



Lamentations

translationNotes

v8

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translationNotes

Introduction to Lamentations

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Lamentations

1. First lament: Jerusalem is captured and has been abandoned by Yahweh and by its people (1:1–22)
2. Second lament: Yahweh caused this destruction because he was angry with Jerusalem (2:1–22)
3. Third lament
 - The city sorrows over its destruction (3:1–20)
 - There is comfort for those who turn back to Yahweh (3:21–39)
 - Judah is learning to return to Yahweh (3:40–54)
 - Judah cries out for vengeance upon its enemies (3:55–66)
4. Fourth lament: The terrors of the siege of Jerusalem
 - The punishment of Jerusalem was caused by the people's sin (4:1–20)
 - This punishment had satisfied Yahweh's wrath for their sin (4:21–22a)
 - Edom will be punished also (4:22b)
5. Fifth lament: The broken nation cries out to Yahweh in confession, petition and praise of him (5:1–22)

What is the Book of Lamentations about?

This book expresses grief over the capture of the city of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in about 586 BC. The book is organized into five poems. In them the writer speaks of the people's sin and unfaithfulness to God that led to their destruction. However, he also remembers God's faithfulness for those who turn back to him. (See: **sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning, unfaithful, unfaithfulness** and **faith**)

Who wrote the Book of Lamentations?

The name of the author of Lamentations is not given in the text, but it became traditional to say that the author was Jeremiah. It is fitting that a lament was made over the fall and destruction Jerusalem. The eyewitness nature of the laments seems to fit closely with the Book of Jeremiah. Certainly the serious and grieving tone of Jeremiah is carried into the Book of Lamentations, and there is nothing to suggest that Jeremiah was not the author.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may call the book “Poems of Sadness.” If translators want to keep to the traditional view that the prophet Jeremiah wrote this book, they might decide on a title such as “The Sad Sayings of Jeremiah.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts**Did God abandon Israel?**

Jeremiah often uses the imagery of abandonment in Lamentations, but this does not mean that God had completely given up on Israel. He rejected Israel for a period of time as the special place where he would be present. However, God remained faithful to his covenant promises.

While it was common in the ancient Near East to think that a god might leave his city, he usually did so because he was too weak to defend it. In Lamentations, Yahweh abandons Jerusalem because of the people’s sinfulness, not because of any weakness on his part. (See: [god, gods, goddess](#))

What is a funeral song?

It is common for cultures to sing songs at a funeral or when someone has died. Depending on the culture, these songs can sound either happy or sad. Lamentations is somewhat reminiscent of a sad song sung at a funeral. Some have said that the rhythm of the poems in Hebrew makes the poems sound as if they are slow or sluggish, like a funeral procession.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues**What style of writing is Lamentations?**

Lamentations is a collection of five poems. These laments may have been sung or chanted by the Jewish exiles living in captivity in Babylon, and also by those Jews who remained in Jerusalem after its conquest. In Chapters 1, 2 and 4, each line of the poem begins with a different Hebrew letter in alphabetical order. The third chapter repeats three lines with the same letter followed by the next three lines beginning with next letter in alphabetical order.

Who are the woman and the man in Lamentations?

The author uses the image of an abandoned woman and a persecuted man to represent Judah and Jerusalem. This is a type of personification used to make the pain more understandable to the reader. (See: [Personification](#))

Lamentations 01 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Judah destroyed for her sin

Judah used to be great, but is now a slave. The temple is stripped of all its valuables. (See: [sin](#), [sins](#), [sinned](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [temple](#))

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Jerusalem was once full of people,
but now it is completely deserted.

Once it was a powerful nation,
but now it is alone, like a widow.

Once everyone in the world honored it like a king's daughter,
but now it is like a slave.

² We in the city weep bitterly all during the nights,
with tears flowing down our cheeks.

We did not trust Yahweh to help us, and the people groups that we did trust failed to help us;
none of those people comfort us now.

All the people groups that were friends with us have betrayed us;
they are all now our enemies.

ULB:

¹ The city that once was full of people is now sitting all alone.
She has become like a widow, though she was a mighty nation.
She was a princess among the nations, but is now forced into slavery.

² She weeps and wails in the night, and her tears cover her cheeks.

None of her lovers comfort her.

All her friends have betrayed her. They have become her enemies.

translationNotes**General Information:**

Various poetic forms are used throughout this book. (See [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

is now sitting all alone

This speaks of the city of Jerusalem being empty, as if it were a woman who was sitting alone. AT: "is now empty" (See: [Metaphor](#))

She

The writer of Lamentations writes about the city of Jerusalem as if it were a woman. (See: **Personification**)

like a widow

This speaks of Jerusalem as being without protection, as if it were a vulnerable widow. (See: **Simile**)

She was a princess among the nations

This speaks of Jerusalem being honored as if it were a princess. AT: “She was like a princess among the nations” (See: **Metaphor**)

forced into slavery

“forced to become a slave.” This can be stated in active form. AT: “but she is now a slave” (See: **Active or Passive**)

She weeps and wails ... and her tears cover her cheeks

The author describes Jerusalem as having emotions like a human being. The city also stands for her inhabitants. AT: “Those who live in her weep and wail ... and their tears cover their cheeks” (See: **Personification** and **Metonymy**)

weeps and wails

The word “wails” refers to the sounds that a person makes when they “weep” loudly. AT: “weeps loudly” (See: **Doublet**)

None of her lovers comfort her. All her friends have betrayed her

This speaks of the people groups that had been faithful to Jerusalem betraying Jerusalem, as if the people groups were Jerusalem’s lovers and friends. (See: **Metaphor**)

translationWords

- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- nation
- prince, princess
- servant, slave, slavery
- lover
- comfort, comforter
- betray, betrayer
- adversary, enemy

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:3

UDB:

³ The people of Judah have become poor
and have suffered greatly.

Almost all of our people
were forced to leave our land.

We now live in another country
and we have no peace.

When the people Judah were unable to defend ourselves,
that was when our enemies captured us.

ULB:

³ After poverty and affliction, Judah has gone into exile.
She lives among the nations and finds no rest.
All her pursuers overtook her in her desperation.

translationNotes

General Information:

In these verses, Jerusalem and Judah are spoken of as if they were women. (See: [Personification](#))

After poverty and affliction

“After suffering poverty and affliction”

Judah has gone into exile

Here Judah refers to its inhabitants. AT: “the people of Judah have gone into exile” or “the people of Judah have been taken into a foreign land” (See: [Metonymy](#))

She lives ... finds

Here the kingdom of Judah is described as a woman. “She” also stands for the citizens of Judah. AT: “Her people live ... they find” (See: [Personification](#) and [Metonymy](#))

finds no rest

“does not find rest” or “is always afraid”

All her pursuers overtook her in her desperation

This speaks of the people of Judah being captured by their enemies as if they were a woman who was captured by those pursuing her. (See: [Personification](#))

All her pursuers overtook her

“Everyone who was chasing her managed to capture her” or “Everyone who was hunting for her found her”

in her desperation

The word “desperation” can be expressed as an adjective. AT: “when she was desperate” or “when she was distressed” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [afflict, affliction](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [rest](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ The roads to Mount Zion are empty
because no one comes here to celebrate the sacred festivals any longer.

No elders or leaders sit under the city gates to talk any more,
and Jerusalem's priests groan in sorrow.

The young women left in Jerusalem cry
because they are suffering greatly.

⁵ Our enemies are now masters of our city,
and they prosper.

Yahweh has punished us, the people of Jerusalem,
because of all the sins that we have committed.

Our enemies have taken all our children
and made them go to other countries.

ULB:

⁴ The roads of Zion mourn because none come to the appointed feasts.

All her gates are desolate. Her priests groan.

Her virgins are sorrowful and she herself is in complete distress.

⁵ Her adversaries have become her master; her enemies prosper.

Yahweh has afflicted her for her many sins.

Her little children go into captivity to her adversary.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The city of Zion is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city. (See: [Personification](#))

The roads of Zion mourn

The author speaks of the roads that lead to Zion mourning as if they were human beings. (See: [Personification](#))

the appointed feasts

“the feasts that God told them to celebrate”

All her gates are desolate

The word “her” refers to Zion. AT: “All of Zion’s gates are empty” (See: [Personification](#))

Her virgins are sorrowful and she herself is in complete distress

Here the people of Zion being distressed are spoken of as if they were a woman in distress. AT: “Zion’s virgins are sorrowful, and its people despairing” (See: [Personification](#))

Her adversaries have become her master; her enemies prosper

“Zion’s adversaries rule over it; its enemies prosper”

Yahweh has afflicted her for her many sins

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the people of Zion for their sins as if they were a woman that Yahweh was punishing. AT: “Yahweh has afflicted her people because of the sins they have committed” (See: [Personification](#))

Her little children go into captivity to her adversary

The word “captivity” can be expressed as a verb. AT: “Her enemy captures her little children” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [mourn, mourning](#)
- [feast](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)
- [desolate, desolation](#)
- [priest, priests, priesthood](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [lord, lords, master, masters, sir, Sir, Sirs](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)
- [captive, captivity](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:6

UDB:

⁶ Jerusalem was a beautiful city,
 but it is not beautiful now.
 The leaders of our city are like deer that are starving
 because they can find no grass to eat.
 They are very weak
 and cannot run from our enemies.

ULB:

⁶ Beauty has left the daughter of Zion.
 Her princes have become like deer that cannot find pasture,
 and they go without strength before their pursuer.

translationNotes

General Information:

The city of Zion is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city. (See: [Personification](#))

Beauty has left the daughter of Zion

This speaks of everything beautiful in Zion being destroyed as if “beauty” were a person that left Zion. AT: “Everything that was beautiful about the daughter of Zion is destroyed”

daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

Her princes have become like deer that cannot find pasture

This speaks of Zion’s princes having nothing to eat like deer that cannot find grass to eat. AT: “Her princes are starving, they are like deer that cannot find grass to eat” (See: [Simile](#))

deer

A deer is a medium-sized, grass-eating animal that is often hunted by humans for food. It is also a beautiful animal to look at.

they go without strength before

“they are not strong enough to run away from” or “they are very weak before”

their pursuer

“the person that is pursuing them”

translationWords

- [daughter of Zion](#)
- [prince, princess](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:7**UDB:**

⁷ We, the people of Jerusalem, are sad and have no more homes to live in;
 we think about all the splendid things that once filled our city.
 But now our enemies have captured the city,
 and there is no one to help us.
 Our enemies destroyed our city
 and laughed while they were doing it.

ULB:

⁷ In the days of her affliction and her homelessness, Jerusalem will call to mind
 all her precious treasures that she had in former days.
 When her people fell into the hand of the adversary, no one helped her.
 The adversaries saw her and laughed at her destruction.

translationNotes**In the days of her affliction and her homelessness**

“During the time of her affliction and her homelessness”

Jerusalem will call to mind

Here “Jerusalem” refers to the people who live there. The phrase “call to mind” is an idiom. AT: “the people of Jerusalem will remember” or “Jerusalem will remember” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

in former days

“in the past.” This refers to the time before the people of Jerusalem were captured. AT: “before this disaster happened” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

When her people fell into the hand of the adversary

Here the word “hand” refers the control of the enemy army. AT: “When the adversary conquered and captured her people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

saw her and laughed at her destruction

This means that they were glad and mocked Jerusalem when it was destroyed.

at her destruction

This word “destruction” can be expressed as a verb. AT: “because she was destroyed” or “while they destroyed her” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [afflict, affliction](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)
- [mind](#)
- [precious](#)
- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ We, the people of Jerusalem, have sinned very much;
 our city has become like a bloody rag between a woman's legs.
 Everyone who previously honored our city now despise it;
 they are like people who strip a woman bare and then mock her.
 Now we groan in the city;
 we are like a woman without clothes who tries to cover herself with her hands.
⁹ It is as if our city has become filthy because we have sinned so greatly;
 we did not think about how God would punish us.
 We did not imagine how we would suffer;
 there is no one to comfort us.
 We all call out to God, "Yahweh, look at how we are suffering
 because our enemies have defeated us!"

