from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind.

I will bring an end to the worthless idols of Memphis. (Ezekiel 30:13 ULT)

All idols are worthless. This is why God said he would destroy them.
...for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39 ULT)

All of God’s judgments are righteous. This is why the person who wrote this psalm said that they are good.

**Translation Strategies**

If people would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. Otherwise, here are other strategies of showing that the phrase is used to inform or remind.

1. Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.
2. Use one of your language’s ways for expressing information in a weak way. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

**Examples of Translation Strategies Applied**

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

   I hate those who serve worthless idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT) - By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

   “Because idols are worthless, I hate those who serve them.”

...for your righteous judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39 ULT)

   ...for your judgments are good because they are righteous.

**Can Sarah, who is ninety years old**

, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17-18 ULT) - The phrase “who is ninety years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

   “Can Sarah bear a son even when she is ninety years old?”

**I will call on Yahweh, who is worthy to be praised**

... (2 Samuel 22:4 ULT) - There is only one Yahweh. The phrase “who is worthy to be praised” gives a reason for calling on Yahweh.

   “I will call on Yahweh, because he is worthy to be praised”

(2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing information in a weak way.

   The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur.

   “The name of the third river is Tigris. It flows east of Asshur.”

(Go back to: Ruth 2:4; 3:2; 4:1)
Rhetorical Question

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. Or, 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 ULT)

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. These rhetorical questions might be used for the purpose of expressing attitudes or feelings, rebuking people, teaching something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, or introducing 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 different or more limited 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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 ULT)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was about to compare the kingdom of God to something. In this case, he compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed.

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, did the person who asked it expect to receive an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you understand the purpose for the rhetorical question. 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 ULT)

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 ULT)
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 ULT)*

*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 ULT)*

*You should not insult God's high priest!*

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?

*(Job 3:11 ULT)*

*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 ULT)*

*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 ULT)*

*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 ULT)*

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 ULT)*

*What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils?* Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

(Go back to: Ruth 1:11; 1:12; 1:13; 2:8; 2:9; 3:1; 3:2)
Symbolic Action

Description

A symbolic action is something that someone does in order to express a certain idea. For example, in some cultures people nod their head up and down to mean "Yes" or turn their head from side to side to mean "No". Symbolic actions do not mean the same things in all cultures. In the Bible, sometimes people perform symbolic actions and sometimes they only refer to the symbolic action.

Examples of symbolic actions

- In some cultures people shake hands when they meet to show that they are willing to be friendly.
- In some cultures people bow when they meet to show respect to each other.

Reason this is a translation issue

An action may have a meaning in one culture, and a different meaning or no meaning at all in another culture. For example, in some cultures raising the eyebrows means "I am surprised" or "What did you say?" In others cultures it means "Yes".

In the Bible people did things that had certain meanings in their culture. When we read the Bible we might not understand what someone meant if we interpret the action based on what it means in our own culture.

You (the translator) need to understand what people in the Bible meant when they used symbolic actions. If an action does not mean the same thing in your own culture, then you need to figure out how to translate what the action meant.

Examples from the Bible

Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: He did this to show great respect to Jesus.

Look, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to his home, and have a meal with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: When people wanted someone to welcome them into their home, they stood at the door and knocked on it.

Translation Strategies

If people would correctly understand what a symbolic action meant to the people in the Bible, consider using it. If not, here are some strategies for translating it.

1. Tell what the person did and why he did it.
2. Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.
3. Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning. Do this only in poetry, parables, and sermons. Do not do this when there actually was a person who did a specific action.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Tell what the person did and why he did it.
Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet in order to show that he greatly respected him.

Look, I stand at the door and knock. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Look, I stand at the door and knock on it, asking you to let me in.

(2) Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet. (Luke 8:41)

Jairus showed Jesus great respect.

Look, I stand at the door and knock. (Revelation 3:20)

Look, I stand at the door and ask you to let me in.

(3) Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning.

Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet. (Luke 8:41 ULT) - Since Jairus actually did this, you should not substitute an action from your own culture.

Look, I stand at the door and knock. (Revelation 3:20 ULT) - Jesus was not standing at a real door. Rather he was speaking about wanting to have a relationship with people. So in cultures where it is polite to clear one's throat when wanting to be let into a house, you could use that.

Look, I stand at the door and clear my throat.

(Go back to: Ruth 2:10; 3:4)
Synecdoche

Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

- **My soul** exalts the Lord. (Luke 1:46 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- 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 ULT)

“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. The hands are chosen to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

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 ULT)
- “I exalt the Lord.”

...the Pharisees

said to him (Mark 2:24 ULT)

- ...**a representative of the Pharisees** said to him...

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

I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

(Back to: Ruth 1:6; 4:5; 4:9)
alien, foreign, foreigner

Definition:
The term “foreigner” refers to a person living in a country that is not his own. Another name for a foreigner is an “alien.”

• In the Old Testament, this term especially refers to anyone who came from a different people group than the people he was living among.
• A foreigner is also a person whose language and culture is different from those of a particular region.
• For example, when Naomi and her family moved to Moab, they were foreigners there. When Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth later moved to Israel, Ruth was called a “foreigner” there because she was not originally from Israel.
• The apostle Paul told the Ephesians that before they knew Christ, they were “foreigners” to God’s covenant. Sometimes “foreigner” is translated as “stranger,” but it should not refer only to someone who is unfamiliar or unknown.

Bible References:

• 2 Chronicles 02:17
• Acts 07:29-30
• Deuteronomy 01:15-16
• Genesis 15:12-13
• Genesis 17:27
• Luke 17:18
• Matthew 17:24-25

Word Data:

• Strong’s: H312, H628, H776, H1471, H1481, H1616, H2114, H3937, H4033, H5236, H5237, H6154, H8453, G241, G245, G526, G915, G1854, G3581, G3927, G3941

(Go back to: Ruth 2:10)
Almighty

Facts:
The term “Almighty” literally means “all-powerful.” In the Bible, this term always refers to God.

- The titles “the Almighty” or “the Almighty One” refer to God and reveal that he has complete power and authority over everything.
- This term is also used to describe God in the titles “Almighty God” and “God Almighty” and “Lord Almighty” and “Lord God Almighty.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “All-powerful” or “Completely Powerful One” or “God, who is completely powerful.”
- Ways to translate the phrase “Lord God Almighty” could include “God, the Powerful Ruler” or “Powerful Sovereign God” or “Mighty God who is Master over everything.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God, lord, power)

Bible References:

- Exodus 06:2-5
- Genesis 17:01
- Genesis 35:11-13
- Job 08:03
- Numbers 24:15-16
- Revelation 01:7-8
- Ruth 01:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7706, G3841

(Go back to: Ruth 1:20; 1:21)
ancestor, father, fathered, forefather, grandfather

Definition:

The term “father” refers to a person’s male parent.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to a male ancestor(s) of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated a “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4 “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader,” depending on the context.
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: God the Father, son, Son of God)

Bible References:

- Acts 07:02
- Acts 07:32
- Acts 07:45
- Acts 22:03
- Genesis 31:30
- Genesis 31:42
- Genesis 31:53
- Hebrews 07:4-6
- John 04:12
- Joshua 24:3-4
- Malachi 03:07
- Mark 10:7-9
- Matthew 01:07
- Matthew 03:09
- Matthew 10:21
- Matthew 18:14
- Romans 04:12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1, H2, H25, H369, H539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G540, G1080, G3737, G3962, G3964, G3966, G3967, G3970, G3971, G3995, G4245, G4269, G4613

(Go back to: Ruth 4:17)
anoint, anointed, anointing

Definition:
The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell. In biblical times, there were several reasons for anointing someone with oil.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship. One time Jesus commented that in doing this she was preparing him for his future burial.
- After Jesus died, his friends prepared his body for burial by anointing it with oils and spices.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.
- In biblical times, a woman might anoint herself with perfume to make herself more sexually attractive.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour oil on” or “put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring perfumed oil on.”
- To “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil.” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated.”
- In some contexts the term “anoint” could be translated as “appoint.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: Christ, consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, priest, prophet)

Bible References:

- 1 John 02:20
- 1 John 02:27
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 04:27-28
- Amos 06:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 05:13-15

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 3:3)
barley

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

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

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: grain, thresh, wheat)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:12-14
- Job 31:40
- Judges 07:14
- Numbers 05:15
- Revelation 06:06

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8184, G2915, G2916

(Go back to: Ruth 1:22; 2:17; 2:23; 3:2; 3:15; 3:17)
Bethlehem, Ephrathah

Facts:

Bethlehem was a small city in the land of Israel, near the city of Jerusalem. It was also known as “Ephrathah,” which was probably its original name.

- Bethlehem has been called the “city of David,” since King David was born there.
- The prophet Micah said that the Messiah would come from “Bethlehem Ephrathah.”
- Fulfilling that prophecy, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, many years later.
- The name “Bethlehem” means “house of bread” or “house of food.”

(See also: Caleb, David, Micah)

Bible References:

- Genesis 35:16
- John 07:42
- Matthew 02:06
- Matthew 02:16
- Ruth 01:02
- Ruth 01:21

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:02** David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem.
- **21:09** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a virgin. The prophet Micah said that he would be born in the town of Bethlehem.
- **23:04** Joseph and Mary had to make a long journey from where they lived in Nazareth to Bethlehem because their ancestor was David whose hometown was Bethlehem.
- **23:06** “The Messiah, the Master, has been born in Bethlehem!”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H376, H672, H1035, G965

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:2; 1:19; 1:22; 2:4; 4:11)
bless, blessed, blessing

Definition:
To “bless” someone or something means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

- Blessing someone also means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.
- When people “bless” God or express a desire that God be blessed, this means they are praising him.
- The term “bless” is sometimes used for consecrating food before it is eaten, or for thanking and praising God for the food.

Translation Suggestions:
- To “bless” could also be translated as to “provide abundantly for” or to “be very kind and favorable toward.”
- “God has brought great blessing to” could be translated as “God has given many good things to” or “God has provided abundantly for” or “God has caused many good things to happen to”.
- “He is blessed” could be translated as “he will greatly benefit” or “he will experience good things” or “God will cause him to flourish.”
- “Blessed is the person who” could be translated as “How good it is for the person who.”
- Expressions like “blessed be the Lord” could be translated as “May the Lord be praised” or “Praise the Lord” or “I praise the Lord.”
- In the context of blessing food, this could be translated as “thanked God for the food” or “praised God for giving them food” or “consecrated the food by praising God for it.”