ULB:

⁸ Jerusalem sinned greatly, therefore, she has become scorned as something that is filthy.
 All who honored her now despise her since they have seen her nakedness.
 She groans and tries to turn away.
⁹ She has become unclean beneath her skirts. She did not think about her future.
 Her fall was terrible. There was no one to comfort her.
 She cried out, "Look at my affliction, Yahweh, for the enemy has become too great!"

translationNotes**General Information:**

The city of Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city. (See: [Personification](#))

Jerusalem sinned greatly, therefore, she has become scorned as something that is filthy

This speaks of Jerusalem being scorned in the same way that a woman is scorned when she is unclean. According to the Law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during her monthly bleeding. AT: "Jerusalem's sins have made her filthy and unclean, and therefore she was unacceptable before God" (See: [Simile](#))

Jerusalem sinned greatly

This describes Jerusalem as a woman who sinned, while it also stands for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. AT: “The people of Jerusalem sinned greatly” (See: [Personification](#) and [Metonymy](#))

has become scorned

This can be stated in active form. AT: “has become an object of scorn” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

her nakedness

“her naked.” Jerusalem is described as a woman whose private parts have been exposed to everyone to shame her. (See: [Personification](#))

She has become unclean beneath her skirts

According to the Law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during her monthly bleeding. This speaks of Jerusalem being unclean, as if it were a menstruating woman. AT: “Jerusalem has become unclean, as when a woman is unclean beneath her skirts” (See: [Metaphor](#))

unclean

A person who God considers to be spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Her fall was terrible

The phrase “her fall” is an idiom. AT: “Her downfall was astonishing” or “Those who saw her destruction were surprised” (See: [Idiom](#))

Look at my affliction, Yahweh

Possible meanings are that 1) the author of Lamentations now talks directly to Yahweh or 2) Jerusalem is described as talking to Yahweh like a person. (See: [Personification](#))

Look at

“Pay attention to”

the enemy has become too great

This means that the enemy army has become too large and powerful and has defeated Jerusalem. AT: “the enemy army has defeated me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

translationWords

- Jerusalem
- sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning
- honor, honors, to honor
- unclean
- comfort, comforter
- afflict, affliction
- Yahweh
- adversary, enemy

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:10**UDB:**

¹⁰ Our enemies have taken away all our treasures,
all the valuable things that we owned.

People who do not worship you, Yahweh, are going into our sacred temple,
where you had said no foreigner must go into the place where your people worship you.

ULB:

¹⁰ The adversary has put his hand on all our precious treasures.
She has seen the nations enter her sanctuary,
even though you had commanded that they must not enter into your assembly place.

translationNotes**has put his hand on**

This is an idiom. AT: “has taken possession of” or “has stolen” (See: [Idiom](#))

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

She has seen

The word “She” refers to Jerusalem. (See: [Personification](#))

the nations

This refers to people from various nations, not the entire population of those nations. AT: “people from the nations” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

you had commanded

The word “you” refers to Yahweh.

translationWords

- adversary, enemy
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- precious
- nation
- sanctuary
- command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments
- assembly, assemble

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ All the people in the city cry out with pain
while they search for food.

They have given their most valuable things
to get food to eat to restore their strength.

Yahweh, look at me,
no one values my life.

¹² You people who pass by,
you do not seem to care at all about what has happened to me.

Look around and see that there are no other people who are suffering as I do.

Yahweh has caused me to suffer

because he has punished me on the day he was angry with us, his people.

ULB:

¹¹ All her people groan as they search for bread.

They have given their precious treasures for food to restore their lives.

Look, Yahweh, and consider me, for I have become worthless.

¹² Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?

Look and see if there is anyone else's sorrow like the sorrow that is being inflicted on me,
since Yahweh has tormented me on the day of his fierce anger.

translationNotes**her people**

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem which is described as if it were a woman. AT: "her inhabitants" or "the people of the city" (See: [Personification](#))

bread

This refers to food in general. AT: "food" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

They have given their precious treasures for food

This means they traded their wealth and their valuables in exchange for food. AT: “They have traded their precious treasures in exchange for food” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

to restore their lives

“to save their lives” or “to restore their strength”

Look, Yahweh, and consider me

Here Jerusalem speaks directly to Yahweh. (See: [Personification](#))

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?

This rhetorical question is an accusation against the people who walk past Jerusalem and do not care about its well-being. This question can be written as a statement. AT: “All you who pass by should care more for my affliction!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Is it nothing to you

Here Jerusalem continues to speak, but now to people who pass by instead of to Yahweh. (See: [Personification](#))

Look and see

These words share similar meanings. Together they invite the reader to understand by seeing that no one has suffered so much. (See: [Doublet](#))

the sorrow that is being inflicted on me

This can be stated in active form. AT: “the sorrow that Yahweh is inflicting upon me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

on the day of his fierce anger

Here the word “day” is used as an idiom. AT: “when he was fiercely angry” (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- bread
- precious
- life, live, lived, lives, living, alive
- worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless
- torment
- angry, anger

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:13-14**UDB:**

¹³ It is as though he sent a fire from heaven
that burned in my bones;
it is as though he has placed a trap to entangle my feet,
and made me turn back.

He has abandoned me;
I am weak and alone every day, all during the day.

¹⁴ He turned the sins that I have committed into a heavy load for me to carry;
it is as though he tied them around my neck.

Previously we were strong,
but he has caused me to become weak.
He has allowed my enemies to capture me,
and I was not able to do anything to resist them.

ULB:

¹³ It is from on high that he has sent fire into my bones, and it has conquered them.
He has spread a net for my feet and turned me back.
He has made me constantly desolate and weak.

¹⁴ The yoke of my transgressions is bound together by his hand.
They are knit together and placed upon my neck. He has made my strength fail.
The Lord has given me over into their hands, and I am not able to stand.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. (See: [Personification](#))

on high

This is an idiom. AT: "heaven" (See: [Idiom](#))

he has sent fire into my bones, and it has conquered them

This speaks of Yahweh punishing Jerusalem as if Jerusalem were a person that Yahweh were punishing with fire. AT: “he has sent a painful punishment into my inner being, and it has destroyed me” or “he has sent a destructive punishment into the middle of Jerusalem, and it has destroyed the city” (See: [Personification](#) and [Metaphor](#))

has sent fire into my bones

Here “fire” represents pain and “bones” represents one’s inner being. AT: “has sent pain into my bones” or “has sent pain into my inner being” (See: [Metonymy](#))

He has spread a net for my feet

This speaks of Yahweh punishing Jerusalem as if Jerusalem were a person that Yahweh had set a trap for. This refers to a type of trap usually used to catch an animal. (See: [Personification](#) and [Metaphor](#))

turned me back

This is an idiom. AT: “prevented my from walking any further” (See: [Idiom](#))

The yoke of my transgressions ... They are knit together and placed upon my neck

This speaks of the people of Jerusalem’s sins as if they were a yoke bearing a heavy burden that Yahweh had placed on their necks. Also, this can be stated in active form. AT: “My transgressions are like a yoke that he has bound together with his hands and placed upon my neck” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

given me over into their hands

“given me over into the hands of my enemies.” Here their enemies’ control is represented by their “hands.” AT: “given my over to the control of my enemies” or “let my enemies defeat me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I am not able to stand

This is an idiom. AT: “I cannot resist them” (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- [on high, in the highest](#)
- [fire](#)
- [turn, turn away, turn back](#)

- desolate, desolation
- yoke
- transgress, transgresses, transgression
- bind, bond, bound
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- Lord

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:15**UDB:**

¹⁵ The Lord looked at my mighty soldiers, who kept me safe.
He summoned a great army
to come and crush me to defeat my strong young soldiers.
The Lord has trampled on the people of Judah
as people trample on grapes in a pit to make juice.

ULB:

¹⁵ The Lord has tossed aside all my mighty men who defended me.
He has called an assembly against me to crush my vigorous men.
The Lord has trampled the virgin daughter of Judah in the winepress.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. (See: [Personification](#))

mighty men

“strongest soldiers”

an assembly

Here the enemy army attacking Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were a meeting of people who have come together in order to accuse and condemn someone. AT: “a great army” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to crush my vigorous men

This speaks of the enemy army defeating the soldiers of Jerusalem as if they crushed them. AT: “to defeat my vigorous men”

vigorous men

This refers to men at the strongest time of their lives.

The Lord has trampled ... in the winepress

Here the judgment of God is described as if Jerusalem were grapes on which he had trampled in order to squeeze out the juice. AT: “It is as though the Lord has trampled upon the virgin daughter of Judah in a winepress” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the virgin daughter of Judah

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. The word “virgin” suggests that this woman is pure. (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [Lord](#)
- [mighty, might](#)
- [assembly, assemble](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [Judah, kingdom of Judah](#)
- [grape](#)
- [winepress](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:16-17**UDB:**

¹⁶ I weep because of all these things.

My eyes are filled with tears.

There is no one to comfort me.

The one who comforts me is far away from me.

My children have no hope

because the enemy has taken us all captive.

¹⁷ The people who lived in Zion (the city of Jerusalem)

have no one to give them comfort.

Yahweh has given the order that the people in nearby nations

will become the enemies of the descendants of our father Jacob (who are also called the Israelites).

Jerusalem has become disgusting to them.

ULB:

¹⁶ For these things I weep, my eyes overflow with tears;

for a comforter is far from me, one who restores my life.

My children are desolate because the enemy has conquered me.

¹⁷ Zion has spread her hands wide; there is none to comfort her.

Yahweh has commanded that those around Jacob should be his adversaries.

Jerusalem is something unclean to them.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city. (See: [Personification](#))

for a comforter is far from me, one who restores my life

This speaks of Jerusalem having no one to comfort her as if she did have a comforter, but that he was far away. The word “comforter” can be expressed as a verb. AT: “for there is no one to comfort me and restore my life” (See: [Metaphor](#))

restores my life

“revives me”

Zion has spread her hands wide

Here Jerusalem no longer speaks about herself; instead the author describes Jerusalem. He speaks of Zion as if it were a woman that lifts up her hands to ask for help. AT: “Zion has reached out for help” (See: [Personification](#) and [Symbolic Action](#))

those around Jacob

“the people around Jacob” or “the nations surrounding Jacob”

around Jacob should be his adversaries

Here “Jacob” refers to his descendants, that is Israel. AT: “around Jacob’s descendants should be their adversaries” (See: [Metonymy](#))

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [comfort, comforter](#)
- [restore, restores, restored, restoration](#)
- [life, live, lived, lives, living, alive](#)
- [children, child](#)
- [desolate, desolation](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [Jacob, Israel](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ But what Yahweh has done to me is fair,
for I had refused to obey what he told me to do.

You people everywhere, listen to me!

Look and see that I am suffering greatly.

My young daughters and brave sons
have been taken away to far off lands.

¹⁹ I pleaded with our allies, in whom we trusted, to help,
but they all refused,
they told lies and did not keep their promises.

My priests and my leaders
died within the walls of the city
while they searched for food to eat.

ULB:

¹⁸ Yahweh is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment.

Hear, all you peoples, and see my sorrow.

My virgins and my vigorous men have gone into captivity.

¹⁹ I called for my friends, but they were treacherous toward me.

My priests and my elders perished in the city,
while they sought food to restore their lives.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. (See: [Personification](#))

Yahweh is righteous

This implies that what Yahweh has done, he has done because he is righteous. AT: “Yahweh has acted out of his righteousness” or “What Yahweh has done is right”

see my sorrow

The word “sorrow” can be expressed as a “sad.” AT: “see how extremely sad I am” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

My virgins and my vigorous men have gone into captivity

Here all of the people of Jerusalem who were taken into captivity are represented by the “virgins” and the “vigorous men” who were taken. AT: “Many of my people, including my virgins and vigorous men, have gone into captivity” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

vigorous men

This refers to men at the strongest time of their lives. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 1:15](#).

I called for my friends

“I called for my friends to help me” or “I called for my allies to help me”

they were treacherous toward me

This means that they betrayed him. AT: “they betrayed me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to restore their lives

“to save their lives” or “to restore their strength”

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [righteous, righteousness](#)
- [rebel, rebellious, rebellion](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [captive, captivity](#)
- [priest, priests, priesthood](#)
- [elder](#)
- [perish, perished, perishing, perishable](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:20**UDB:**

²⁰ Yahweh, see that I am suffering very much!

Inside of my body I am in great distress.

I am sad in the center of my being,

because I have rebelled against you

and have caused you great sadness!

Our enemies kill people in the streets with their swords;

and that makes our homes the places where the dead are kept.

ULB:

²⁰ Look, Yahweh, for I am in distress; my stomach churns,

my heart is disturbed within me, for I have been very rebellious.