(See also: praise)

Bible References:
- 1 Corinthians 10:16
- Acts 13:34
- Ephesians 01:03
- Genesis 14:20
- Isaiah 44:03
- James 01:25
- Luke 06:20
- Matthew 26:26
- Nehemiah 09:05
- Romans 04:09

Examples from the Bible stories:
- 01:07 God saw that it was good and he blessed them.
- 01:15 God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He blessed them and told them, “Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.”
- 01:16 So God rested from all he had been doing. He blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- 04:04 “I will make your name great. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be blessed because of you.”
- 04:07 Melchizedek blessed Abram and said, “May God Most High who owns heaven and earth bless Abram.”
- 07:03 Isaac wanted to give his blessing to Esau.
• **08:05** Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

**Word Data:**

• Strong's: H833, H835, H1288, H1289, H1293, G1757, G2127, G2128, G2129, G3106, G3107, G3108, G6050

(Go back to: Ruth 2:4; 2:19; 2:20; 3:10; 4:14)
Boaz

Facts:
Boaz was an Israelite man who lived during the time when there were judges ruled Israel. He married a Moabite woman named Ruth and became both the great grandfather of King David and an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

- He was a relative of an Israelite woman named Naomi who had returned to Israel after her husband and sons died in Moab.
- Boaz “redeemed” Naomi’s widowed daughter-in-law Ruth by marrying her and giving her a future with a husband and children.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Moab, redeem, Ruth)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 02:12
- 2 Chronicles 03:17
- Luke 03:30-32
- Matthew 01:05
- Ruth 02:04

Word Data:
- Strong’s: H1162

bow, bow down, knelt, bend, bend the knee

Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To "bow down" means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include "bow the knee" (meaning to kneel) and "bow the head" (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is "bowed down" has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means "bend forward" or "bend the head" or "kneel."
- The term "bow down" could be translated as "kneel down" or "prostrate oneself."
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: humble, worship)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 05:18
- Exodus 20:05
- Genesis 24:26
- Genesis 44:14
- Isaiah 44:19
- Luke 24:05
- Matthew 02:11
- Revelation 03:09

Word Data:

- Strong's: H86, H3721, H3766, H5753, H5791, H6915, H7743, H7812, H7817, G1120, G2578, G2827, G4098

(Go back to: Ruth 2:10)
bread

Definition:

Bread is a food made from flour mixed with water and oil to form a dough. The dough is then shaped into a loaf and baked.

- When the term “loaf” occurs by itself, it means “loaf of bread.”
- Bread dough is usually made with something that makes it rise, such as yeast. However, bread can also be made without yeast so that it does not rise. This is called “unleavened bread” in the Bible. The ancient Israelites ate “unleavened bread” during the passover meal.
- Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, this term is also used in the Bible to refer to food in general. (See: Synecdoche) Many times the term “bread” can be translated more generally as “food.”
- The phrase “bread of the presence” refers to twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and were only for the priests to eat. This could be translated as “bread showing that God lived among them.”
- The term “bread from heaven” refers to the special white food called “manna” that God provided for the Israelites when they were wandering through the desert. Jesus also called himself the “bread that came down from heaven” and the “bread of life.”

(See also: Passover, tabernacle, temple, unleavened bread, yeast)

Bible References:

- Acts 02:46
- Acts 27:35
- Exodus 16:15
- Luke 09:13
- Mark 06:38
- Matthew 04:04
- Matthew 11:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2557, H3899, H4635, H4682, G106, G740, G4286

(Go back to: Ruth 1:6; 2:14)
brother

Definition:
The term “brother” refers to a male sibling who shares at least one biological parent.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives or associates, such as members of the same tribe, clan, occupation, or people group. When used in this way, the term can refer to both men and women.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often use the term “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: apostle, God the Father, sister, spirit)

Bible References:

- Acts 07:26
- Genesis 29:10
- Leviticus 19:17
- Nehemiah 03:01
- Philippians 04:21
- Revelation 01:09

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H251, H252, H264, H1730, H2992, H2993, H2994, H7453, G80, G81, G2385, G2455, G2500, G4613, G5360, G5569

(See also: Ruth 4:3; 4:10)
bury, buried, burial

Definition:
The term “bury” refers to putting an object (usually a dead body) into a hole or other burial place and then covering it with dirt or stones, etc. The term “burial” is the act of burying something, or it can be used to describe a place where something has been buried.

- Often people bury a dead body by placing it into a deep hole in the ground and then covering it with dirt.
- Sometimes the dead body is placed in a box-like structure, such as a coffin, before burying it.
- In Bible times, dead people were often buried in a cave or similar place. After Jesus died, his body was wrapped in cloths and placed in a stone tomb that was sealed with a large boulder.
- The terms “burial place” or “burial room” or “burial chamber” or “burial cave” always refer to a place where a dead body is buried.
- Other things can also be buried, such as when Achan buried silver and other things that he had stolen from Jericho.
- The phrase “buried his face” usually means “covered his face with his hands.”
- Sometimes the word “hide” can mean “bury” as when Achan hid things in the ground that he had stolen from Jericho. This meant he buried them in the ground.

(See also: Jericho, tomb)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 09:9-10
- Genesis 35:4-5
- Jeremiah 25:33
- Luke 16:22
- Matthew 27:07
- Psalm 079:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6900, H6912, H6913, G1779, G1780, G2290, G4916, G5027

(Go back to: Ruth 1:17)
children, child, offspring

Definition:
The term “child” (plural “children”) refers to the offspring of a man and woman. The term is often used more generally to refer to anyone who is young in age and is not yet a fully grown adult. The term “offspring” is a general reference to the biological descendants of people or animals.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person's descendants.
- Often in the Bible, “offspring” has the same meaning as “children” or “descendants.”
- The term “seed” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to offspring.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
  - children of the light
  - children of obedience
  - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to the Church. For example, sometimes the New Testament refers to people who believe in Jesus as “children of God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person's great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as, “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God's spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as, “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as, “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: descendant, seed, promise, son, spirit, believe, beloved)

Bible References:

- 1 John 02:28
- 3 John 01:04
- Galatians 04:19
- Genesis 45:11
- Joshua 08:34-35
- Nehemiah 05:05
- Acts 17:29
- Exodus 13:11-13
- Genesis 24:07
- Isaiah 41:8-9
- Job 05:25
- Luke 03:7
- Matthew 12:34
Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 4:12; 4:16)
clean, wash

Definition:

The term “clean” generally refers either to removing dirt or stains from something or to not having any dirt or stain in the first place. The term “wash” refers specifically to action of removing dirt or stains from something.

- “Cleanse” is the process of making something “clean.” It could also be translated as “wash” or “purify.”
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites which animals he had specified as ritually “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” Only the clean animals were permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice. In this context, the term “clean” means that the animal was acceptable to God for use as a sacrifice.
- A person who had certain skin diseases would be unclean until the skin was healed enough to no longer be contagious. Instructions for cleansing the skin had to be obeyed in order for that person to be declared “clean” again.
- Sometimes “clean” is used figuratively to refer to moral purity, meaning to be “clean” from sin.

In the Bible, the term “unclean” is used figuratively to refer to things that God declared to be unfit for his people to touch, eat, or sacrifice.

- God gave the Israelites instructions about which animals were “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” The unclean animals were not permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice.
- People with certain skin diseases were said to be “unclean” until they were healed.
- If the Israelites touched something “unclean,” they themselves would be considered unclean for a certain period of time.
- Obeying God's commands about not touching or eating unclean things kept the Israelites set apart for God's service.
- This physical and ritual uncleanness was also symbolic of moral uncleanness.
- In another figurative sense, an “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with the common word for “clean” or “pure” (in the sense of being not dirty).
- Other ways to translate this could include, “ritually clean” or “acceptable to God.”
- “Cleanse” could be translated by “wash” or “purify.”
- Make sure that the words used for “clean” and “cleanse” can also be understood in a figurative sense.
- The term “unclean” could also be translated as “not clean” or “unfit in God's eyes” or “physically unclean” or “defiled.”
- When referring to a demon as an unclean spirit, “unclean” could be translated as “evil” or “defiled.”
- The translation of this term should allow for spiritual uncleanness. It should be able to refer to anything that God declared as unfit for touching, eating, or sacrifice.

(See also: defile, demon, holy, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Genesis 07:02
- Genesis 07:08
- Deuteronomy 12:15
- Psalms 051:07
- Proverbs 20:30
- Ezekiel 24:13
- Matthew 23:27
- Luke 05:13
- Acts 08:07
- Acts 10:27-29
• Colossians 03:05
• 1 Thessalonians 04:07
• James 04:08

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 3:3)
comfort, comforts, comforter, uncomforted

Definition:
The terms “comfort” and “comforter” refer to helping someone who is suffering physical or emotional pain.

- A person who comforts someone is called a “comforter.”
- In the Old Testament, the term “comfort” is used to describe how God is kind and loving to his people and helps them when they are suffering.
- In the New Testament, it says that God will comfort his people through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive the comfort are then enabled to give the same comfort to others who are suffering.
- The expression “comforter of Israel” referred to the Messiah who would come to rescue his people.
- Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” who helps believers in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “comfort” could also be translated as, “ease the pain of” or “help (someone) overcome grief” or “encourage” or “console.”
- A phrase such as “our comfort” could be translated as “our encouragement” or “our consoling of (someone)” or “our help in times of grieving.”
- The term “comforter” could be translated as “person who comforts” or “someone who helps ease pain” or “person who encourages.”
- When the Holy Spirit is called “the Comforter” this could also be translated as “the Encourager” or “the Helper” or “the One who helps and guides.”
- The phrase “comforter of Israel” could be translated as, “the Messiah, who comforts Israel.”
- An expression like, “they have no comforter” could also be translated as, “No one has comforted them” or “There is no one to encourage or help them.”

(See also: encourage, Holy Spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 05:8-11
- 2 Corinthians 01:04
- 2 Samuel 10:1-3
- Acts 20:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2505, H5150, H5162, H5165, H5564, H8575, G302, G3870, G3874, G3875, G3888, G3890, G3931

(Go back to: Ruth 2:13)
command, commandment

Definition:

The term “command” means to order someone to do something. The term “commandment” refers to the thing that a person is commanded to do.

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

Translation Suggestions

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

(See decree, statute, law, Ten Commandments)

Bible References:

- Luke 01:06
- Matthew 01:24
- Matthew 22:38
- Matthew 28:20
- Numbers 01:17-19
- Romans 07:7-8

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 2:15)
**conceive, conception**

**Definition:**

The terms “conceive” and “conception” usually refer to becoming pregnant with a child. It can also be used for animals that become pregnant.