Outside, the sword bereaves a mother, inside the house there is only death.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. (See: [Personification](#))

Look, Yahweh, for I am in distress

Jerusalem continues to talk about herself as if she were a woman, but now talks directly to Yahweh. (See: [Personification](#))

my stomach churns

The word “churn” means to move around violently, normally in a circular rotation. This does not mean the stomach is literally churning, but describes how the woman, representing Jerusalem, feels. AT: “my insides ache” or “my stomach hurts” (See: [Metaphor](#))

my heart is disturbed within me

Here the woman, representing Jerusalem, refers to her “heart” to emphasize her feelings. AT: “my heart is broken” or “I am extremely sad” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

the sword bereaves a mother

The “sword” represents the enemy. AT: “the enemy kills a mother’s children” (See: [Metonymy](#))

inside the house there is only death

Possible meanings are 1) “inside the house, everyone is dying” or 2) “and inside the house the dead people are kept” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

translationWords

- [heart, hearts](#)
- [rebel, rebellious, rebellion](#)
- [sword](#)
- [death, die, dead](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 1:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ Hear my groaning!
but no one came to comfort me.
All our enemies know what happened to me;
they were all happy to hear
about what Yahweh has done to his people.
Please do soon what you have promised,
when our enemies will suffer like we have suffered!

²² Yahweh, let those evil deeds come near to you
so you may see them all!
Punish them as you have punished me
for all my sins!
I suffer and groan very much,
and I faint within my inner self.

ULB:

²¹ They have heard my groaning, but there is no one to comfort me.
All my enemies have heard of my trouble and they are glad that you have done it.
You have brought the day you promised; now let them become like me.

²² Let all their wickedness come before you.
deal with them as you have dealt with me because of all my transgressions.
My groans are many and my heart is faint.

translationNotes**General Information:**

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. (See: [Personification](#))

They have heard my groaning

“People have heard my groaning.” Jerusalem continues to speak as if she were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

you have done it

Here the word “you” refers to Yahweh.

You have brought the day you promised

The phrase “the day” is an idiom that refers to a specific event happening. AT: “You have done what you have promised” (See: [Idiom](#))

now let them become like me

This is a request for Jerusalem’s enemies to suffer as the people of Jerusalem have. AT: “now let them suffer like me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Let all their wickedness come before you

This is a request for Yahweh to judge Jerusalem’s enemies for their wickedness. The phrase “come before you” is an idiom. AT: “Pay attention to all of the wickedness they have committed” or “Judge them for all of their wickedness” (See: [Idiom](#))

deal with them as you have dealt with me

This is a request for Yahweh to punish Jerusalem’s enemies as he punished the people of Jerusalem. AT: “punish them as you have punished me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

my heart is faint

Here the “heart” represents the whole person. AT: “I am faint” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

translationWords

- [comfort, comforter](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [rejoice](#)
- [evil, wicked, wickedness](#)
- [torment](#)
- [transgress, transgresses, transgression](#)
- [heart, hearts](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 02 General Notes

Structure and formatting

God has become Judah's enemy. He is determined to destroy them.

Links:

- **[Lamentations 02:01 Notes](#)**

Lamentations 2:1-2

UDB:

¹ The Lord was extremely angry with us;
it was as though he covered Jerusalem with a dark cloud.

Previously it was a beautiful city,
but he has caused it to become a ruin.

At the time he punished Israel,
he even abandoned his temple in Jerusalem.

² The Lord destroyed the homes of the people of Judah;
he did not act mercifully.

Because he was very angry,
he broke down the fortresses of Judah.
He has made our kingdom to be completely helpless, and
he has caused our rulers to lose all honor.

ULB:

¹ The Lord has covered the daughter of Zion under the cloud of his anger.

He has thrown the splendor of Israel down from heaven to earth.

He has not remembered his footstool on the day of his anger.

² The Lord has swallowed up and has had no compassion on all the towns of Jacob.
In the days of his anger he has thrown down the fortified cities of the daughter of Judah;
in dishonor he has brought down to the ground the kingdom and its rulers.

translationNotes

General Information:

A new poem begins. The writer of Lamentations uses many different ways to express that the people of Israel have lost God's favor. (See: [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

The Lord has covered the daughter of Zion under the cloud of his anger

This speaks of the Lord's anger against Jerusalem (Zion) as if it were a dark cloud. Possible meanings are 1) God is threatening to harm the people of Jerusalem or 2) God has already harmed the people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the daughter of Zion ... the daughter of Judah

These are poetic names for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. Translate “the daughter of Zion” as you did in [Lamentations 1:6](#).(See: [Personification](#))

He has thrown the splendor of Israel down from heaven to earth

The phrase “the splendor of Israel” refers to Jerusalem. This passage speaks of the people of Jerusalem losing favor with the Lord as if he threw them out of his presence. The phrase “from heaven to earth” is a great distance used to represent how much they lost favor with the Lord. AT: “Jerusalem, the splendor of Israel, has lost all favor with the Lord” or “Jerusalem has lost all favor with the Lord” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

He has not remembered his footstool

This is a reference to the Lord having considered Jerusalem his “footstool” in the past, which symbolized that he had authority over them and that they were submissive to him. This speaks of the Lord disregarding Jerusalem as his footstool as if he did not remember them. AT: “He disregarded Jerusalem as his footstool” (See: [Metaphor](#))

not remembered

This speaks of the Lord not paying attention to Jerusalem as if he did not remember them. AT: “disregarded” or “paid no attention to” (See: [Metaphor](#))

on the day of his anger ... the days of his anger

Here “day” is used as an idiom that refers to a general period of time. AT: “at the time when he displays his anger ... the time of his anger” or “at the time he acts in his anger ... the time of his anger” (See: [Idiom](#))

swallowed up

This speaks of the Lord completely destroying the towns as if he were an animal who ate them. AT: “completely destroyed” (See: [Metaphor](#))

all the towns of Jacob

Here “the towns of Jacob” refers to the towns where his descendants lived. AT: “all the towns of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the fortified cities of the daughter of Judah

Possible meanings are 1) the fortified cities throughout Judah or 2) the fortified walls of Jerusalem.

translationWords

- Lord
- Zion, Mount Zion
- angry, anger
- Israel, Israelites
- heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly
- earth, earthly
- footstool
- compassion, compassionate
- Jacob, Israel
- stronghold, fortress, fortified
- Judah
- wrath, fury
- dishonor, dishonorable
- disgrace, disgraceful
- kingdom
- prince, princess

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:3-4

UDB:

³ Because he was extremely angry,
he has caused Israel to not be powerful anymore.

He has refused to assist us
when our enemies attacked us.

He has destroyed Israel
like a raging fire destroys everything.

⁴ He has gotten ready to kill us, his people,
as though we were his enemies.

He prepared to kill the people whom we love the most,
members of our own families.

He is extremely angry with us people of Jerusalem;
his anger is like a fire.

ULB:

³ With fierce anger he has cut off every horn of Israel.

He has withdrawn his right hand from before the enemy.

He has burned up Jacob like a blazing fire that devours everything around it.

⁴ Like an enemy he has bent his bow toward us,
with his right is ready to shoot.

He has slaughtered all who had been so pleasing to him in the tent of the daughter of Zion;
he has poured out his wrath like fire.

translationNotes

General Information:

The author continues the use of metaphors to express how the Lord opposed Judah.

he has cut off every horn of Israel

This speaks of the Lord taking away Israel's strength as if he were cutting off its horns. The word "horn" refers to an animal horn, not a musical instrument. AT: "he has taken away all of Israel's strength" (See: [Metaphor](#))

withdrawn his right hand from before the enemy

Here the Lord's protection is represented by his "right hand." AT: "stopped protecting us from our enemies" (See: [Metonymy](#))

He has burned up Jacob like a blazing fire that devours everything around it

This speaks of how the Lord has destroyed Jacob as if a fire has completely burned it. AT: "He has destroyed Jacob like a blazing fire destroys everything"

Jacob

Here "Jacob" refers to the places where his descendants lived. AT: "Israel" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Like an enemy he has bent his bow toward us, with his right is ready to shoot

A soldier has to bend his bow in order to shoot an arrow from it. This speaks of the Lord preparing to attack Israel as if he were an enemy about to shoot them with a bow and arrow. AT: "He has prepared to kill us, like an enemy who has made his bow ready to shoot us" (See: [Simile](#))

in the tent of the daughter of Zion

The "daughter of Zion" is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. The phrase "tent of the daughter of Zion" speaks of Jerusalem as a "tent" emphasizing that it is the home of those who live there. AT: "who live in Jerusalem" (See: [Personification](#) and [Metaphor](#))

he has poured out his wrath like fire

This speaks of the Lord's wrath as if it were a liquid that he were pouring out on the people. His wrath is also compared to a "fire" to emphasize how destructive it is. AT: "in his anger he has destroyed everything like a blazing fire" (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [cut off](#)
- [right hand](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [fire](#)
- [devour](#)
- [bow and arrow](#)
- [slaughter](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [precious](#)
- [tent](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:5-6**UDB:**

⁵ The Lord has become like an enemy
to us Israelites; he has destroyed us;
he has destroyed our palaces
and made our fortresses into ruins.
He has gotten rid of many people in Jerusalem,
and caused us to mourn and weep for those who were killed.

⁶ He has caused our enemies to smash his temple
as easily as if it had been a hut in a garden.
He has caused us, his people, to forget
all our sacred festivals and Sabbath days.
He has hated our kings and priests
because he was extremely angry with them.

ULB:

⁵ The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel.
He has swallowed up all her palaces. He has destroyed her strongholds.
He has increased mourning and lamentation within the daughter of Judah.

⁶ He has attacked his tabernacle like a garden hut. He has destroyed the place of the solemn assembly.
Yahweh has caused both solemn assembly and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion,
for he has despised both king and priest in the indignation of his anger.

translationNotes**swallowed up**

This speaks of the Lord completely destroying Israel as if he were animal who ate them. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:2](#). AT: “completely destroyed” (See: [Metaphor](#))

her palaces ... her strongholds

Israel is spoken of as if it were female.

He has increased mourning and lamentation within the daughter of Judah

The words “mourning” and “lamentation” can be expressed as verbs. AT: “He has caused more and more people within the daughter of Judah to mourn and lament” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

daughter of Judah

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. AT: “Judah” (See: [Personification](#))

He has attacked his tabernacle like a garden hut

This speaks of the tabernacle being easily destroyed, as if it were a garden hut. The Lord caused Israel’s enemies to destroy it. He did not destroy it himself. AT: “He has caused their enemies to attack his tabernacle as easily as if it were a garden hut” (See: [Simile](#) and [Metonymy](#))

a garden hut

a very small building for holding farming tools or for sheltering someone who is guarding a garden

He has destroyed the place of the solemn assembly

The Lord caused Israel’s enemies to destroy it. He did not destroy it himself. AT: “He has caused the place of the solemn assembly to be destroyed” or “He has caused their enemies to destroy the place of the solemn assembly” (See: [Metonymy](#))

caused both solemn assembly and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion

This can be stated in active form. AT: “caused the people in Zion to forget both solemn assembly and Sabbath” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in the indignation of his anger

“because he was extremely angry with them”

translationWords

- [palace](#)
- [mourn, mourning](#)
- [lament, laments, lamentation](#)
- [tabernacle](#)
- [assembly, assemble](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Sabbath](#)
- [king](#)
- [priest, priests, priesthood](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:7

UDB:

⁷ Yahweh has rejected the very altar on which we had sacrificed animals to him;
 he has abandoned his temple.
 He has allowed our enemies to tear down the walls
 of our temple and our palaces.
 They shout victoriously in the temple of Yahweh,
 like we previously shouted during our sacred festivals.

ULB:

⁷ The Lord has rejected his altar and disowned his sanctuary.
 He has given over the walls of her palaces into the hand of the enemy.
 They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh, as on the day of an appointed feast.

translationNotes

He has given over the walls of her palaces into the hand of the enemy

Here the enemy's "hand" refers to the enemy's control. AT: "He has allowed the enemy to capture the walls of her palaces" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the walls of her palaces

Here the word "her" may refer either to the temple or to Jerusalem. Possible translations are 1) "the walls of the temple" or 2) "the walls of Jerusalem's palaces." The word "walls" is a synecdoche for the whole building, and the building is a synecdoche for all of Jerusalem. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh, as on the day of an appointed feast

This is an ironic comparison between the happy, noisy festivals of Israel and the loud shouts of victory of the Babylonians. AT: "They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh, as the Israelites would during an appointed feast" (See: [Irony](#))

have raised a shout

This is an idiom. AT: "have shouted victoriously" (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- Lord
- reject
- altar, altars
- sanctuary
- hand, right hand, to hand over
- house of God, Yahweh's house

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:8-9**UDB:**

⁸ Yahweh was determined
 that our enemies would tear down our city wall.
 It was as though he had first measured the walls
 and then completely destroyed them.
 It was as though he caused the towers and walls to lament
 because they were now ruins.
⁹ The city gates have collapsed;
 the enemy has destroyed the bars that fastened the gates shut.
 The king and his officials have been forced to go to other countries,
 where no one teaches the laws that God gave to Moses.
 The prophets do not receive any visions
 because Yahweh does not give them any.