- The phrase “conceive a child” could be translated as, “become pregnant” or some other term that is an acceptable way of referring to this.
- The related term “conception” could be translated as, “beginning of a pregnancy” or “moment of becoming pregnant.”
- These terms can also refer to creating something or thinking of something, such as an idea, a plan, or a task. Ways to translate this could include, “think of” or “plan” or “create,” depending on the context.
- Sometimes this term can be used figuratively as in, “when sin is conceived” which means “when sin is first thought of” or “at the very start of a sin” or “when a sin first begins.”

(See also: create, womb)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 21:1-4
- Hosea 02:4-5
- Job 15:35
- Luke 01:24-25
- Luke 02:21

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2029, H2030, H2032, H2232, H2254, H2803, H3179, G1080, G1722, G2845, G4815

(Go back to: Ruth 4:13)
confirm, confirmation, legal

Definition:

The term “confirm” refers to verifying that something is true or legally certifying that a transaction has occurred.

- When a king is “confirmed” it means that the decision to make him king has been agreed upon and supported by the people.
- To confirm what someone wrote means to verify that what was written is true.
- The “confirmation” of the gospel means teaching people about the good news of Jesus in such a way that it shows that it is true.
- To give an oath “as confirmation” means to solemnly state or swear that something is true or trustworthy.
- Ways to translate “confirm” could include, “state as true” or “prove to be trustworthy” or “agree with” or “assure” or “promise,” depending on the context.

(See also: covenant, oath, trust)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:15-18
- 2 Corinthians 01:21
- 2 Kings 23:3
- Hebrews 06:16-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H559, H1396, H3045, H3559, H4390, H4672, H5414, H5975, H6213, H6965, G950, G951, G3315, G4972

(Go back to: Ruth 4:7)
covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love

Definition:

In biblical times, the term translated as "covenant faithfulness" was used to describe the kind of faithfulness, loyalty, kindness, and love that was both expected and demonstrated between people who were closely related to one another, either by marriage or by blood. This same term is used often in the Bible to describe the way God relates to his people, especially his commitment to fulfill the promises that he made to them.

- The way this term is translated can depend on how each of the individual terms “covenant” and “faithfulness” are translated.
- Other ways to translate this term might include: “faithful love;” “loyal, committed love;” or “loving dependability.”

(See also: covenant, faithful, grace, Israel, people of God, promise)

Bible References:

- Ezra 03:11
- Numbers 14:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2617

(Go back to: Introduction to Ruth; Ruth 1:8; 2:20; 3:10)
David

Facts:

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

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

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Goliath, Philistines, Saul (OT))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 17:12-13
- 1 Samuel 20:34
- 2 Samuel 05:02
- 2 Timothy 02:08
- Acts 02:25
- Acts 13:22
- Luke 01:32
- Mark 02:26

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:02 God chose a young Israelite named David to be king after Saul. David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. ... David was a humble and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- 17:03 David was also a great soldier and leader. When David was still a young man, he fought against a giant named Goliath.
- 17:04 Saul became jealous of the people's love for David. Saul tried many times to kill him, so David hid from Saul.
- 17:05 God blessed David and made him successful. David fought many battles and God helped him defeat Israel's enemies.
- 17:06 David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- 17:09 David ruled with justice and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- 17:13 God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the prophet Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was. David repented of his sin and God forgave him. For the rest of his life, David followed and obeyed God, even in difficult times.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1732, G1138

(Go back to: Ruth 4:17; 4:22)
die, dead, deadly, death,

Definition:
The term “death” refers to being physically dead instead of alive.

1. Physical death
   • To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
   • The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Eternal death
   • Eternal death is the separation of a person from God.
   • This is the kind of death that happened to Adam when he sinned and disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
   • This same kind of death happens to every person, because we sin. But God gives us eternal life when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:
   • To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression in the target language that refers to death.
   • In some languages, to “die” may be expressed as to “not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
   • Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as to “pass away” in English. However, in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
   • In the Bible, eternal life and eternal death are often compared to physical life and physical death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and eternal death.
   • In some languages it may be more clear to say “eternal death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
   • The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)
   • The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: believe, faith, life)

Bible References:
   • 1 Corinthians 15:21
   • 1 Thessalonians 04:17
   • Acts 10:42
   • Acts 14:19
   • Colossians 02:15
   • Colossians 02:20
   • Genesis 02:15-17
   • Genesis 34:27
   • Matthew 16:28
   • Romans 05:10
   • Romans 05:12
   • Romans 06:10
Examples from the Bible stories:

• 01:11 God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would die.
• 02:11 “Then you will die, and your body will return to dirt.”
• 07:10 Then Isaac died, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
• 37:05 “Jesus replied, “I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who believes in me will never die.”
• 40:08 Through his death, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
• 43:07 “Although Jesus died, God raised him from the dead.”
• 48:02 Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone dies.
• 50:17 He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death.

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 1:3; 1:5; 1:8; 1:17; 2:11; 2:20; 4:5; 4:10)
elder, older, old

Definition:
The term "elder" or "older" refers to people (in the Bible, usually men) who have grown old enough to become mature adults and leaders within a community. For example, elders might have gray hair, have adult children, or perhaps even have grandchildren or great-grandchildren.

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:1-3
- 1 Timothy 03:1-3
- 1 Timothy 04:14
- Acts 05:19-21
- Acts 14:23
- Mark 11:28
- Matthew 21:23-24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1419, H2205, H7868, G1087, G3187, G4244, G4245, G4850

(Go back to: Ruth 4:2; 4:4; 4:9; 4:11)
Ephrath, Ephrathah

Facts:

The terms "Ephrath" and "Ephrathah" are probably derived from the name "Ephraim," who was one of the sons of Joseph and became the patriarch of one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Different

• "Ephrathah" is the name of the region where Rachel died, near the city of Bethel.
• There is a woman named "Ephrath" in the OT, who was the wife of Caleb.
• Both cities of Bethlehem and Kirjath-Jearim are also called "Ephrathah," even though both cities are in a different region than described above (near Bethel).

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Boaz, Caleb, David, Israel)

Bible References:

Word Data:

• Strong's: H672, H673

(Go back to: Ruth 1:2; 4:11)
**evil, wicked, unpleasant**

**Definition:**

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

- 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 24:11
- 1 Timothy 06:10
- 3 John 01:10
- Genesis 02:17
- Genesis 06:5-6
- Job 01:01
- Job 08:20
- Judges 09:57
- Luke 06:22-23
- Matthew 07:11-12
- Proverbs 03:07
- 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:


(Go back to: Ruth 1:21)
**face, facial**

**Definition:**

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings.

- The expression “your face” is often a figurative way of saying “you.” Similarly, the expression “my face” often means “I” or “me.”
- In a physical sense, to “face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine affecting many people living on earth.
- The figurative expression “do not hide your face from your people” means “do not reject your people” or “do not desert your people” or “do not stop taking care of your people.”

**Translation Suggestions:**

- If possible, it is best to keep the expression or use an expression in the project language that has a similar meaning.
- The term to “face” could be translated as to “turn toward” or to “look at directly” or to “look at the face of.”
- The expression “face to face” could be translated as “up close” or “right in front of” or “in the presence of.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “before his face” could be translated as “ahead of him” or “in front of him” or “before him” or “in his presence.”
- The expression “set his face toward” could be translated as “began traveling toward” or “firmly made up his mind to go to.”
- The expression “hide his face from” could be translated as “turn away from” or “stop helping or protecting” or “reject.”
- To “set his face against” a city or people could be translated as “look at with anger and condemn” or “refuse to accept” or “decide to reject” or “condemn and reject” or “pass judgment on.”
- The expression “say it to their face” could be translated as “say it to them directly” or “say it to them in their presence” or “say it to them in person.”
- The expression “on the face of the land” could also be translated as “throughout the land” or “over the whole earth” or “living throughout the earth.”

**Bible References:**

- Deuteronomy 05:04
- Genesis 33:10

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H600, H639, H5869, H6440, H8389, G3799, G4383, G4750

*(Go back to: Ruth 2:10)*
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 04:07
- Acts 06:7
- Galatians 02:20-21
- James 02:20

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

(Go back to: Ruth 1 General Notes)
faithful, faithfulness, unfaithful, unfaithfulness, trustworthy

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
- Numbers 12:07
- 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 05:07
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 01:07
- 1 Thessalonians 05:24
- 3 John 01:05
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

(Go back to: Introduction to Ruth)
family, household

Definition:
The term “family” refers to a group of people who are related by blood and usually includes a father, mother, and their children. In the Bible, this term sometimes includes other close relatives such as grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts.

• In biblical times, usually the oldest man was the major authority of a family.
• Family could also include servants, concubines, and even foreigners.
• Some languages may have a broader word such as “clan” or “household” that would fit better in contexts where more than just parents and children are being referred to.
• The New Testament often uses terms related to the concept of “family” to refer to the Church, meaning people who believe in Jesus.

(See also: clan, ancestor, house)

Bible References:
• 1 Kings 08:1-2
• 1 Samuel 18:18
• Exodus 01:21
• Joshua 02:12-13
• Luke 02:04

Word Data:
• Strong’s: H1, H251, H272, H504, H1004, H1121, H2233, H2859, H2945, H3187, H4138, H4940, H5387, H5712, G1085, G3614, G3624, G3965

(Go back to: Ruth 2:1; 2:3)
famine

Definition:
The term “famine” refers to an extreme lack of food throughout a country or region, usually due to not enough rain.

- Food crops can fail from natural causes such as lack of rain, crop disease, or insects.
- Food shortages can also be caused by people, such as enemies who destroy crops.
- In the Bible, God sometimes caused famine as a way to punish nations when they sinned against him.
- In Amos 8:11 the term “famine” is used figuratively to refer to a time when God punished his people by not speaking to them. This could be translated with the word for “famine” in your language, or with a phrase such as “extreme lack” or “severe deprivation.”

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:11-12
- Acts 07:11
- Genesis 12:10
- Genesis 45:06
- Jeremiah 11:21-23
- Luke 04:25
- Matthew 24:08

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3720, H7458, H7459, G3042

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1)
favor, favorable, favoritism

Definition:
The term “favor” generally means approval. Someone who favors another person regards that person positively and approves of them.

- Jesus grew up “in favor with” God and men. This means that both God and others approved of his character and behavior.
- The expression “find favor” with someone means that someone is approved of by that person.
- When a king shows favor to someone, it often means that he approves of that person’s request and grants it.
- A “favor” can also be a gesture or action towards or for another person for their benefit.
- The term “favoritism” means an attitude of acting favorably toward some people but not others. It means the inclination to pick one person over another or one thing over another because the person or item is preferred. Generally, favoritism is considered unfair.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term “favor” could include “approval” or “blessing” or “benefit.”
- The “favorable year of Yahweh” could be translated as “the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing.”
- The term “favoritism” could be translated as “partiality” or “being prejudiced” or “unjust treatment.” This word is related to the word “favorite,” which means to prefer above all others.

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 02:25-26
- 2 Chronicles 19:07
- 2 Corinthians 01:11
- Acts 24:27
- Genesis 41:16
- Genesis 47:25
- Genesis 50:05

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 2:2; 2:10; 2:13)
fear, afraid, dread

**Definition:**

The terms “fear” refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term “fear” can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king. The term “dread” refers to extreme or intense fear.

**Translation Suggestions:**

- Depending on the context, the term “fear” can be translated in various ways, depending on the context. Some possibilities include: “be afraid;” “deeply respect;” or “deep respect;” “revere,” or “reverence;” or perhaps “be in awe of.”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “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).”

(See also: marvel, awe, Lord, power, Yahweh)

**Bible References:**

- 1 John 04:18
- Acts 02:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 06:14
- Jonah 01:09
- Luke 12:05
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

**Word Data:**


(Go back to: Ruth 3:11)
forsake, forsaken, leave

Definition:

The term “forsake” means to abandon someone or to give up something. Someone who has been “forsaken” has been deserted or abandoned by someone else.

- When people “forsake” God, they are being unfaithful to him by disobeying him.
- When God “forsakes” people, he has stopped helping them and allowed them to experience suffering in order to cause them to turn back to him.
- This term can also mean to forsake things, such as forsaking, or not following, God’s teachings.
- The term “forsaken” can be used in the past tense, as in “he has forsaken you” or as in referring to someone who has “been forsaken.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include “abandon” or “neglect” or “give up” or “go away from” or “leave behind,” depending on the context.
- To “forsake” God’s law could be translated “disobey God’s law.” This could also be translated as “abandon” or “give up on” or “stop obeying” his teachings or his laws.
- The phrase “be forsaken” can be translated as “be abandoned” or “be deserted.”
- It more clearer to use different words to translate this term, depending on whether the text describes forsaking a thing or a person.

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 06:11-13
- Daniel 11:29-30
- Genesis 24:27
- Joshua 24:16-18
- Matthew 27:45-47
- Proverbs 27:9-10
- Psalms 071:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H488, H2308, H5203, H5428, H5800, H5805, H7503, G646, G657, G863, G1459, G2641,

(Go back to: Ruth 1:16; 2:20)
gate, gate bars, gatekeeper, gateposts, gateway

**Definition:**

A “gate” is a hinged barrier at an access point in a fence or wall that surrounds a house or city. The “gate bar” refers to a wooden or metal bar that can be moved into place so that the gate cannot be opened from the outside.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A city gate was often the news and social center of a village. It was also where business transactions occurred and judgments were made.

**Translation Suggestions:**

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

**Bible References:**

- Acts 09:24
- Acts 10:18
- Deuteronomy 21:18-19
- Genesis 19:01
- Genesis 24:60
- Matthew 07:13

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1817, H5592, H6607, H8179, G2374, G4439, G4440

*(Go back to: Ruth 4:1; 4:10; 4:11)*
generation

Definition:

The term “generation” generally refers to a group of people who are all alive at the same time. They are all born in the same general time period and are therefore about the same age.

- A generation can also refer to a span of time. In Bible times, a generation was usually considered to be about 40 years.
- Parents and their children are from two different generations.
- In the Bible, the term “generation” is also used figuratively to refer generally to people who share common characteristics.

Translation Suggestions

- The phrase “this generation” or “people of this generation” could be translated as “the people living now” or “you people.”
- “This wicked generation” could also be translated as “these wicked people living now.”
- The expression “from generation to generation” or “from one generation to the next” could be translated as “people living now, as well as their children and grandchildren” or “people in every time period” or “people in this time period and future time periods” or “all people and their descendants.”
- “A generation to come will serve him; they will tell the next generation about Yahweh” could also be translated as “Many people in the future will serve Yahweh and will tell their children and grandchildren about him.”

(See also: descendant, evil, ancestor)

Bible References:

- Acts 15:19-21
- Exodus 03:13-15
- Genesis 15:16
- Genesis 17:07
- Mark 08:12
- Matthew 11:16
- Matthew 23:34-36
- Matthew 24:34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1755, H1859, H8435, G1074

(Go back to: Ruth 4:18)
glean, gleanings

Definition:

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

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

(See also: Boaz, grain, harvest, Ruth)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 24:21-22
- Isaiah 17:4-5
- Job 24:06
- Ruth 02:02
- Ruth 02:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3950, H3951, H5953, H5955

(Go back to: Ruth 2:2; 2:3; 2:7; 2:8; 2:15; 2:16; 2:17; 2:18; 2:19; 2:23)
God

Definition:
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” or “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.”

NOTE: In the biblical text, when a person who does not worship Yahweh speaks about Yahweh and uses the word “god,” it is acceptable to render the term without a capital letter in reference to Yahweh (see Jonah 1:6, 3:9).
- 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 01:07
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8
- 1 Timothy 04:10
- Colossians 01:16
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 03:1-2
- Genesis 01:02
- Hosea 04:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 02:20
- Jeremiah 05:05
- John 01:03
- Joshua 03:9-11
- Lamentations 03:43
- Micah 04:05
- Philippians 02:06
- Proverbs 24:12
- Psalms 047:09

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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:


(Go back to: Ruth 1:16; 2:12)
god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, 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 35:02
- Exodus 32:01
- Psalms 031:06
- Psalms 081:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 07:41
- Acts 07:43
- Acts 15:20
- Acts 19:27
- Romans 02:22
- Galatians 04:8-9
- Galatians 05:19-21
- Colossians 03:05
- 1 Thessalonians 01:09
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:


(Go back to: Ruth 1:15)
good, right, pleasant, pleasing, better, best

Definition:

The word “good” has different meanings depending on the context. Many languages will use different words to translate these different meanings.

- In general, something is good if it fits with God's character, purposes, and will.
- Something that is “good” could be pleasing, excellent, helpful, suitable, profitable, or morally right.
- Land that is “good” could be called “fertile” or “productive.”
- A “good” crop could be a “plentiful” crop.
- A person can be “good” at what they do if they are skillful at their task or profession, as in, the expression, “a good farmer.”
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”
- The term “goodness” usually refers to being morally good or righteous in thoughts and actions.
- The goodness of God refers to how he blesses people by giving them good and beneficial things. It also can refer to his moral perfection.

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone.
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: evil, holy, profit, righteous)

Bible References:

- Galatians 05:22-24
- Genesis 01:12
- Genesis 02:09
- Genesis 02:17
- James 03:13
- Romans 02:04

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 01:04 God saw that what he had created was good.
- 01:11 God planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”
- 01:12 Then God said, “It is not good for man to be alone.”
- 02:04 “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and evil like he does.”
- 08:12 “You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for good!”
- 14:15 Joshua was a good leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- 18:13 Some of these kings were good men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
28:01 "**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me '**good**'? There is only one who is **good**, and that is God."

**Word Data:**


*(Go back to: Ruth 2:22; 3:13; 4:15)*
**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 04:33
- Acts 06:08
- Acts 14:04
- Colossians 04:06
- Colossians 04:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 04:07
- John 01:16
- Philippians 04:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

**Word Data:**

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

*(Go back to: Ruth 2 General Notes)*
grain, grainfields

Definition:

The term “grain” usually refers to the seed of a food plant such as wheat, barley, corn, millet, or rice. It can also refer to the whole plant.

- In the Bible, the main grains that are referred to are wheat and barley.
- A head of grain is the part of the plant that holds the grain.
- Note that some older Bible versions use the word “corn” to refer to grain in general. In modern English however, “corn” only refers to one type of grain.

(See also: head, wheat)

Bible References:

- Genesis 42:03
- Genesis 42:26-28
- Genesis 43:1-2
- Luke 06:02
- Mark 02:24
- Matthew 13:7-9
- Ruth 01:22

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1250, H1430, H1715, H2233, H2591, H3759, H3899, H7054, H7383, H7641, H7668, G248, G2590, G3450, G4621, G4719

(Go back to: Ruth 2:2)
hand

Definition:
The word “hand” refers to the part of the body at the end of the arm. In the Bible, this term is associated with a person's power, control, or action, whether it be in reference to God or in reference to a human person.

Some of the various uses of the term “hand” include the following:

- To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.”
- To “save from the hand of” means to prevent someone from being harmed by another person.
- The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
- The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, the phrase “by the hand of the Lord” means that God caused something to happen.
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- The term “laying on of hands” can refer to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God's service, to pray for healing, or to ask God to bless that person.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that he himself wrote that part of the letter rather than speaking it to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as, “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: adversary, bless, captive, honor, power)

Bible References:

- Acts 07:25
- Acts 08:17
- Acts 11:21
- Genesis 09:05
- Genesis 14:20
- John 03:35
- Mark 07:32
- Matthew 06:03

Word Data:

(Go back to: Ruth 1:13; 4:5; 4:9)
harvest, reap

Definition:

The term “harvest” refers to the gather the ripe fruits, vegetables, seeds, or grains from the plants on which they were growing. The term “reap” means to harvest crops.

- The harvest time normally happens at the end of a growing season.
- The Israelites held a “Festival of Harvest” or “Festival of Ingathering” to celebrate the reaping of the food crops. God commanded them to offer the first fruits of these crops as a sacrifice to him.
- In biblical times, reapers usually harvested crops by hand, either pulling up the plants or cutting them with a sharp cutting tool.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate the concept with the word that is commonly used in the language to refer to the harvesting of crops.
- The event of harvesting could be translated as, “time of gathering in” or “crop gathering time” or “fruit picking time.”
- The verb to “harvest” could be translated as, to “gather in” or to “pick up” or to “collect.”