ULB:

⁸ Yahweh decided to destroy the city wall of the daughter of Zion.
 He has stretched out the measuring line and has not withheld his hand from destroying the wall.
 He has made the ramparts and wall to lament; together they wasted away.
⁹ Her gates have sunk into the ground; he has destroyed and broken the bars of her gate.
 Her king and her princes are among the nations, the law is no more
 and her prophets find no vision from Yahweh.

translationNotes**Yahweh decided to destroy the city wall**

Yahweh chose to have the wall destroyed and caused Jerusalem's enemy to destroy it. He did not destroy it himself. (See: [Metonymy](#))

daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

He has stretched out the measuring line

This speaks of preparing to destroy the wall as if he measured it before he destroyed it, so that he knew how much to destroy. AT: “It is as though he has measured the wall” (See: [Metaphor](#))

has not withheld his hand from destroying

This can be stated without the double negatives. Also, here the Lord is referred to by his “hand.” AT: “with his hand he has destroyed the wall” or “he has destroyed the wall” (See: [Double Negatives](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

He has made the ramparts and wall to lament; together they wasted away

The walls and ramparts are spoken of as if they were people who lamented and died. AT: “Because he has destroyed the ramparts and walls, they are like people who lament and have lost their strength” (See: [Personification](#))

ramparts

Ancient cities had a main “wall” to keep attackers out, and an outer line of “ramparts” to keep attackers from the wall.

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [lament, laments, lamentation](#)
- [gate, gate bar](#)
- [king](#)
- [prince, princess](#)
- [Gentile, Gentiles](#)
- [law, law of Moses, God’s law, law of Yahweh](#)
- [prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#)
- [vision](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:10**UDB:**

¹⁰ The old men of Jerusalem sit on the ground,
and they say nothing.

They are so sad that they wear rough sackcloth
and throw dust on their heads.

The young girls of Jerusalem bow down sorrowfully,
their faces touch the ground.

ULB:

¹⁰ The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground in silence.

They have thrown dust on their heads and put on sackcloth.

The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed their heads to the ground.

translationNotes**daughter of Zion**

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

sit on the ground in silence

Often people would sit on the ground to show they were mourning. AT: “sit on the ground, mourning in silence” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

They have thrown dust on their heads and put on sackcloth

These are actions of mourning. AT: “To show their mourning, they have thrown dust on their heads and put on sackcloth” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

have bowed their heads to the ground

This is an action of mourning. AT: “have sorrowfully bowed their heads to the ground” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

translationWords

- [elder](#)
- [sackcloth](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ My eyes are very tired because of my tears;
I am very grieved within my inner being.
Because very many of my people have died,
in my inner being I grieve and am exhausted.
Even children and babies are fainting
and dying in the streets because they have no food.
¹² They cry out to their mothers,
“We need something to eat and drink!”
They collapse like wounded men
in the streets of the city.
They slowly die
in the arms of their mothers.

ULB:

¹¹ My eyes have failed from their tears; my stomach churns;
my inner parts are poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
children and infants faint in the streets of the city.
¹² They say to their mothers, “Where is grain and wine?”
as they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city,
their lives are poured out on the bosom of their mothers.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The author shifts from describing Jerusalem to describing his own experience.

My eyes have failed from their tears

This is an idiom. AT: “I have cried until I cannot cry anymore” (See: [Idiom](#))

my stomach churns

The word “churn” means to move around violently, normally in a circular rotation. This does not mean the stomach is literally churning, but describes how the author feels. AT: “my insides ache” or “my stomach hurts” (See: [Metaphor](#))

my inner parts are poured out to the ground

The author speaks of feeling grief in his inner being as if his inner body parts had fallen out of his body onto the ground. AT: “my entire inner being is in grief” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the daughter of my people

This is a poetic name of Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. AT: “my people” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Personification](#))

Where is grain and wine?

This rhetorical question is used as a request for something to eat. The children are telling their mother that they are hungry. The phrase “grain and wine” represents food and drink. This question may be written as a statement. AT: “Give us something to eat and drink.” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

as they faint like a wounded man

This speaks of the children fainting from hunger and thirst in the same way that a wounded man faints. (See: [Simile](#))

their lives are poured out on the bosom of their mothers

This speaks of the children dying as if their lives were a liquid that was being poured out. AT: “they slowly die in the arms of their mothers” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [grain](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [life, live, lived, lives, living, alive](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:13-14**UDB:**

¹³ You people of Jerusalem,

I cannot say anything to help you.

No people have suffered like you are suffering;

I do not know what I can do to comfort you.

You have fallen just as far

as if you had sunk in the ocean;

there is no one who can bring your city back to what it was.

¹⁴ The prophets among you claimed that they had seen visions from Yahweh,

but what they said was false and worthless.

They did not work to save you from your enemies;

they did not tell you that you had sinned.

Instead, they announced to you things that they said Yahweh had told them;

they tempted you to believe them, and you did.

ULB:

¹³ What can I say to you, daughter of Jerusalem?

To what can I compare to you, that I may comfort you, virgin daughter of Zion?

Your wound is as great as the sea. Who can heal you?

¹⁴ Your prophets have seen false and worthless visions for you.

They have not exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes,

but for you they gave utterances that are false and misleading.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The author begins to address Jerusalem.

What can I say ... Jerusalem?

The author uses this rhetorical question to express that he does not know what to say to help Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. AT: "There is nothing that I can say ... Jerusalem." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

daughter of Jerusalem ... virgin daughter of Zion

These are poetic names for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. “Zion” is another name for Jerusalem. (See: [Personification](#))

To what can I compare to you ... Zion?

The author uses this rhetorical question to express that he does not know how to give comfort to Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. AT: “There is nothing to which I can compare you ... Zion.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Your wound is as great as the sea

This speaks of Jerusalem’s great suffering as if it were as terrible as the sea is great. AT: “Your suffering is as terrible as the sea is large” (See: [Simile](#))

Who can heal you?

“Who can restore you?” The author uses this rhetorical question to express that there is no one who can restore Jerusalem to the way it was before. This question can be written as a statement. AT: “No one can heal you.” or “No one can restore you.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

They have not exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes

“They did not tell you about your sins to restore your fortunes.” The word “fortune” refers to a person’s wealth and prosperity.

for you they gave utterances

The word “utterances” can be expressed with the verb “spoke.” AT: “they spoke things to you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [comfort, comforter](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [heal, cure](#)
- [prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#)
- [deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive](#)
- [fool, fools, foolish, folly](#)
- [vision](#)
- [reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation](#)
- [iniquity, iniquities](#)
- [restore, restores, restored, restoration](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:15-16**UDB:**

¹⁵ All those who pass by you
 make fun of you by clapping their hands;
 they shake their heads and hiss at you;
 They say, "Is this the great city of Jerusalem?
 Is it the city that people said was the most beautiful city in the world,
 the city that caused all the people on the earth to rejoice?"

¹⁶ Now all our enemies laugh at you;
 they hate you so much that they hiss at you and grind their teeth at you.
 They say, "We have destroyed Israel!
 This is what we longed for,
 and now it has happened!"

ULB:

¹⁵ All those who pass along the road clap their hands at you.
 They hiss and shake their heads against the daughter of Jerusalem and say,
 "Is this the city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,' 'The Joy for All of Earth'?"

¹⁶ All your enemies open their mouths against you.
 They sneer and grind their teeth and say, "We have swallowed her up!
 This is the day we have waited for! We have lived to see it!"

translationNotes**clap their hands ... hiss and shake their heads**

These actions are used to mock and insult others. AT: "mock you by clapping their hands ... hiss and shake their heads" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

the daughter of Jerusalem

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

Is this the city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,' 'The Joy for All of Earth'?

This rhetorical question is used to express sarcasm. This question can be written as a statement. AT: "This city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,' 'The Joy for All of Earth,' is not so beautiful or joyful anymore!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

The Perfection of Beauty

"Perfectly Beautiful"

grind their teeth

This action shows a person's anger and that they are mocking others. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

We have swallowed her up

Here the people speak of destroying Jerusalem as if they were an animal swallowing its food. AT: "We have completely destroyed Jerusalem" (See: [Metaphor](#))

We have lived to see it

This is an idiom. AT: "We have greatly desired to see it happen" (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- [Jerusalem](#)
- [perfect](#)
- [joy, joyful](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at, mocker](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:17**UDB:**

¹⁷ Yahweh has done what he planned;
long ago he threatened to destroy you,
and now he has done it.

He has destroyed your city without acting mercifully toward you;
he has enabled your enemies to be happy about defeating you;
he has enabled your enemies to continually become stronger.

ULB:

¹⁷ Yahweh has done what he planned to do. He has fulfilled his word.
He has overthrown you without pity,
for he has permitted the enemy to rejoice over you; he has lifted up the horn of your enemies.

translationNotes**He has overthrown**

“He has destroyed”

to rejoice over you

This means that the enemy rejoiced because they defeated them. AT: “to rejoice over defeating you”

he has lifted up the horn of your enemies

Here “horn” (that is, an animal horn) represents strength. AT: “he has increased the power of your enemies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [fulfill, fulfilled](#)
- [word, words](#)
- [proclaim, proclamation](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)

- rejoice
- strength, strengthen
- adversary, enemy

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:18-19**UDB:**

¹⁸ I wish the city walls could speak like the people who
cry out to Yahweh!

I would tell the walls, "Cry out for help to Yahweh!

Let your tears flow day and night!

Let them flow like rivers.

Do not stop grieving;

do not stop crying."

¹⁹ Get up during every night and cry out;

tell Yahweh what you feel in your inner beings.

Raise your arms to plead to him

to act mercifully to prevent our children from dying;

they are fainting on the street corners

because they have no food to eat.

ULB:

¹⁸ Their heart cried out to the Lord,

walls of the daughter of Zion! Make your tears flow down like a river day and night.

Give yourself no relief, your eyes no relief.

¹⁹ Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches!

Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord.

Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children who faint with hunger at the corner of every street."

translationNotes**Their heart cried out to the Lord**

Here the word "heart" represents the whole person emphasizing one's innermost being. Possible meanings of who cried out are 1) the people of Jerusalem. AT: "The people of Jerusalem shouted to the Lord from their innermost being" or 2) the walls are being personified. AT: "You walls, cry out to the Lord from your innermost being" (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Personification](#))

walls of the daughter of Zion! Make your tears flow ... of every street

The writer speaks to the walls of Jerusalem. He wants the people of Jerusalem to do what he is telling the walls to do. Some translations take this whole section to be spoken to the “walls,” though this can be written with the first phrase “walls of the daughter of Zion!” spoken to the “walls,” and the rest of the section spoken directly to the people. (See: [Apostrophe](#))

the daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))

Make your tears flow down like a river

This speaks of the people crying so much that their tears would flow like a river. AT: “Cry many, many tears” (See: [Metaphor](#))

day and night

These two opposite times of day refer to all the time. AT: “all of the time” (See: [Merism](#))

Give yourself no relief, your eyes no relief

“Do not allow yourself and your eyes to rest from crying”

at the beginning of the night watches

“many times during the night.” This refers to every time a watchman came on duty.

Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord

The phrase “pour out your heart like water” is an idiom. Here the Lord is represented by his “face” to emphasize his presence. AT: “Tell the Lord how you feel in your inner being” (See: [Idiom](#))

Lift up your hands to him

This was an action often performed while praying. AT: “Lift up your hands to him in prayer” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

for the lives of your children

This means for them to request that the Lord save their children. AT: “to save the lives of your children” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

at the corner of every street

The word “every” here is an exaggeration for “many.” AT: “where the streets come together” or “by the roads” (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

translationWords

- heart, hearts
- Lord
- Zion, Mount Zion
- watch, watchman
- face
- life, live, lived, lives, living, alive
- children, child
- head

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:20

UDB:

²⁰ Yahweh, look at your people and have mercy on us.

Have you ever caused people to suffer like this before?

It is certainly not right that women are eating the flesh of their own children,
the children whom they have always taken care of.

It is not right that our enemies are killing priests and prophets
in your own temple!

ULB:

²⁰ See, Yahweh, and consider those you have dealt in this way.

Should women eat the fruit of their wombs, the children whom they have cared for?

Should priest and prophet be slaughtered in the sanctuary of the Lord?

translationNotes

Should women eat the fruit of their wombs ... for?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that it is not right for women to eat their children. This question can be written as a statement. AT: "Woman should not eat their own children ... for!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

the fruit of their wombs

This speaks of children having come from their mother as if they were fruit that came from her womb. AT: "their children that they have given birth to" or "their own children" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Should priest and prophet be slaughtered in the sanctuary of the Lord?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that the prophets and priests should not be killed. This question can be written as a statement. AT: "The prophets and priests should not be slaughtered in the sanctuary of the Lord!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Should priest and prophet be slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. AT: "Should our enemies slaughter priests and prophets" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

translationWords

- [fruit, fruitful](#)
- [priest, priests, priesthood](#)
- [prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#)
- [slaughter](#)
- [sanctuary](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 2:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ The corpses of people of all ages lie in the streets;

there are even corpses of young men and young women whom our enemies have killed with their swords.

Because you were very angry,

you caused them to be killed;

you have slaughtered them

without pitying them at all.

²² You summoned my enemies to attack from every direction,

as though you were calling them to come to a feast.

At that time you showed that you were very angry,

and no one escaped.

Our enemies murdered our little children,

the ones whom we took care of and reared up.

ULB:

²¹ Both the young and the old lie on the dust of the streets.

My young women and my young men have fallen by the sword;

you have slaughtered them without taking pity on them.

²² You have summoned, as you would call the people to a feast day, my terrors on every side, on the day of the anger of Yahweh no one escaped or survived;

those I cared for and raised,

my enemy has destroyed.

translationNotes**Both the young and the old lie on the dust**

It is implied here that this refers to dead people. AT: "The corpses of both the young and the old lie on the dust" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Both the young and the old

These phrases refer to people. These two opposites are used to refer to all ages of people. AT: “Both young people and old people” or “People of all ages” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#) and [Merism](#))

My young women and my young men have fallen by the sword

Here the “sword” refers to their enemies. This is a euphemism that means that they were murdered by their enemies. AT: “My young women and my young men have been murdered by their enemies” or “My enemies have murdered my young women and my young men” (See: [Euphemism](#))

you have slaughtered them

This speaks of Yahweh allowing the people to be slaughtered as if he killed them himself. AT: “you allowed them to be slaughtered” or “you allowed this to happen” (See: [Metonymy](#))

as you would call the people to a feast day

“as if they were coming to a feast.” This speaks of how Yahweh summoned his enemies as if he were inviting them to a feast. (See: [Simile](#))

my terrors

Here the people the author fears are referred to as his “terrors.” AT: “the attackers I was afraid of” (See: [Metonymy](#))

on every side

This is an idiom. AT: “to attack from every direction” (See: [Idiom](#))

on the day of the anger of Yahweh

Here “day” is used as an idiom that refers to a general period of time. AT: “at the time when Yahweh acted in his anger” or “during the time that Yahweh displayed his anger” (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- [virgin](#)
- [sword](#)
- [slaughter](#)
- [wrath, fury](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [terror, terrify](#)
- [assembly, assemble](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 03 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Troubles

Here the author speaks of the suffering experienced by the people of Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege and after the city's fall. He speaks of these sufferings as if they had been directed against him personally, as if God had personally attacked him. However, we should understand the writer's feelings as having been shared by everyone in the city.

In verse 19, the writer begins to think about the lessons that he and his fellow citizens should learn about God and his anger and his mercy. He also thinks about what it means to repent and to trust in God.

In verse 43, the writer speaks again about the suffering that God has caused to Jerusalem, but here the writer speaks of "we" and "us," not "I" and "me." But in verse 48, he begins to speak about how he himself will continually mourn over what has happened.

In verse 52, the writer begins to think about his personal enemies in Jerusalem, those who persecuted him for bringing Yahweh's messages to the city. He asks for God to show his enemies that he was doing right, and to take revenge on them for their crimes against him.

Links:

- **Lamentations 03:01 Notes**

Lamentations 3:1-4

UDB:

¹ I, the one who am writing this, am a man whom Yahweh made to suffer,
because he was angry.

² It was as though he caused me to walk in a very dark place
without any light at all.

³ He has punished me many times,
many times during each day.

⁴ He has caused my skin and my flesh to become old.
He has broken my bones.

ULB:

¹ I am a man who has seen misery under the rod of Yahweh's fury.

² He drove me away and caused me to walk in darkness rather than light.

³ Surely he turned his hand against me again and again, the whole day long.

⁴ He made my flesh and my skin waste away; he broke my bones.

translationNotes

Connecting Statement:

A new poem begins. Here the author speaks of the sufferings that his people experienced. He speaks about them as if God had personally attacked only him. However, the writer intends to speak for everyone in the city. (See: [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#))

who has seen misery

Here “has seen” represents has experienced. AT: “who has experienced misery” or “who has suffered” (See: [Metaphor](#))

under the rod of Yahweh's fury

Being “under the rod” represents being beaten with a rod. The author speaks of God's punishment as if God had beaten him with a rod. AT: “because Yahweh was very angry and has beaten me with a rod” or “because Yahweh was very angry and has punished me severely” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

He drove me away

“He forced me to go away”

caused me to walk in darkness rather than light

Here “darkness” represents suffering. AT: “caused me to suffer terribly with no hope, like a person walking in darkness rather than light” (See: [Metaphor](#))

he turned his hand against me

Here “turned his hand against me” represents attacking him. The author speaks of God causing bad things to happen to him as if God had attacked him. AT: “he has attacked me” or “he has caused many bad things to happen to me, like someone who attacks a person” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

He made my flesh and my skin waste away; he broke my bones

Possible meanings are 1) these things are a result of being beaten or 2) these are more ways that God punished the man.

translationWords

- [rod](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [wrath, fury](#)
- [walk, walks, walked, walking](#)
- [darkness](#)
- [light](#)
- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [flesh](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:5-8**UDB:**

- ⁵ He has surrounded me with things
that make me suffer very bitterly.
- ⁶ It is as though he has buried me in a dark place
like those who have been dead for a long time.
- ⁷ It is as though he has built a prison wall around me,
and fastened me with heavy chains, so I cannot escape.
- ⁸ Although I call out and cry out for him to help me,
he does not pay attention to me.

ULB:

- ⁵ He built up siege works against me, and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship.
- ⁶ He made me live in dark places, like those who died long ago.
- ⁷ He built a wall around me and I cannot escape. He made my chains heavy
- ⁸ and though I call out and cry for help, he shut out my prayer.

translationNotes**He built up siege works against me**

Siege works are ramps that an army builds around a city to enable them to climb over the city walls and invade the city.

He built up siege works against me

Possible meanings are 1) the author speaks of God causing bad things to happen to him as if he were a city and God was an enemy that built up siege works against him. AT: “God attacked me like an enemy army that sets up siege works around a city” or 2) the author speaks of God causing the enemy army to attack Jerusalem as if God were the enemy. AT: “God caused the enemy army to build up siege works against me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

surrounded me with bitterness and hardship

This represents God causing him to experience much bitterness and hardship. AT: “caused me to experience much bitterness and hardship” or “caused me to suffer and have many problems” (See: [Metaphor](#))

bitterness

Here “bitterness” represents suffering. (See: [Metaphor](#))

He made me live in dark places, like those who died long ago

Here “dark places” is a metaphor for suffering. The author compares the intensity of his suffering to the intensity of the darkness that those who died long ago experience. AT: “The suffering that he causes me is intense like the darkness of the grave” or “He makes me suffer terribly, as if I were in the darkness of those who died long ago” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Simile](#))

He built a wall around me and I cannot escape. He made my chains heavy

This represents the continuing suffering. Like a person who cannot escape from prison, the author cannot make his suffering stop. AT: “My suffering continues. It is as though he has built a wall around me and put heavy chains on me, and I cannot escape” (See: [Metaphor](#))

he shut out my prayer

The author speaks about God refusing to listen to his prayers as though God was shutting his ears so that the author’s prayers could not go into them. AT: “he refuses to hear my prayer” (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- [siege, besiege, besieged, besieger](#)
- [darkness](#)
- [death, die, dead](#)
- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:9-11**UDB:**

⁹ It is as though he has blocked my path with a high stone wall
and has caused me to wander everywhere to try to get out.

¹⁰ He has waited to attack me
like a bear or a lion hides and waits to attack a man.

¹¹ It is as though a bear has dragged me off the path and mauled me,
and left me alone without help.

ULB:

⁹ He blocked my path with a wall of hewn stone; he made my paths crooked.

¹⁰ He is like a bear waiting to ambush me, a lion in hiding;

¹¹ he turned aside my paths, he has made me desolate.

translationNotes**He blocked my path**

The author speaks of God causing him to continue to suffer as if God was preventing him from escaping the suffering by blocking his path. AT: “It is as though he blocked my path” (See: [Metaphor](#))

a wall of hewn stone

“a wall of cut stones.” People would cut stones into regular shapes that could fit together well in order to build a strong wall.

he made my paths crooked

Crooked paths do not lead people to where they want to go. Here they represent unsuccessful ways of escaping suffering. AT: “it is as though he has made my paths crooked” or “I have tried to make the suffering stop, but God has prevented me, like one who prevents another from escaping by making his paths crooked” (See: [Metaphor](#))

He is like a bear waiting to ambush me, a lion in hiding

The author speaks of God being ready to cause him to suffer more, as if God were a wild animal waiting to attack him. (See: [Simile](#))

he turned aside my paths

Possible meanings are 1) “he dragged me off the path” or 2) “he caused my path to turn in the wrong direction”

he has made me desolate

“he has made me hopeless” or “he has not allowed me to have any help”

translationWords

- [lion](#)
- [desolate, desolation](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:12-15**UDB:**

¹² It is as though he strung his bow and made me the target
to shoot at with his arrows.

¹³ It is as though he shot his arrows
deep into my body.

¹⁴ All my relatives laugh at me;
all during each day they sing songs that make fun of me.

¹⁵ Yahweh has made me suffer greatly,
like someone suffers after drinking something very bitter.

ULB:

¹² He bent his bow and set me as a target for his arrow.

¹³ He pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver.

¹⁴ I became a laughingstock to all my people, the object of their taunting all day long.

¹⁵ He filled me with bitterness and forced me to drink wormwood.

translationNotes**General Information:**

God is often spoken of as if he were a warrior.

He bent his bow

A soldier has to bend his bow in order to shoot an arrow from it. The author speaks of God deciding to cause him trouble as if God were a warrior ready to shoot him with an arrow. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:4](#). AT: "It was as if God made his bow ready to shoot"

He pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver

The author speaks of the deep grief he feels as if God had shot his kidneys with an arrow. AT: "My grief is great. It is as if he pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver" (See: [Metaphor](#))

my kidneys

The kidneys are abdominal organs that move urine into the bladder. They are a metaphor for a person's emotions. AT: "deep into my body" or 2) "my heart" (See: [Metaphor](#))

quiver

a bag worn on the back in which to store arrows

a laughingstock to all my people

The word “all” is a generalization, meaning “most.” AT: “a laughingstock to most of my people” or “someone whom all my people mock” (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

laughingstock

someone whom many people mock

He filled me with bitterness

Here “bitterness” represents suffering. It is referred to as if it were something that could fill the speaker. AT: “He has caused me to suffer very much” (See: [Metaphor](#))

forced me to drink wormwood

Wormwood is the bitter juice from the leaves and flowers of a certain plant. Drinking that bitter juice represents suffering. AT: “it is as though he forced me to drink something very bitter” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [bow and arrow](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:16-18**UDB:**

- ¹⁶ It is as though he has caused me to chew gravel that broke my teeth;
it is as though he has trampled me in the ground.
- ¹⁷ Things no longer go well for me;
I no longer remember being prosperous.
- ¹⁸ I continue to say to myself, "I am not strong enough to bear any more hardships.
I no longer expect that Yahweh will rescue me."

ULB:

- ¹⁶ He crushed my teeth with gravel; he has pushed me down into the dust.
- ¹⁷ My soul is deprived of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is.
- ¹⁸ So I say, "My endurance has perished and so has my hope in Yahweh."

translationNotes**He crushed my teeth with gravel**

Possible meanings are 1) the author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had forced him to chew gravel. AT: "He has humiliated me, like someone who forces another to chew gravel" or 2) the author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had pushed his face down into the gravel on the ground. AT: "He has humiliated me, like someone who pushes another man's face down into the gravel" (See: [Metaphor](#))

he has pushed me down into the dust

The author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had pushed him down into the dust on the ground. (See: [Metaphor](#))

My soul is deprived of peace

Possible meanings are 1) the author's experiences are not peaceful. AT: "I have no peace in my life" or 2) the author does not feel peace. AT: "I feel no peace in my soul"

My endurance has perished and so has my hope in Yahweh

The author speaks as if his ability to endure more suffering and his hope that Yahweh will help him were living beings that have died. AT: "I cannot endure anymore suffering and I can no longer hope that Yahweh will help me" (See: [Personification](#))

endurance

Some versions translate this as “glory” or “splendor.”

translationWords

- soul, souls
- peace, peaceful
- endure, endurance
- perish, perished, perishing, perishable
- hope, hoped, hopes
- Yahweh

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:19-21**UDB:**

¹⁹ When I think about how I suffer and how I wander far from home,
it is like drinking a very bitter liquid.