(See also: firstfruits, festival, good news)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 09:9-11
- 2 Samuel 21:7-9
- Galatians 06:9-10
- Isaiah 17:11
- James 05:7-8
- Leviticus 19:09
- Matthew 09:38
- Ruth 01:22
- Galatians 06:9-10
- Matthew 06:25-26
- Matthew 13:30
- Matthew 13:36-39
- Matthew 25:24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2758, H4395, H4672 H7105, H7114, H7938, G270, G2325, G2326, G2327

heart

Definition:
The term “heart” refers to the internal bodily organ that pumps blood throughout the body in people and animals. However, 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 complete sincerity, commitment, or willingness, holding nothing back.
- 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 03:17
- 1 Thessalonians 02:04
- 2 Thessalonians 03:13-15
- Acts 08:22
- Acts 15:09
- Luke 08:15
- Mark 02:06
- Matthew 05:08
- Matthew 22:37

Word Data:


(See also: hard)

(See also: heart)
hope, hoped

Definition:
Hope is strongly desiring something to happen. Hope can imply either certainty or uncertainty regarding a future event.

- In the Bible, the term “hope” also has the meaning of “trust,” as in “my hope is in the Lord.” It refers to a sure expectation of receiving what God has promised his people.
- Sometimes the ULT translates the term in the original language as “confidence.” This happens mostly in the New Testament in situations where people who believe in Jesus as their Savior have the assurance (or confidence or hope) of receiving what God has promised.
- To have “no hope” means to have no expectation of something good happening. It means that it is actually very certain that it will not happen.

Translation Suggestions:
- In some contexts, the term to “hope” could also be translated as to “wish” or to “desire” or to “expect.”
- The expression “nothing to hope for” could be translated as “nothing to trust in” or “no expectation of anything good”
- To “have no hope” could be translated as “have no expectation of anything good” or “have no security” or “be sure that nothing good will happen.”
- The expression “have set your hopes on” could also be translated as “have put your confidence in” or “have been trusting in.”
- The phrase “I find hope in your Word” could also be translated as “I am confident that your Word is true” or “Your Word helps me trust in you” or “When I obey your Word, I am certain to be blessed.”
- Phrases such as “hope in” God could also be translated a, “trust in God” or “know for sure that God will do what he has promised” or “be certain that God is faithful.”

(See also: bless, confidence, good, obey, trust, word of God)

Bible References:
- 1 Chronicles 29:14-15
- 1 Thessalonians 02:19
- Acts 24:14-16
- Acts 26:06
- Acts 27:20
- Colossians 01:05
- Job 11:20

Word Data:

(Go back to: Ruth 1:12)
house

Definition:
The term “house” refers to a small building, shelter, or tent, usually the place where a family sleeps. The term is often used figuratively in the Bible to mean various concepts such as “household” or “descendants,” etc.

- Sometimes the term "house" means “household,” referring to the people who live together in one house.
- Sometimes the term "house" means “family” or “descendants,” referring to all the people related to or descended from a particular person. For example, the phrase “house of David” refers to all the descendants of King David.
- The terms “house of God” and “house of Yahweh” refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to a central place where Yahweh was worshipped.
- The phrase “house of Israel” can refer generally to the entire nation of Israel or more specifically to the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “house” could be translated as “household” or “people” or “family” or “descendants” or “temple” or “dwelling place.”
- The phrase “house of David” could be translated as “clan of David” or “family of David” or “descendants of David.” Related expressions could be translated in a similar way.
- Different ways to translate “house of Israel” could include “people of Israel” or “Israel's descendants” or “Israelites.”
- The phrase “house of Yahweh” could be translated as “Yahweh's temple” or “place where Yahweh is worshiped” or “place where Yahweh meets with his people” or “where Yahweh dwells.” The phrase “house of God” could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: David, descendant, house of God, household, kingdom of Israel, tabernacle, temple, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Acts 07:42
- Acts 07:49
- Genesis 39:04
- Genesis 41:40
- Luke 08:39
- Matthew 10:06
- Matthew 15:24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1005, G3609, G3613, G3614, G3624

(Go back to: Ruth 1:8; 1:9; 2:7; 4:11; 4:12)
inherit, inheritance, heir

Definition:

The term “inherit” refers to receiving something valuable from a parent after the parent(s) die. The term can also refer to receiving something valuable from some other person because of a special relationship with that person. An “inheritance” is the thing(s) that is received, and an “heir” is a person who receives an inheritance.

- A physical inheritance that is received may be money, land, or other kinds of property.
- God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would inherit the land of Canaan, that it would belong to them forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- As always, consider first whether there are already terms in the target language for the concept of an heir or an inheritance, and use those terms.
- Depending on the context, other ways that the term “inherit” could be translated might include “receive” or “possess” or “come into possession of.”
- Ways to translate “inheritance” could include “promised gift” or “secure possession.”
- The term “heir” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “privileged child who receives the father’s possessions.”
- The term “heritage” could be translated as “inherited blessings.”

(See also: heir, Canaan, Promised Land)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 06:09
- 1 Peter 01:04
- 2 Samuel 21:03
- Acts 07:4-5
- Deuteronomy 20:16
- Galatians 05:21
- Genesis 15:07
- Hebrews 09:15
- Jeremiah 02:07
- Luke 15:11
- Matthew 19:29
- Psalm 079:01

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **04:06** When Abram arrived in Canaan God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an **inheritance**.”
- **27:01** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
- **35:03** “There was a man who had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘Father, I want my **inheritance** now!’ So the father divided his property between the two sons.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2490, H2506, H3423, H3425, H4181, H5157, H5159, G2816, G2817, G2819, G2820

(Go back to: Ruth 4:5; 4:6; 4:10)
Israel, Israelites

Facts:

The term “Israel” is the name that God gave to Jacob. The name means “he struggles with God.”

- The descendants of Jacob became known as the “people of Israel” or the “nation of Israel” or the “Israelites.”
- God formed his covenant with the people of Israel. They were his chosen people.
- The nation of Israel consisted of twelve tribes.
- Soon after King Solomon died, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: the southern kingdom, called “Judah,” and the northern kingdom, called “Israel.”
- Often the term “Israel” can be translated as “the people of Israel” or “the nation of Israel,” depending on the context.

(See also: Jacob, kingdom of Israel, Judah, nation, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:01
- 1 Kings 08:02
- Acts 02:36
- Acts 07:24
- Acts 13:23
- John 01:49-51
- Luke 24:21
- Mark 12:29
- Matthew 02:06
- Matthew 27:09
- Philippians 03:4-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 08:15 The descendants of the twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel.
- 09:03 The Egyptians forced the Israelites to build many buildings and even whole cities.
- 09:05 A certain Israelite woman gave birth to a baby boy.
- 10:01 They said, “This is what the God of Israel says, ‘Let my people go!’”
- 14:12 But despite all this, the people of Israel complained and grumbled against God and against Moses.
- 15:09 God fought for Israel that day. He caused the Amorites to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the Amorites.
- 15:12 After this battle, God gave Israel its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave Israel peace along all its borders.
- 16:16 So God punished Israel again for worshiping idols.
- 43:06 “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3478, H3479, H3481, H3482, G935, G2474, G2475

(Go back to: Ruth 2:12; 4:7; 4:11; 4:14)
Jesse

Facts:

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

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

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Boaz, descendant, Jesus, king, prophet, Ruth, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 02:12
- 1 Kings 12:16
- 1 Samuel 16:1
- Luke 03:32
- Matthew 01:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3448, G2421

(Go back to: Ruth 4:17; 4:22)
Judah

Facts:

Judah was one of Jacob’s older sons. His mother was Leah. His descendants were called the “tribe of Judah.” When used as the name of a region of land, the term “Judah” refers to the land given to the tribe of Judah, which includes the mountainous area to the south of the city of Jerusalem.

• It was Judah who told his brothers to sell their younger brother Joseph as a slave instead of leaving him to die in a deep pit.
• King David and all the kings after him were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
• When Solomon’s reign ended and the nation of Israel divided, the kingdom of Judah was the southern kingdom.
• In the New Testament book of Revelation, Jesus is called the “Lion of Judah.”
• The words “Jew” and “Judea” come from the name “Judah.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Jacob, Jew, Judah, Judea, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

• 1 Chronicles 02:1-2
• 1 Kings 01:09
• Genesis 29:35
• Genesis 38:02
• Luke 03:33
• Ruth 01:02

Word Data:

• Strong’s: H3063

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:2; 1:7; 4:12)
judge, judgment

Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right.

- 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)

Bible References:

- 1 John 04:17
- 1 Kings 03:09
- Acts 10:42-43
- Isaiah 03:14
- James 02:04
- Luke 06:37
- Micah 03:9-11
- Psalm 054:01

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:


(Visit the article for more information.)
law of Moses, God's law, law of Yahweh, the law

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 15:06
- Daniel 09:13
- Exodus 28:42-43
- Ezra 07:25-26
- Galatians 02:15
- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 05:18
- Nehemiah 10:29
- Romans 03:20

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

(Go back to: Ruth 2 General Notes)
Leah

Facts:
Leah was one of Jacob's wives. She was the mother of six of Jacob's sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. She was also the mother of Dinah.

- Leah's father was Laban, who was the brother of Jacob's mother Rebekah.
- Jacob didn't love Leah as much as he loved his other wife, Rachel, but God abundantly blessed Leah by giving her many children.
- Leah's son Judah was an ancestor of King David and Jesus.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)
(See also: Jacob, Judah, Laban, Rachel, Rebekah, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:
- Genesis 29:17
- Genesis 29:28
- Genesis 31:06
- Ruth 04:11

Word Data:
- Strong's: H3812

(Go back to: Ruth 4:11)
life, live, living, alive

Definition:
The term "life" refers to being physically alive as opposed to being physically dead.

1. Physical life

- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person's lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Eternal life

- A person has eternal life when he believes in Jesus. God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives’ could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about eternal life, the term “life” could be translated in the following ways: “eternal life” or “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God's Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: death, everlasting)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 01:03
- Acts 10:42
- Genesis 02:07
- Genesis 07:22
- Hebrews 10:20
- Jeremiah 44:02
- John 01:04
- Judges 02:18
- Luke 12:23
- Matthew 07:14
Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed life into him.
- **03:01** After a long time, many people were living in the world.
- **08:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still alive, he was very happy.
- **17:09** However, toward the end of his [David's] life he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:01** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
- **35:05** Jesus replied, “I am the Resurrection and the Life.”
- **44:05** “You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G198, G222, G227, G806, G590

(Go back to: Ruth 2:20; 3:13; 4:15)
lord, Lord, master, sir

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “lord” generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When “Lord” is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULT and UST, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.
- Some languages translate “Lord” as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of “master” when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as “master.”
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, “lord” could be translated with a respectful form of address such as “sir.” This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as “Lord” (capitalized) in English.