²⁰ I will never forget this time
when I feel very depressed.

²¹ However, I confidently expect Yahweh to do good things for me again,
and this I know is true.

ULB:

¹⁹ Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and bitterness.

²⁰ I continually remember it and I am bowed down within me.

²¹ But I call this to mind and therefore I have hope:

translationNotes**General Information:**

In verses 19 to 42, the writer thinks about the lessons that he and his fellow citizens should learn about God and his anger and mercy.

wormwood and bitterness

Wormwood is a plant that gives a liquid which is very bitter to drink. Together “wormwood” and “bitterness” represent severe suffering. (See: [Doublet](#) and [Metaphor](#))

I am bowed down within me

The author speaks of his deep sadness and despair as if he were bowed down. AT: “I am depressed” or “I am discouraged” (See: [Idiom](#))

But I call this to mind

This means to intentionally think about something. The word “this” refers to something that the author will start to speak about in the next verse. AT: “But I choose to think about this” or “But I remember this”

I have hope

“I hope”

translationWords

- [afflict, affliction](#)
- [bow, bow down](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:22-24**UDB:**

²² Yahweh never stops faithfully loving us, and he shows his compassion for us forever.

He never stops acting kindly toward us.

²³ Every morning he acts mercifully toward us again.

He is the one in whom we can always trust.

²⁴ So I sincerely say to myself, “Yahweh gives me what I need!”

Because I believe this, I will confidently wait for him to do good things for me.

ULB:

²² The steadfast love of Yahweh never ceases and his compassions never end,

²³ they are new every morning; your faithfulness is great.

²⁴ “Yahweh is my inheritance,” I said, therefore I will hope in him.

translationNotes**The steadfast love of Yahweh never ceases**

The abstract noun “steadfast love” can be expressed with the phrase “love faithfully.” AT: “Yahweh never stops loving his people faithfully” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

his compassions never end

The abstract noun “compassions” can be translated with the verb “care.” AT: “he never stops caring for those who suffer” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

they are new every morning

The word “they” refers to God’s steadfast love and compassions. Their being new represents God continuing to act according to them. AT: “every morning he treats us again with steadfast love and compassion” (See: [Metaphor](#))

your faithfulness

The word “your” refers to Yahweh.

Yahweh is my inheritance

When God gave each tribe of Israel their land, he called it an inheritance. The author speaks of Yahweh being all he needs as if Yahweh were the inheritance that he had received. AT: “Because Yahweh is with me, I have everything I need” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [faithful, faithfulness](#)
- [inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:25-29**UDB:**

- ²⁵ Yahweh is good to all those who depend on him,
to those who seek him to help them.
- ²⁶ So it is good for us to wait quietly
for Yahweh to save us.
- ²⁷ And it is good for us to suffer patiently
while we are young.
- ²⁸ Those who seek him to help them should sit by themselves and not complain,
because they know that it is Yahweh who has allowed them to suffer.
- ²⁹ They should lie in the dirt, with their faces on the ground,
because they can still hope that Yahweh will help them.

ULB:

- ²⁵ Yahweh is good to those who wait for him, to the one who seeks him.
- ²⁶ It is good to wait silently for the salvation of Yahweh.
- ²⁷ It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
- ²⁸ Let him sit alone in silence, when it is laid upon him.
- ²⁹ Let him put his mouth in the dust—there may yet be hope.

translationNotes**Yahweh is good to those who wait for him**

Here “good” refers to kindness. AT: “Yahweh is kind to those who wait for him” or “Yahweh does good things for those who wait for him”

those who wait for him

Possible meanings are 1) “all those who depend on him” or 2) “the one who waits patiently for him to act.”

the one who seeks him

Possible meanings for “seeks him” are 1) asking God for help or 2) wanting to know God. (See: [Metaphor](#))

that he bear the yoke in his youth

Here “bear the yoke” represents suffering. The abstract noun “his youth” can be expressed with the word “young.” AT: “that he suffer while he is young” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

Let him sit alone in silence

The phrase “in silence” refers to not speaking. Here it may refer specifically to not complaining. AT: “Let him sit alone without speaking” or “Let him sit alone and not complain”

when it is laid upon him

“when the yoke is laid upon him.” Here the yoke represents suffering. AT: “when he suffers” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Let him put his mouth in the dust

Putting the mouth in the dust represents bowing down with one’s face on the ground. AT: “Let him lie down with his mouth on the ground” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [good, goodness](#)
- [salvation](#)
- [to bear](#)
- [yoke](#)
- [hope, hoped, hopes](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:30-33**UDB:**

³⁰ If someone strikes us on one cheek,
we should turn the other cheek toward that person in order that he may strike it, too,
and accept it when others insult us.

³¹ The Lord does not abandon his people forever.

³² Sometimes he causes us to suffer,
but he also acts kindly toward us
because he continually and faithfully loves us.

³³ And he does not take pleasure when he causes people to suffer
or be sad.

ULB:

³⁰ Let him offer his cheek to the one who strikes him, and let him be filled to the full with reproach.

³¹ For the Lord will not reject us forever,

³² but though he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

³³ For he does not afflict from his heart or torment the children of mankind.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The writer speaks of the one who waits for Yahweh ([Lamentations 3:25](#)).

Let him offer his cheek to the one who strikes him

The word “him” refers to anyone who is suffering and who waits for Yahweh. Here “offer his cheek” represents allowing someone to strike his cheek. AT: “Let him allow people to hit him on the face” (See: [Metaphor](#))

let him be filled to the full with reproach

The author speaks of a person as if he were a container and reproach were a liquid. Being filled with reproach represents being reproached much. The implication is that he should be patient when this happens. AT: “let him be insulted much” or “let him be patient when people reproach him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

though he causes grief

“though the Lord causes people to suffer” or “though he afflicts people”

he will have compassion

“he will be compassionate to them”

For he does not afflict from his heart

Here the heart represents desire or pleasure, and afflicting from the heart represents afflicting with pleasure. AT: “For it does not make him happy to afflict people” or “He does not take pleasure in afflicting people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the children of mankind

This refers to people in general. AT: “human beings” or “people” (See: [Idiom](#))

translationWords

- [disgrace, disgraceful](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [reject](#)
- [forever](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [afflict, affliction](#)
- [heart, hearts](#)
- [torment](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:34-36**UDB:**

³⁴ If people mistreat and oppress all the prisoners,
³⁵ or if they rebel against God
 by refusing to do for others what is right,
³⁶ or if they cause judges to decide matters unjustly,
 the Lord certainly sees all these things.

ULB:

³⁴ To crush underfoot all the prisoners of the earth,
³⁵ to deny a man justice in the presence of the Most High,
³⁶ to deny justice to a person—the Lord would not approve such things!

translationNotes**General Information:**

The author wrote in general terms about what is true for all people, but it shows God's concern for his people, the people of Israel, who were being mistreated by their enemies.

To crush ... to deny a man justice ... to deny justice

“If people crush ... if they deny a man justice ... if they deny justice”

To crush underfoot

Here “crush underfoot” represents abusing and mistreating people. AT: “To abuse” or “To mistreat” (See: [Metaphor](#))-

to deny a man justice

This refers to not allowing a person to have what he deserves. AT: “to deny a person his rights” or “to keep a person from having what he deserves”

in the presence of the Most High

Doing something “in the presence of the Most High” represents doing it while knowing that God sees it. AT: “knowing that the Most High sees it” (See: [Metonymy](#))

to deny justice to a person

Here “deny justice” refers to not making a just decision for a person in a legal concern. AT: “to judge a person wrongly in court” or “to keep a person who goes to a judge from getting what is right”

translationWords

- [prison, prisoner, imprison](#)
- [earth, earthly](#)
- [just, justice, justly](#)
- [Most High](#)
- [Lord](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:37-39**UDB:**

- ³⁷ No one can make something happen
unless Yahweh has already decided that it should happen.
- ³⁸ God in heaven is the one who commands that disasters should happen,
and he also causes good things to happen.
- ³⁹ So it is certainly not right for us, who are only people on earth, to complain
when he punishes us for the sins that we have committed.

ULB:

- ³⁷ Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord decreed it?
- ³⁸ Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and the good come?
- ³⁹ How can any person alive complain? How can a person complain about the punishment for his sins?

translationNotes**Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord decreed it?**

The author uses this rhetorical question to teach that when someone commands something to happen, it will happen only if God has already decreed that it should happen. AT: “No one has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord decreed it.” or “What someone has commanded to happen has never happened unless the Lord decreed it.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

has spoken

It can be expressed clearly that this refers to commanding something to happen. AT: “has commanded that something should happen” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

it came to pass

“what he said happened”

Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and the good come?

The author uses this rhetorical question to teach that both calamities and good things happen only because God has commanded them to happen. AT: “It is only from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and the good come.” or “It is only because the Most High has commanded it that both calamities and good things happen.” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

from the mouth of the Most High

Here “mouth” represents what God says or commands. AT: “from the command of the Most High” or “because the Most High has commanded it” (See: [Metonymy](#))

both calamities and the good come

Here “come” represents happening. Also, the nominal adjective “the good” can be stated as “good things.” AT: “both calamities and good things happen” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Nominal Adjectives](#))

How can any person alive complain? How can a person complain about the punishment for his sins?

The author uses these rhetorical questions to teach that people should not complain when God punishes them. AT: “A person should not complain when God punishes him for his sins.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

How can any person alive complain

Possible meanings are 1) it is implied that mere people cannot fully understand God’s actions. AT: “How can a mere person complain” or 2) it is implied that being alive is a gift from God. AT: “How can a person who is blessed to be alive complain” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

translationWords

- [decree](#)
- [punish, punishment](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:40-43**UDB:**

⁴⁰ Instead, we should think carefully about how we behave;
we should turn back to Yahweh.

⁴¹ We should pray with all our inner beings and lift up our arms
toward God in heaven, and say,

⁴² "We have sinned and rebelled against you,
and you have not forgiven us.

⁴³ You have been very angry and chased after us;
you have slaughtered us without pitying us.

ULB:

⁴⁰ Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to Yahweh.

⁴¹ Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in the heavens:

⁴² "We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.

⁴³ You have covered yourself with anger and pursued us, you have killed and you have not spared.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The writer speaks again about the suffering that God has caused to Jerusalem, but here he speaks of "we" and "us," not "I" and "me."

General Information:

In verse 42 the author starts a prayer that he and the people of Israel should pray.

let us return to Yahweh

Here "return to Yahweh" represents submitting to him again. AT: "let us submit to Yahweh again" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands

Here “lift up our hearts” represents praying sincerely. It was customary for the Israelites to raise their hands when praying to God. AT: “Let us pray sincerely with lifted hands” or “Let us lift up our hands and pray sincerely” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))

We have transgressed and rebelled

The words “transgressed” and “rebelled” share similar meanings. Together they indicate that transgression is the same as rebelling against Yahweh. (See: [Doublet](#))

You have covered yourself with anger

Here anger is spoken of as if it were a garment that God has put on. Hebrew often spoke of emotions as if they were clothing. AT: “You have been angry” (See: [Metaphor](#))

you have killed

“you have killed many of us”

you have not spared

Here “spared” represents having pity. AT: “you have not had pity on us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [test, tests, tested](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [heart, hearts](#)
- [God](#)
- [heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)
- [transgress, transgresses, transgression](#)
- [rebel, rebellious, rebellion](#)
- [angry, anger](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:44-47**UDB:**

- ⁴⁴ You have hidden yourself away, as if you were in a cloud,
so that you will not hear us when we pray.
- ⁴⁵ You have made us go among the foreign peoples,
and they think we are only garbage.
- ⁴⁶ All our enemies have spoken things to insult us.
- ⁴⁷ We are constantly afraid that people will trap us,
because we have experienced so many disasters and so much ruin.

ULB:

- ⁴⁴ You have covered yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through.
- ⁴⁵ You have made us like filthy scum and refuse among the nations.
- ⁴⁶ All our enemies curse us,
- ⁴⁷ panic and pitfall have come upon us, ruin and destruction.

translationNotes**Connecting Statement:**

The prayer that began in [Lamentations 3:42](#) continues.