(See also: God, Jesus, ruler, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 39:02
- Joshua 03:9-11
- Psalms 086:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:04
- Lamentations 02:02
- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 09:09

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Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:05** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, “In God's word, he commands his people, 'Do not test the Lord your God.'”
- **25:07** Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God's word he commands his people, ‘Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.’”
- **26:03** This is the year of the Lord's favor.
- **27:02** The law expert replied that God's law says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.”
- **31:05** Then Peter said to Jesus, “Master, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water”
- **43:09** “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and Messiah!”
- **47:03** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her masters as a fortuneteller.
- **47:11** Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be saved.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H113, H136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G203, G634, G962, G1203, G2962

(Go back to: Ruth 2:13)
love, beloved

Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn't benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
   - Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
   - When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
   - In the ULT, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.

2. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.
   - This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
   - The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.

3. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULT refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God's love can include giving up one's own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means, “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”
- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.
- Many languages must express “love” as an action. So for example, they might translate “love is patient, love is kind” as, “when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him.”

(See also: covenant, death, sacrifice, save, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:07
- 1 John 03:02
- 1 Thessalonians 04:10
- Galatians 05:23
- Genesis 29:18
- Isaiah 56:06
- Jeremiah 02:02
- John 03:16
Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:02** The law expert replied that God's law says, "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself."
- **33:08** "The thorny ground is a person who hears God's word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God."
- **36:05** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I **love**."
- **39:10** “Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me.”
- **47:01** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:01** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:03** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:04** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:07** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:09** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 4:15)
Moab, Moabite

Facts:
The term "Moab" refers to a people group that lived to the east of the Salt Sea. The book of Genesis describes this people group as the descendents of a man named "Moab," who was the son of Lot's elder daughter.

- In the book of Ruth, Elimelek and his family went to live in Moab because of the famine around Bethlehem.
- Ruth is called a "Moabite woman" because she was born in the country of Moab and was from that people group.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Judea, Lot, Ruth, Salt Sea)

Bible References:

- Genesis 19:37
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Ruth 01:1-2
- Ruth 01:22

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4124, H4125

(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:2; 1:4; 1:6; 1:22; 2:2; 2:6; 2:21; 4:3; 4:5; 4:10)
name

Definition:
The term “name” refers to the word by which a specific person or thing is called. In the Bible, however, the term “name” is used in several different ways to refer to several different concepts.

- In some contexts, “name” could refer to a person’s reputation, as in “let us make a name for ourselves.”
- The term “name” could also refer to the memory of something. For example, “cut off the names of the idols” means to destroy those idols so that they are no longer remembered or worshiped.
- Speaking “in the name of God” meant speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative.
- The “name” of someone could refer to the entire person, as in “there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (See: metonymy)

Translation Suggestions:

- An expression like “his good name” could be translated as “his good reputation.”
- Doing something “in the name of” could be translated as “with the authority of” or “with the permission of” or “as the representative of” that person.
- The expression “make a name for ourselves” could be translated “cause many people to know about us” or “make people think we are very important.”
- The expression “call his name” could be translated as “name him” or “give him the name.”
- The expression “those who love your name” could be translated as “those who love you.”
- The expression “cut off the names of idols” could be translated as “get rid of pagan idols so that they are not even remembered” or “cause people to stop worshiping false gods” or “completely destroy all idols so that people no longer even think about them.”

(See also: call)

Bible References:

- 1 John 02:12
- 2 Timothy 02:19
- Acts 04:07
- Acts 04:12
- Acts 09:27
- Genesis 12:02
- Genesis 35:10
- Matthew 18:05

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5344, H7121, H7761, H8034, H8036, G2564, G3686, G3687, G5122

(See back to: Ruth 1:2; 1:4; 2:1; 2:19; 4:5; 4:10; 4:14; 4:17)
people of God

Definition:

The concept of the “people of God” in the Bible refers to people with whom God has established a covenant relationship.

- In the Old Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel was chosen by God and set apart from the other nations of the world in order to serve and obey him.
- In the New Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the “Church,” meaning everyone who believes in Jesus. This includes both Jews and Gentiles. In the New Testament, sometimes this group of people is called the "sons of God" or "children of God."
- When God uses the phrase “my people,” he is referring to people who have a covenant relationship with him. God's people are chosen by him, and he wants them to live in a way that is pleasing to him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people of God” could be translated as “God's people” or “the people who worship God” or “people who serve God” or “people who belong to God.”
- When God says “my people” other ways to translate it could include “the people I have chosen” or “the people who worship me” or “the people who belong to me.”
- Similarly, “your people” could be translated as “the people who belong to you” or “the people you chose to belong to you.”
- Also “his people” could be translated as “the people who belong to him” or “the people God chose to belong to himself.”

(See also: Israel, people group)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:02
- Acts 07:34
- Acts 07:51-53
- Acts 10:36-38
- Daniel 09:24-25
- Isaiah 02:5-6
- Jeremiah 06:20-22
- Joel 03:16-17
- Micah 06:3-5
- Revelation 13:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H430, H5971, G2316, G2992

(Go back to: Ruth 1:6)
people, people group,

Definition:

The terms “people” and “people group” refer to some group of people that shares a common language and culture. The term “the people” often refers to a gathering of people in a certain place or at a specific event.

- In Bible times, the members of a people group usually had the same ancestors and lived together in a particular country or area of land.
- Depending on the context, the term “people” can can refer to a “people group” or “family” or “relatives” or “army.”
- In plural form, the term “peoples” often refers to all people groups on the earth. Sometimes it refers more specifically to people who are not Israelites or who do not serve Yahweh. In some English Bible translations, the term “nations” is also used in this way.

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: descendant, nation, tribe, world)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 08:51-53
- 1 Samuel 08:07
- Deuteronomy 28:09
- Genesis 49:16
- Ruth 01:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 14:02 God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the Promised Land to their descendants, but now there were many people groups living there. what follows is
- 21:02 God promised Abraham that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing. This blessing would be that the Messiah would come sometime in the future and provide the way of salvation for people from all the people groups of the world.
- 42:08 “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere.”
• 42:10 “So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

• 48:11 Because of this New Covenant, anyone from any people group can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.

• 50:03 He (Jesus) said, “Go and make disciples of all people groups!” and, “The fields are ripe for harvest!”

Word Data:

• Strong’s: H249, H523, H524, H776, H1121, H1471, H3816, H5712, H5971, H5972, H6153, G1074, G1085, G1218, G1484, G2560, G2992, G3793

(Go back to: Ruth 1:10; 1:15; 1:16; 2:11; 4:4)
prosper, prosperity, prosperous

Definition:
The term “prosper” generally refers to living well and can refer to prospering physically or spiritually. When people or a country are “prosperous,” it means they are wealthy and have all that they need to be successful. They are experiencing “prosperity.”

- The term “prosperous” often refers to success in owning money and property or in producing everything needed for people to live well.
- In the Bible, the term “prosperous” also includes good health and being blessed with children.
- A “prosperous” city or country is one that has many people, good production of food, and businesses that bring in plenty of money.
- The Bible teaches that a person will prosper spiritually when he obeys God’s teachings. He will also experience the blessings of joy and peace. God does not always give people a lot of material wealth, but he will always prosper them spiritually as they follow his ways.
- Depending on the context, the term “prosper” could also be translated as “succeed spiritually” or “be blessed by God” or “experience good things” or “live well.”
- The term “prosperous” could also be translated as “successful” or “wealthy” or “spiritually fruitful.”
- “Prosperity” could also be translated as “well-being” or “wealth” or “success” or “abundant blessings.”

(See also: bless, fruit, spirit)

Bible References:
- 1 Chronicles 29:22-23
- Deuteronomy 23:06
- Job 36:11
- Leviticus 25:26-28
- Psalms 001:3

Word Data:

(Go back to: Ruth 4:11)
Rachel

Facts:

Rachel was one of Jacob’s wives. She was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, whose descendants became three of the twelve tribes of Israel.

• Rachel and her sister Leah were the daughters of Laban, Jacob’s uncle.
• For many years, Rachel was not able to have any children. Then God enabled her to give birth to Joseph.
• Years later, Rachel died as she gave birth to Benjamin. Jacob buried her near Bethlehem.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Jacob, Laban, Leah, Joseph (OT), twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

• Genesis 29:06
• Genesis 29:19-20
• Genesis 29:30
• Genesis 31:06
• Genesis 33:1-3
• Matthew 02:18

Word Data:

• Strong’s: H7354, G4478

(Go back to: Ruth 4:11)
raise, raised, risen, arise, arose, got up, stir up, stirred up

Definition:
raise, raise up

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

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

rise, arise

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: resurrection, appoint, exalt)

Bible References:

• 2 Chronicles 06:41
• 2 Samuel 07:12
• Acts 10:40
• Colossians 03:01
• Deuteronomy 13:1-3
• Jeremiah 06:01
• Judges 02:18
• Luke 07:22
• Matthew 20:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

• 21:14 The prophets foretold that the Messiah would die and that God would also raise him from the dead.
41:05 “Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would!”
43:07 “Although Jesus died, God raised him from the dead. This fulfills the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’ We are witnesses to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again.”
44:05 “You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead.”
44:08 Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the power of Jesus the Messiah. You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again!”
48:04 This meant that Satan would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of Satan forever.
49:02 He (Jesus) walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.
49:12 You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on the cross instead of you, and that God raised him to life again.

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 4:5; 4:10)
rebuke

Definition:
The term "rebuke" refers to correcting someone verbally, usually with sternness or force.

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

(See also admonish, disobey)

Bible References:

- Mark 01:23-26
- Mark 16:14
- Matthew 08:26-27
- Matthew 17:17-18

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 2:16)
redeem, redeemer, redemption

Definition:
The term “redeem” refers to buying back something or someone that has been previously owned or held captive. A “redeemer” is someone who redeems something or someone.

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

Translation Suggestions:
- Depending on the context, the term “redeem” could also be translated as “buy back” or “pay to free (someone)” or “ransom.”
- The term “redemption” could be translated as “ransom” or “freedom payment” or “buying back.”
- The words “ransom” and “redeem” have basically the same meaning, so some languages may have only one term to translate both these words. The word “ransom,” however, can also mean the payment necessary to “redeem” something or someone. The term “redeem” never refers to the actual payment itself.