You have covered yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through

This represents God refusing to listen to the people's prayer. AT: "You refuse to listen to our prayers. It is as though you put a cloud between us and you so that our prayers cannot get to you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

You have made us like filthy scum and refuse among the nations

The people of Israel are compared to filthy scum and refuse. Possible meanings are 1) God has caused the nations to think of his people as worthless. AT: "You have made the nations think of us as scum and garbage" or 2) God's forcing his people to live among the nations is like throwing them away as garbage. AT: "You have thrown us away like filthy garbage among the nations" (See: [Simile](#))

panic and pitfall have come upon us, ruin and destruction

The abstract nouns “panic,” “pitfall,” “ruin” and “destruction” can be expressed with verbs. AT: “we are panicking. We are trapped, and we are being ruined and destroyed” or “we are terrified and trapped. We are being completely destroyed” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

pitfall

This refers to falling into a pit. Here it represents being trapped in any way.

have come upon us

“have happened to us”

ruin and destruction

These two words share similar meanings and refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. AT: “total destruction” (See: [Doublet](#))

translationWords

- [pray, prayer, prayers, prayed](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at, mocker](#)
- [fear, fears, afraid](#)
- [pit](#)
- [desolate, desolation](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:48-50**UDB:**

- ⁴⁸ Many tears flow from my eyes
because my people have been destroyed.
- ⁴⁹ My tears continually flow;
they will not stop
- ⁵⁰ until Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees us.

ULB:

- ⁴⁸ My eyes flow with streams of tears because my people are destroyed.
- ⁴⁹ My eyes will shed tears without ceasing, without relief,
- ⁵⁰ until Yahweh from heaven looks down and sees.

translationNotes**General Information:**

The author speaks about himself again.

My eyes flow with streams of tears

Here the author speaks of the great amount of his tears as if they were streams. He uses exaggeration to show that he is very sad and has cried much. AT: "Tears flow from my eyes like water flowing in a river" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

because my people are destroyed

This can be stated in active form. AT: "because enemies have destroyed my people" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

without ceasing, without relief

Both of these phrases means the same thing. The author speaks of his continuing to cry as if his eyes were a person and had no rest from crying. AT: "without stopping" (See: [Doublet](#) and [Personification](#))

until Yahweh from heaven looks down and sees

What the author hopes Yahweh will see can be stated clearly. AT: “until Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees what has happened to my people” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

translationWords

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

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:51-54**UDB:**

⁵¹ I am very grieved
because of what has happened to the women of my city.

⁵² My enemies hunted for me
like people hunt for a bird to kill it
even though there was no reason for them to do that.

⁵³ They threw me into a pit to kill me,
and placed a heavy stone over the top of it.

⁵⁴ The water in the pit rose above my head,
and I said to myself, 'I am about to die!'

ULB:

⁵¹ My eyes cause me grief because of all the daughters of my city.

⁵² I have been hunted like a bird by those who were my enemies; they hunted me without a reason.

⁵³ They cast me into a pit and they threw a stone on me,

⁵⁴ and they caused waters to overflow, covering my head. I said, 'I have been cut off!'

translationNotes**My eyes cause me grief**

The phrase "My eyes" represents what he sees. AT: "What I see causes me to grieve" (See: [Metonymy](#))

because of all the daughters of my city

It can be stated clearly that the "daughters of my city" are suffering. AT: "because the daughters of my city are suffering" or "because I see the daughters of my city suffering" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

all the daughters of my city

Possible meanings are 1) the women of Jerusalem or 2) all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (See: [Idiom](#))

I have been hunted like a bird by those who were my enemies

The author speaks of people looking for him in order to kill him as if he were an animal that they were hunting. This can be stated in active form. AT: “My enemies have looked for me in order to kill me like people who hunt for a bird” (See: [Metaphor](#))

They cast me into a pit

“They threw me into a pit” or “They dropped me into a well”

threw a stone on me

Possible meanings are 1) “threw stones down on me” or 2) “covered the pit with a stone”

they caused waters to overflow, covering my head

“the level of the water in the pit rose up over my head”

I have been cut off

Being “cut off” often represents being killed. Here it represents dying very soon. AT: “I am about to die” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [adversary, enemy](#)
- [well, cistern](#)
- [cut off](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:55-57**UDB:**

- ⁵⁵ But from the bottom of the pit I cried out to you,
 ‘Yahweh, help me!’
- ⁵⁶ I pleaded with you,
 ‘Do not refuse to hear me when I cry out to you!’
- ⁵⁷ Then you answered me
 and said, ‘Do not be afraid!’

ULB:

- ⁵⁵ I called on your name, Yahweh, from the depths of the pit.
- ⁵⁶ You heard my voice when I said, ‘Do not close your ear to my cry for help.’
- ⁵⁷ You came near on the day I called on you; you said, ‘Do not fear.’

translationNotes**I called on your name**

God’s name represents his character, and here, “called on your name” represents trusting God’s character and calling on him for help. AT: “I called to you for help” (See: [Metonymy](#))

from the depths of the pit

Possible meanings are 1) this refers to the pit that author had been thrown into. AT: “from the bottom of the pit” or 2) the author was afraid that he would die soon, so he spoke as if he were in the place of the dead. AT: “from the pit of the dead”

You heard my voice

Here “voice” represents what he said. AT: “You heard my words” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Do not close your ear

Here “close your ear” represents refusing to listen. AT: “Do not refuse to listen” (See: [Metonymy](#))

You came near

People often come near to a person they help. Here “came near” represents helping the man. AT: “you helped me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [call, calls, calling, called](#)
- [name, names, named](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [pit](#)
- [voice](#)
- [fear, fears, afraid](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:58-61**UDB:**

⁵⁸ Yahweh, you argued for me when people wanted to condemn me and execute me;
you did not allow me to die.

⁵⁹ Now, Yahweh, you have seen the evil things that my enemies have done to me,
so judge my case and show that I have done nothing wrong.

⁶⁰ You know the evil things
that they are planning to do to me.

⁶¹ Yahweh, you have heard them insult me;
you have heard what they plan to do to me.

ULB:

⁵⁸ Lord, you defended my case, you saved my life!

⁵⁹ Yahweh, you have seen the wrong they have done to me; judge my case.

⁶⁰ You have seen their insults, all their plots against me—

⁶¹ You have heard their scorn, Yahweh, and all their plans regarding me.

translationNotes**you defended my case, you saved my life**

The author speaks of God keeping him from being killed by his enemies as if God had defended him in court as a lawyer defends someone, and kept him from being killed. AT: “you saved my life from my enemies. It is as though you defended me in court” (See: [Metaphor](#))

you defended my case

Here “defended my case” represents arguing for him. AT: “you argued my case for me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

judge my case

Here God is no longer pictured as a lawyer, but as the judge. It can be stated clearly that he wanted God to judge in his favor. AT: “make a decision about me, and show my enemies that I am right” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

You have seen their insults, all their plots against me

The abstract nouns “insults” and “plots” can be expressed with verbs. AT: “You have seen how they have insulted me and how they have plotted against me many times” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

You have heard their scorn ... and all their plans regarding me

The abstract noun “scorn” can be expressed with the verbs “taunt” or “mock”. It can be stated clearly that the plans were to harm him. AT: “You heard how they have taunted me ... and all they plan to do to me” or “You have heard them mock me ... and plan ways to harm me” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

translationWords

- [Lord](#)
- [trial](#)
- [save, saves, saved, safe](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [oppress, oppression, oppressor](#)
- [judge, judges, judgment, judgments](#)
- [avenge, revenge, vengeance](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:62-63**UDB:**

⁶² Every day they whisper and mutter things about me,
all during the day.

⁶³ Look at them! Whatever they are doing at the moment,
they make fun of me by the songs that they sing.

ULB:

⁶² The lips and the accusations of my enemies come against me all the day.

⁶³ Look at how they sit and then rise up; they mock me with their songs.

translationNotes**The lips and the accusations ... come against me all the day**

The author speaks of his enemies accusing him all day as if their accusations were soldiers that come to attack him all day. AT: “My enemies speak against me and accuse me through the whole day” (See: [Metaphor](#))

The lips ... of my enemies

Here the lips represent what his enemies say. AT: “The words ... of my enemies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

how they sit and then rise up

These two actions together represent everything the people do. AT: “everything they do” (See: [Merism](#))

translationWords

- [accuse, accusation, accuser](#)
- [mock, ridicule, scoff at, mocker](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 3:64-66**UDB:**

⁶⁴ Yahweh, give them what they deserve!

Pay them back for what they have done to me!

⁶⁵ You permit them to do whatever they want,
and you punish them by taking away their shame.

That is why your curse is upon them.

⁶⁶ Because you are angry with them, pursue them and get rid of them,
until none of them remain on the earth.”

ULB:

⁶⁴ Pay back to them, Yahweh, according to what they have done.

⁶⁵ You will let their hearts be shameless! May your condemnation be upon them!

⁶⁶ You pursue them in anger and destroy them from under the heavens, Yahweh!”

translationNotes**Pay back to them, Yahweh, according to what they have done**

Here “Pay back to them” represents punishing them. What they have done can be stated clearly. AT: “Punish them, Yahweh, according to what they have done” or “Yahweh, they have made me suffer, so please make them suffer” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

You will let their hearts be shameless

Here the “heart” is a metonym that represents their attitudes and emotions, and being “shameless” means not feeling ashamed of their sins even though they should. Their not being ashamed would give even more reason for God to punish them. AT: “You will let them feel no shame for their sins” (See: [Metonymy](#))

May your condemnation be upon them

The abstract noun “condemnation” can be expressed with the verbs “condemn” or “curse.” AT: “Condemn them” or “Curse them” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

from under the heavens

Here “from under the heavens” represents everywhere on earth. AT: “wherever they are on earth” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [heart, hearts](#)
- [condemn, condemns, condemned, condemnation](#)
- [heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 04 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Judah being destroyed continues in this chapter. Famine destroyed the rulers and the priests. (See: [priest](#), [priests](#), [priesthood](#))

Links:

- [Lamentations 04:01 Notes](#)

Lamentations 4:1-2**UDB:**

¹ Previously our people were like pure gold,
but now they are worthless.

Just as our enemies have scattered the sacred stones in the temple,
so they have also scattered our young men.

² The young men of Jerusalem were as valuable as large amounts of gold,
but now people consider them to be as worthless as ordinary clay pots.

ULB:

¹ The gold has become tarnished; how the purest gold has changed!
The holy stones are scattered at the corner of every street.

² The precious sons of Zion were worth their weight in pure gold,
but now they are worth no more than clay jars, the work of the potter's hands!

translationNotes**General Information:**

A new poem begins. See [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#).

The gold has become tarnished; how the purest gold has changed

The people of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were gold that is no longer shiny, and therefore no longer valuable. AT: "The people of Jerusalem are like gold that is no longer shiny. They are like pure gold that is no longer beautiful" (See: [Metaphor](#))

how the purest gold has changed

This is an exclamation that shows the author's sadness that this has happened. (See: [Exclamations](#))

The holy stones are scattered at the corner of every street

This may refer to the temple being destroyed and its stones scattered throughout the city. It may also be a metaphor for the people being scattered. (See: [Metaphor](#))

at the corner of every street

"wherever the streets come together" or "by all the roads"

sons of Zion

Here people of a city are spoken of as if they were the sons of the city. Possible meanings are 1) this refers to only the young men of Jerusalem or 2) this refers to all the people of Jerusalem. (See: [Metaphor](#))

they are worth no more than clay jars, the work of the potter's hands

The author speaks of the precious sons of Zion as if they were considered to be inexpensive clay jars. AT: "people consider them to be as worthless as the clay jars that potters make" (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [pure, purify, purification](#)
- [gold](#)
- [holy, holiness](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [precious](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:3**UDB:**

³ Even the female jackals feed their pups,
 but my people act cruelly toward their own children;
 the mothers are like ostriches in the desert that abandon their eggs.

ULB:

³ Even the jackals offer the breast to nurse their cubs, but
 the daughter of my people has become cruel, like the ostriches in the desert.

translationNotes**General Information:**

Because of the lack of food in the city, the people of Jerusalem do not give their children all they need.

the jackals offer the breast to nurse their cubs

This means that mother jackals feed their baby jackals.

jackals

fierce wild dogs

the daughter of my people ... like the ostriches in the desert

The people in Jerusalem are compared to ostriches because they are cruel to their children. (See: [Simile](#))

the daughter of my people has

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11](#). AT: “my people have” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Personification](#))

ostriches

large birds that abandon some of their eggs

translationWords

- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:4-5**UDB:**

⁴ My people's infants' tongues cling to the roofs of their mouths
because they are extremely thirsty;
the children plead for some food,
but no one gives them any.