(See also: free, ransom)

Bible References:
- Colossians 01:13-14
- Ephesians 01:7-8
- Ephesians 05:16
- Galatians 03:13-14
- Galatians 04:05
- Luke 02:38
- Ruth 02:20

Word Data:
- Strong's: H1350, H1353, H6299, H6302, H6304, H6306, H6561, H7069, G59, G629, G1805, G3084, G3085

(Go back to: Ruth 2:20; 3:9; 3:12; 3:13; 4:1; 4:3; 4:4; 4:6; 4:7; 4:8; 4:14)
refuge, refugee, shelter, sheltered

Definition:

The term “refuge” refers to a place or condition of safety and protection. A “refugee” is someone who is seeking a safe place. A “shelter” refers to a place that can protect from weather or danger.

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

Translation Suggestions:

• The term “refuge” could be translated as “safe place” or “place of protection.”
• “Refugees” are people leaving their home to escape from a dangerous situation, and could be translated as “aliens,” “homeless people,” or “exiles.”
• Depending on the context, the term “shelter” could be translated as “something that protects” or “protection” or “protected place.”
• If it refers to a physical structure, “shelter” could also be translated as “protective building” or “house of safety.”
• The phrase “into safe shelter” could be translated as “into a safe place” or “into a place that will protect.”
• To “find shelter” or to “take shelter” or to “take refuge” could be translated as to “find a place of safety” or to “put oneself in a protected place.”

Bible References:

• 2 Samuel 22:3-4
• Deuteronomy 32:37-38
• Isaiah 23:14
• Jeremiah 16:19
• Numbers 35:24-25
• Psalm 046:01
• Psalms 028:08

Word Data:

• Strong’s: H2620, H4268, H4498, H4585, H4733, H4869

(Go back to: Ruth 2:12)
rest, rested, restless

Definition:

The term “rest” generally means to stop working in order to relax or regain strength. However, the term can refer to various kinds of rest besides only rest from working. For example, a person might rest from fighting, rest from speaking, or rest from moving, etc.

- An object can be said to be “resting” somewhere, which means it is “standing” or “sitting” there.
- A boat that “comes to rest” somewhere has “stopped” or “landed” there.
- When a person or animals rest, they are sitting or lying down in order to refresh themselves.
- God commanded the Israelites to rest on the seventh day of the week. This day of not working was called the “Sabbath” day.
- To rest an object on something means to “place” or “put” it there.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, to “rest (oneself)” could also be translated as to “stop working” or to “refresh himself” or to “stop carrying burdens.”
- To “rest” an object on something could be translated as to “place” or “put” or “set” that object on something.
- When Jesus said, “I will give you rest,” this could also be translated as “I will cause you to stop carrying your burden” or “I will help you be at peace” or “I will empower you to relax and trust in me.”
- God said, “they will not enter my rest,” and this statement could be translated as “they will not experience my blessings of rest” or “they will not experience the joy and peace that comes from trusting in me.”
- The term “the rest” could be translated as “those that remain” or “all the other people” or “everything that is left.”

(See also: remnant, Sabbath)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 06:41
- Genesis 02:03
- Jeremiah 06:16-19
- Matthew 11:29
- Revelation 14:11

Word Data:


(See back to: Ruth 1:9; 3:1; 3:18)
**restore, restoration**

**Definition:**

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

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

**Translation Suggestions:**

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

**Bible References:**

- 2 Kings 05:10
- Acts 03:21
- Acts 15:15-18
- Isaiah 49:5-6
- Jeremiah 15:19-21
- Lamentations 05:22
- Leviticus 06:5-7
- Luke 19:08
- Matthew 12:13
- Psalm 080:1-3

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H7725, H7999, H8421, G600, G2675

(Go back to: Ruth 4:15)
Ruth

Facts:

Ruth was a Moabite woman who lived during the time when judges were leading Israel. In Moab, she married an Israelite man named Mahlon after his family had moved there because of a famine in Israel. Mahlon died, and some time after that she left Moab with her mother-in-law Naomi to return to the city of Bethlehem in Israel.

- Ruth was loyal to Naomi and worked hard to provide food for her.
- She also committed herself to serving the one true God of Israel.
- Ruth married an Israelite man named Boaz and gave birth to a son named Obed. Obed became the grandfather of King David, and King David was an ancestor of Jesus.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Boaz, David, judge)

Bible References:

- Matthew 01:05
- Ruth 01:3-5
- Ruth 03:09
- Ruth 04:06

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7327, G4503

(Go back to: Ruth 1:4; 1:14; 1:16; 1:22; 2:2; 2:8; 2:21; 2:22; 3:9; 4:5; 4:10; 4:13)
sandal

Definition:
A sandal is a simple shoe with a flat sole that is held onto the foot by straps that go around the foot or ankle. Sandals are worn by both men and women.

• In ancient Israel, a sandal was sometimes used to confirm a legal transaction, such as the selling of property. One person would take off a sandal and give it to the other person to show that the transaction was legal and binding.
• John said that he was not worthy to even untie Jesus’ sandals, which was a normal task for the servant or slave with the lowest status in a Jewish household.

Bible References:
• Acts 07:33
• Deuteronomy 25:10
• John 01:27
• Joshua 05:15
• Mark 06:7-9

Word Data:
• Strong's: H5274, H5275, H8288, G4547, G5266

(Go back to: Ruth 4:7; 4:8)
Definition:

The term “serve” generally means to do work, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts. The term refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. In the Bible, any of the following people might be called a “servant:” a slave, a young female worker, a young male worker, someone who obeys God, and others. In biblical times, there was less of a difference between a “servant” and a “slave” than there is today. Both servants and slaves were an important part of a household, and many servants were treated almost like members of the family. Sometimes a servant would choose to become a lifetime servant to his master.

- A slave was a kind of servant who was the property of the person he worked for. The person who bought a slave was called his “owner” or “master.” Some masters treated their slaves very cruelly, while other masters treated their slaves very well, as a servant who was a valued member of the household.
- In ancient times, some people willingly became slaves to a person they owed money to in order to pay off their debt to that person.
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.” When Jesus told the disciples to “serve” the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute” or “hand out” or “give.”
- In the Bible, the phrase “I am your servant” was used as a sign of respect and service to a person of higher rank, such as a king. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.
- The term “serve” can also be translated as “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- In the Old Testament, God's prophets and other people who worshiped God were often referred to as his “servants.”
- To “serve God” can be translated as to “worship and obey God” or to “do the work that God has commanded.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to “distribute food.”
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they “serve” the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”

(See also: commit, enslave, household, lord, obey, righteous, covenant, law.)

Bible References:

- Acts 04:29-31
- Acts 10:7-8
- Colossians 01:7-8
- Colossians 03:22-25
- Genesis 21:10-11
- Mark 09:33-35
- Matthew 10:24-25
- Matthew 13:27-28
- 2 Timothy 02:3-5
- Acts 06:2-4
- Genesis 25:23
- Luke 04:8
Examples from the Bible stories:

• **06:01** When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.

• **08:04** The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.

• **09:13** “I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt.”

• **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, “O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**.”

• **29:03** “Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, ‘Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.’”

• **35:06** “All my father’s **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving.”

• **47:04** The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, “These men are servants of the Most High God.

• **50:04** Jesus also said, “A **servant** is not greater than his master.”

Word Data:

• (Servant) Strong’s: H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G1249, G1401, G1402, G2324, G3407, G3411, G3610, G3816, G4983, G5257


shame, ashamed, disgrace, humiliate, reproach

Definition:
The term “shame” refers to the painful feeling of being disgraced or humiliated that a person feels when they do something that others consider dishonorable or improper.

- Something that is “shameful” is “improper” or “dishonorable.”
- The term “ashamed” describes how a person feels when he has done something improper or dishonorable.
- The term “humiliate” means to cause someone to feel shamed or disgraced, usually publicly. The act of shaming someone is called “humiliation.”
- To “reproach” someone means to criticize or disapprove of that person’s character or behavior.
- The phrase “put to shame” means to defeat people or expose their actions so that they feel ashamed of themselves. The prophet Isaiah said that those who make and worship idols will be put to shame.
- The term “disgraceful” can be used to describe a sinful act or the person who did it. When a person does something sinful, it can cause him to be in a state of disgrace or dishonor.
- Sometimes a person who is doing good things is treated in a way that causes him disgrace or shame. For example, when Jesus was killed on a cross, this was a disgraceful way to die. Jesus had done nothing wrong to deserve this disgrace.
- When God humbles someone, it means that he is causing a proudful person to experience failure to help him overcome his pride. This is different from humiliating someone, which is often done in order to hurt that person.
- Saying that a person is “above reproach” or “beyond reproach” or “without reproach” means that this person behaves in a God-honoring way and there is little or nothing that could be said in criticism of him.

Translation Suggestions

- Ways to translate “disgrace” could include “shame” or “dishonor.”
- Ways to translate “disgraceful” could include “shameful” or dishonoring.”
- To “humiliate” could also be translated as to “shame” or to “cause to feel shame” or to “embarrass.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “humiliation” could include “shame” or “degrading” or “disgrace.”
- The word “reproach” could also be translated as “accusation” or “shame” or “disgrace.”
- To “reproach” could also be translated as to “rebuke” or to “accuse” or to “criticize,” depending on the context.

(See also: dishonor, accuse, rebuke, false god, humble, Isaiah, worship)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 03:15-17
- 2 Kings 02:17
- 2 Samuel 13:13
- Luke 20:11
- Mark 08:38
- Mark 12:4-5
- 1 Timothy 03:07
- Genesis 34:07
- Hebrews 11:26
- Lamentations 02:1-2
- Psalms 022:06
- Deuteronomy 21:14
- Ezra 09:05
- Proverbs 25:7-8
• Psalms 006:8-10
• Psalms 123:03
• 1 Timothy 05:7-8
• 1 Timothy 06:13-14
• Jeremiah 15:15-16
• Job 16:9-10
• Proverbs 18:03

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 2:15)
son

Definition:
The male offspring of a man and a woman is called their "son" for his entire life. He is also called a son of that man and a son of that woman. An "adopted son" is a male who has been legally placed into the position of being a son.

- In the Bible, the phrase "son of" can be used to identify a person's father, mother, or an ancestor from some previous generation. This phrase is used in genealogies and many other places.
- Using "son of" to give the name of the father frequently helps distinguish people who have the same name. For example, "Azariah son of Zadok" and "Azariah son of Nathan" in 1 Kings 4, and "Azariah son of Amaziah" in 2 Kings 15 are three different men.

Translation Suggestions:

- In most occurrences of this term, it is best to translate "son" by the literal term in the language that is used to refer to a son.
- When translating the term "Son of God," the project language's common term for "son" should be used.
- Sometimes "sons" can be translated as "children," when both males and females are being referred to. For example, "sons of God" could be translated as "children of God" since this expression also includes girls and women.

(See also: Azariah, descendant, ancestor, firstborn, Son of God, sons of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:15
- 1 Kings 13:02
- 1 Thessalonians 05:05
- Galatians 04:07
- Hosea 11:01
- Isaiah 09:06
- Matthew 03:17
- Matthew 05:09
- Matthew 08:12
- Nehemiah 10:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 04:08 God spoke to Abram and promised again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky.
- 04:09 God said, “I will give you a son from your own body.”
- 05:05 About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham's son.
- 05:08 When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an altar. He was about to kill his son when God said, “Stop! Do not hurt the boy! Now I know that you fear me because you did not keep your only son from me.”
- 09:07 When she saw the baby, she took him as her own son.
- 11:06 God killed every one of the Egyptians' firstborn sons.
- 18:01 After many years, David died, and his son Solomon began to rule.
- 26:04 “Is this the son of Joseph?” they said.
Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 1:1; 1:2; 1:3; 1:11; 1:12; 4:13; 4:15; 4:17)
Tamar

Facts:

Tamar is the name of several different women in the Old Testament. There are several cities or other places that are named Tamar in the Old Testament.

- Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judah. She gave birth to Perez who was an ancestor of Jesus Christ.
- One of King David's daughters was named Tamar; she was the sister of Absalom. Her half-brother Amnon raped her and left her desolate.
- Absalom also had a daughter named Tamar.
- A city called “Hazezon Tamar” was the same as the city of Engedi on the western shore of the Salt Sea. There is also a “Baal Tamar,” and general references to a place called “Tamar” which may have been different from the cities.

(See also: Absalom, ancestor, Amnon, David, ancestor, Judah, Salt Sea)

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 02:04
- 2 Samuel 13:02
- 2 Samuel 14:25-27
- Genesis 38:6-7
- Genesis 38:24
- Matthew 01:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1193, H2688, H8412, H8559

(Go back to: Ruth 4:12)
**testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness**

**Definition:**

When a person gives “testimony” he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To “testify” is to give “testimony.”

- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To “witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

**Translation Suggestions:**

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as, “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as, to “show them what is true” or to “prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as, “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”
- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- To “witness to” could be translated as to “tell what was seen” or to “testify” or to “state what happened.”
- To “witness” something could be translated as to “see something” or to “experience something happen.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, guilt, judge, prophet, testimony, true)

**Bible References:**

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 06:03
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 01:44
- John 01:07
Examples from the Bible stories:

- 39:02 Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- 39:04 The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, “We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?”
- 42:08 “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things.”
- 43:07 “We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G267, G1263, G1957, G2649, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3143, G3144, G4303, G4828, G4901, G5575, G5576, G5577, G6020

(Go back to: Ruth 1:21; 4:9; 4:10; 4:11)
**thresh**

**Definition:**

The terms “thresh” and “threshing” refer to the first part of the process of separating grain from the rest of the plant.

- Threshing a crop loosens the grain from the stalk. Afterwards the grain is “winnowed” to completely separate the seed from all unwanted materials, leaving only the part the grain that can be eaten.
- In Bible times, a “threshing floor” was a large flat rock or an area of packed-down dirt, giving a hard, level surface to crush the grain stalks and remove the grain.
- A “threshing cart” or “threshing wheel” was sometimes used to crush the grain and help separate it from the straw and chaff.
- A “threshing sledge” or “threshing board” was also used for separating grain. It was made of wooden boards that had sharp metal spikes on the end.

(See also: chaff, grain, winnow)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Chronicles 03:1-3
- 2 Kings 13:07
- 2 Samuel 24:16
- Daniel 02:35
- Luke 03:17
- Matthew 03:12
- Ruth 03:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H212, H4173, H1637, H1758, H1786, H1869, H2251, G248

*(Go back to: Ruth 3:2; 3:3; 3:6; 3:14)*
true, truth

Definition:

The term “truth” refers to facts, events, and statements that correspond with reality. True facts describe the universe as it really exists. True events are events that actually happened. True statements are statements that are not false according to the real world.

- "True" things are real, genuine, actual, rightful, legitimate, and factual.
- "Truth" means understandings, beliefs, facts, or statements that are true.
- To say that a prophecy “came true” or “will come true” means that it actually happened as predicted or that it will happen in that way.
- In the Bible the concept of "truth" includes the concept of acting in a way that is reliable and faithful.
- Jesus revealed God’s truth in the words that he spoke.
- The Bible is truth. It teaches what is true about God and about everything he has made.

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: believe, faithful, fulfill, obey, prophet, understand)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 05:6-8
- 1 John 01:5-7
- 1 John 02:08
- 3 John 01:08
- Acts 26:24-26
- Colossians 01:06
- Genesis 47:29-31
- James 01:18
- James 03:14
- James 05:19
- Jeremiah 04:02
- John 01:9
- John 01:16-18
- John 01:51
- John 03:31-33
- Joshua 07:19-21
- Lamentations 05:19-22
- Matthew 08:10
- Matthew 12:17
- Psalm 026:1-3
- Revelation 01:19-20
Examples from the Bible stories:

- **02:04** The snake responded to the woman, “That is not true! You will not die.”
- **14:06** Immediately Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, said, “It is _true_ that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!”
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the _true_ God.
- **31:08** They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, “Truly, you are the Son of God.”
- **39:10** “I have come to earth to tell the truth about God. Everyone who loves the truth listens to me.” Pilate said, “What is truth?”

Word Data:


(Go back to: Ruth 3:12)
trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness

Definition:
To “trust” something or someone is to believe that the thing or person is true or dependable. That belief is also called “trust.” A “trustworthy” person is one you can trust to do and say what is right and true, and therefore one who has the quality of “trustworthiness.”

- Trust is closely related to faith. If we trust someone, we have faith in that person to do what they promised to do.
- Having trust in someone also means depending on that person.
- To “trust in” Jesus means to believe that he is God, to believe that he died on the cross to pay for our sins, and to rely on him to save us.
- A “trustworthy saying” refers to something that is said that can be counted on to be true.

Translation Suggestions:
- Ways to translate “trust” could include “believe” or “have faith” or “have confidence” or “depend on.”
- The phrase “put your trust in” is very similar in meaning to “trust in.”
- The term “trustworthy” could be translated as “dependable” or “reliable” or “can always be trusted.”

(See also: believe, confidence, faith, faithful, true)

Bible References:
- 1 Chronicles 09:22-24
- 1 Timothy 04:09
- Hosea 10:12-13
- Isaiah 31:1-2
- Nehemiah 13:13
- Psalm 031:05
- Titus 03:8

Examples from the Bible stories:
- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.
- 14:15 Joshua was a good leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- 17:02 David was a humble and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- 34:06 Then Jesus told a story about people who trusted in their own good deeds and despised other people.

Word Data:
- Strong’s: H539, H982, H1556, H2620, H2622, H3176, H4009, H4268, H7365, G1679, G3872, G3982, G4006, G4100, G4276

(Go back to: Ruth 1 General Notes)
wheat

Definition:
Wheat is a type of grain that people grow for food. When the Bible mentions “grain” or “seeds,” it is often talking about wheat grain or seeds.

- The wheat seeds or grains grow at the top of the wheat plant.
- After harvesting the wheat, the grain is separated from the stalk of the plant by threshing it. The stalk of the wheat plant is also called “straw” and is often placed on the ground for animals to sleep on.
- After threshing, the chaff surrounding the grain seed is separated from the grain by winnowing and is thrown away.
- People grind the wheat grain into flour, and use this for making bread.

(See also: barley, chaff, grain, seed, thresh, winnow)

Bible References:

- Acts 27:36-38
- Exodus 34:21-22
- John 12:24
- Luke 03:17
- Matthew 03:12
- Matthew 13:26

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1250, H2406, G4621

(Go back to: Ruth 2:23)
winnow, sift

Definition:
The terms “winnow” and “sift” mean to separate grain from unwanted materials. In the Bible, both words can also be used to refer to separating or dividing people.

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

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: chaff, grain)

Bible References:

- Isaiah 21:10
- Matthew 03:12
- Proverbs 20:08
- Ruth 03:02

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2219, H5128, H5130, G4425, G4617

(Go back to: Ruth 3:2)
work, works, deeds

Definition:

The term “work” refers generally either to the action of expending effort in order to accomplish something, or to the result of that action. The term “works” refers generally to actions as a whole (that is, things that have been done or that need to be done).

• In the Bible, these terms are commonly used both in reference to God and humans.
• When used in reference to God, the term “work” in the Bible often refers to God's action of creating the universe or saving his people (either from enemies, from sin, or both).
• God's works refer to all the things he does or has done, including creating the world, saving sinners, providing for the needs of all creation and keeping the entire universe in place.
• The works or deeds that a person does can be either good or evil.

Translation Suggestions:

• Other ways to translate “works” could be “deeds” or “actions” or “things that are done.”
• God's “works” or “deeds” or the “work of his hands” could also be translated as “miracles” or “mighty acts” or “things that God does.”
• The expression “the work of God” could be translated as “the things that God is doing” or “the miracles God does” or “everything that God has accomplished.”
• The term “work” can just be the singular of “works” as in “every good work” or “every good deed.”
• When work is done for God or others, it can be translated as “service” or “ministry.”

(See also: fruit, Holy Spirit, miracle)

Bible References:

• 1 John 03:12
• Acts 02:8-11
• Daniel 04:37
• Exodus 34:10-11
• Galatians 02:15-16
• James 02:17
• Matthew 16:27-28
• Micah 02:07
• Romans 03:28
• Titus 03:4-5

Word Data:

• Strong's: H4566, H4567, H4611, H4659, H5949, G2041

(Go back to: Ruth 2:12)
Yahweh

Facts:
The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name in the Old Testament. The specific origin of this name is unknown, but it is probably derived from the Hebrew verb meaning, “to be.”

- 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 ULT and UST texts always translate this term as, “Yahweh,” in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” never occurs in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even when quoting the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.

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 21:20
- 1 Samuel 16:07
- Daniel 09:03
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 02:04
- Genesis 04:3-5
- Genesis 28:13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:04
- Isaiah 38:08
- Job 12:10
- Joshua 01:09
- Lamentations 01:05
- Leviticus 25:35
- Malachi 03:04
- Micah 02:05
- Micah 06:05
- Numbers 08:11
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

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