⁵ People who previously ate fine food
are now starving in the streets;
those who previously wore fine clothes
now lie upon the rubbish heaps with nothing to eat.

ULB:

⁴ The tongue of the nursing baby sticks to the roof of his mouth by thirst;
the children ask for food, but there is none for them.

⁵ The ones who used to feast on expensive food now starve in the streets;
those who were brought up wearing purple clothing, now lie upon piles of garbage.

translationNotes**The tongue of the nursing baby sticks to the roof of his mouth by thirst**

“Nursing babies are so thirsty that their tongues stick to the top of their mouths”

The ones who used to feast on expensive food

“The ones who used to eat a lot of expensive food”

now starve in the streets

These people no longer have homes, so they live outside along the streets.

those who were brought up wearing purple clothing

Wearing purple clothes was a sign that a person was wealthy. This can be stated in active form. AT: “those who grew up wearing purple clothing” or “those who wore expensive clothing when they were growing up” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

now lie upon piles of garbage

These people no longer have homes and soft beds, so they sleep on piles of garbage.

translationWords

- [feast](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:6**UDB:**

⁶ The people of Sodom died very suddenly in a disaster.
 But God punished my people
 more severely than the people of Sodom,
 and no one was concerned about all that we suffered.

ULB:

⁶ The punishment of the daughter of my people is greater than that of Sodom,
 which was overthrown in a moment and no hands were wrung for her.

translationNotes**The punishment of the daughter of my people is greater than that of Sodom**

The abstract noun “punishment” can be expressed with the verb “punish.” AT: “The daughter of my people has been punished more severely than Sodom was punished”

the daughter of my people

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11](#). AT: “my people” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Personification](#))

which was overthrown in a moment

The word “which” refers to Sodom. This can be stated in active form. AT: “which God destroyed in a moment” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

no hands were wrung for her

This can be stated in active form. AT: “no one wrung their hands for her” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

no hands were wrung for her

People sometimes rub and twist their hands when they are worried and cannot fix something, so wringing the hands here represents worrying. The word “her” refers to Jerusalem, which was called “the daughter of my people.” AT: “no one was worried about her” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [punish, punishment](#)
- [Sodom](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:7-8**UDB:**

⁷ Our leaders used to be like pure snow or white milk,
they were so clean and spotless.

Their bodies were healthy,
pink like coral and brilliant like sapphires.

⁸ Now our leaders' faces are blacker than soot,
and no one recognizes them when they walk in the streets.

Their skin has shriveled and it hangs on their bones,
and it has become as dry as a stick of wood.

ULB:

⁷ Her leaders were purer than snow, whiter than milk;
their bodies were more ruddy than coral, their form was like sapphire.

⁸ Their appearance now is darker than soot;
they are not recognized in the streets.

Their skin has shriveled on their bones;
it has become as dry as wood.

translationNotes**Her leaders were purer than snow, whiter than milk**

Possible meanings are 1) Jerusalem's leaders were beautiful to look at because they were physically healthy or 2) the leaders were morally pure as new snow and milk are pure white. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Her leaders

"Jerusalem's leaders"

their bodies were more ruddy than coral

"their bodies were redder than coral." This implies that they were healthy. AT: "their bodies were healthy and red" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

coral

a rock-hard red substance that comes from the ocean and was used for making decorations

sapphire

a costly blue stone used in jewelry

Their appearance now is darker than soot

This may be because 1) the sun has darkened the leaders' skin or 2) the soot from the fires that burned Jerusalem has covered their faces.

they are not recognized

This can be stated in active form. AT: "no one can recognize them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Their skin has shriveled on their bones

This implies that there was not much muscle or fat under the skin. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

it has become as dry as wood

Their dry skin is compared to dry wood. (See: [Simile](#))

translationWords

- [pure, purify, purification](#)
- [snow](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:9-10**UDB:**

⁹ It is better to die in a battle
than to die of hunger.

There was no food to harvest in the fields,
so the people slowly starved until they died.

¹⁰ Women who usually acted with love and compassion
have killed and cooked their own children;
they ate them when there was no other food,
when Jerusalem was being destroyed by attacking armies.

ULB:

⁹ Those who have been killed by the sword were happier than those killed by hunger,
who wasted away, pierced by the lack of any harvest from the field.

¹⁰ The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children;
they became their food during the time
when the daughter of my people was being destroyed.

translationNotes**Those who have been killed by the sword**

Here the “sword” represents an enemy’s attack. It can be stated in active form. AT: “Those whom enemy soldiers have killed” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

those killed by hunger

Here “hunger” represents starvation. This can be stated in active form. AT: “those who starved to death” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

who wasted away

“who became extremely thin and weak”

pierced by the lack of any harvest from the field

Here “harvest from the field” is a metonym that represents food to eat. Lack of food is spoken of here as if it were a sword that pierces people. AT: “who died because there was not enough food to eat” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

The hands of compassionate women

Here the women are represented by their “hands.” Because they were so hungry, women who had been compassionate in the past were no longer compassionate toward their children; instead they boiled them for food. AT: “Compassionate women” or “Women who had been compassionate in the past” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

they became their food

“their children became the women’s food”

the daughter of my people was

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11](#). AT: “my people were” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Personification](#))

translationWords

- [sword](#)
- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [children, child](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:11**UDB:**

¹¹ Yahweh has shown to everyone how angry he was with his people!
His anger spread like a fire in Zion (the city of Jerusalem)
that burned the city down to its rock foundations.

ULB:

¹¹ Yahweh showed all his wrath; he poured out his fierce anger.
He kindled a fire in Zion that consumed her foundations.

translationNotes**Yahweh showed all his wrath; he poured out his fierce anger**

Yahweh was very angry, and he did everything he wanted to do to show that he was angry. (See: [Parallelism](#))

he poured out his fierce anger

God's punishing his people is spoken of as if his anger were a burning hot liquid that he poured out on them. AT: "because of his fierce anger, he punished his people" or "in fierce anger he responded to his people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

He kindled a fire in Zion

This represents God causing Israel's enemies to start a fire in Jerusalem. AT: "He caused a fire to start in Zion" (See: [Metonymy](#))

that consumed her foundations

Here "her foundations" represents the whole city, even the part of the city that would be ruined last. AT: "that burned down the city, even its foundations" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [rage](#)
- [angry, anger](#)
- [fire](#)

- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [devour](#)
- [foundation, founded](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:12-13**UDB:**

¹² None of the kings on the earth or anyone else
believed that any of our enemies could enter the gates of Jerusalem.
¹³ But that is what happened;
it happened because the prophets sinned;
the priests also sinned
by causing innocent people to die.

ULB:

¹² The kings of the earth did not believe,
nor did any of the inhabitants of the world believe,
that enemies or opponents could enter the gates of Jerusalem.
¹³ This happened because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests
who have shed the blood of the righteous in her midst.

translationNotes

The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the inhabitants of the world believe,
“The kings of the earth and the rest of the inhabitants of the world did not believe”

enemies or opponents

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that these are people who desired to harm Jerusalem. AT: “any kind of enemy” or “any of Jerusalem’s enemies” (See: [Doublet](#))

the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests

These two lines share similar meanings and emphasize that these spiritual leaders were largely responsible for the fall of Jerusalem. AT: “the terrible sins of her prophets and priests” (See: [Parallelism](#))

who have shed the blood of the righteous

Both the priests and the prophets were guilty of murder. Here “shed the blood” represents murder. AT: “who have murdered the righteous” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- king
- earth, earthly
- believe, believes, believed, belief
- adversary, enemy
- gate, gate bar
- Jerusalem
- sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning
- prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess
- iniquity, iniquities
- priest, priests, priesthood
- blood
- righteous, righteousness

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:14-15**UDB:**

¹⁴ The priests and prophets wander through the streets
as though they were blind.

No one will touch them

because their clothes are stained with the blood of those innocent people.

¹⁵ These people shouted at the priests and prophets, saying,

“Stay away from us! Do not touch us!”

So the priests and prophets have fled from Israel,

and they wander around from one country to another,

but people in each country keep saying to them, “You cannot stay here!”

ULB:

¹⁴ They wandered, blind, through the streets.

They were so defiled by that blood that no one was allowed to touch their clothes.

¹⁵ “Away! Unclean!” people cried at them. “Away! Away! Do not touch!”

So they wandered about; people said among the nations, “They can stay here no longer.”

translationNotes**They wandered, blind, through the streets**

The priests and prophets are spoken of as if they were blind because they wandered through the streets, not knowing where to go. AT: “They wandered through the streets like blind men” (See: [Metaphor](#))

They were so defiled by that blood

Here “defiled” represents being unacceptable to God. Because the priests and prophets murdered people, they were ritually unclean, unable to worship God or be with ordinary people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

defiled by that blood

“defiled by the blood that they shed.” Possible meanings are 1) the blood was on their clothes or 2) “blood” is a metonym for murder. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Away! Unclean

“Go away! You are unclean”

Away! Away! Do not touch

“Go away! Go away! Do not touch us”

translationWords

- [defile, be defiled](#)
- [blood](#)
- [unclean](#)
- [Gentile, Gentiles](#)
- [foreigner, foreign, alien](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:16

UDB:

¹⁶ It is Yahweh himself who has scattered them;
he no longer is concerned about them.

People do not welcome our priests any longer, and they care nothing for the elders.

ULB:

¹⁶ Yahweh himself scattered them; he does not watch over them anymore.
They do not honor the priests,
and they did not show any favor to the elders.

translationNotes

scattered them

“scattered the prophets and priests”

he does not watch over them anymore

Here “watch over them” represents being concerned about them and helping them. AT: “he does not care about them anymore” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [watch, watchman](#)
- [honor, honors, to honor](#)
- [favor, favors, favorable, favoritism](#)
- [elder](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ We continued to look for someone to help us before it was too late,
but it was useless.

We continued to watch to see if one of our allies would save us,
but none of the nations that we were waiting for was willing to help us.

¹⁸ Our enemies were pursuing us,
so we could not even walk in our streets because they could take us as prisoners.
Our enemies were about to capture us;
it was time for them to kill us.

ULB:

¹⁷ Our eyes failed, looking in vain for help;
from our watchtowers we watched
for a nation that could not rescue us.

¹⁸ They followed our steps,
we could not walk in our streets.
Our end was near and our days were numbered,
our end had come.

translationNotes**Our eyes failed, looking in vain for help**

Their eyes failing represents their seeking and not being able to find what they were looking for. These two phrases together emphasize that they were trying hard to find help. AT: “We continued looking, but we could not find anyone to help us” (See: [Metonymy](#))

for help

The abstract noun “help” can be expressed as a verb. AT: “for people to help us” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

in vain

without succeeding

we watched for a nation that could not rescue us

Here “watched” represents hoping. It can be stated clearly that they were hoping that a nation would come and rescue them. AT: “we hoped for a nation to come and rescue us, but it could not rescue us” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

They followed our steps

Here “our steps” represents where they went. AT: “Our enemies followed us everywhere we went” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Our end was near

Here “near” is a metaphor for “soon.” AT: “Our end would be soon” or “Our enemies would soon destroy us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Our end

Possible meanings are 1) “Our end” refers to the end of living in their own city because their enemies would destroy the city and capture them. AT: “Our destruction” or “Our capture” or 2) “Our end” refers to the end of their lives. AT: “Our death” or “The time for us to die” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

our days were numbered

Being numbered represents being so few that they could be easily counted. AT: “we had very little time” (See: [Metaphor](#))

our end had come

The phrase “had come” means that what they had expected was now happening. AT: “it was now the end for us” or “our enemies were attacking us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless](#)
- [nation](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:19-20**UDB:**

¹⁹ Those who ran after us were faster than eagles flying in the sky.

Even if we fled to the mountains

or hid in the desert,

they went there ahead of us and waited to attack us.

²⁰ Our king, whom Yahweh had appointed,

the one who enabled us to live,

the one whom we trusted to protect us

when we had to live in the other nations as slaves—

the enemy captured him,

as you would capture an animal in a pit.

ULB:

¹⁹ Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles in the sky.

They chased us to the mountains and lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

²⁰ The breath in our nostrils—Yahweh's anointed one—he was the one who was captured in their pits;

of whom it was said, "Under his shadow we will live among the nations."

translationNotes**Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles in the sky**

The author compares the speed of their pursuers to the speed of eagles flying. Eagles fly very quickly to catch other animals. AT: "Those who were chasing us were faster than eagles" (See: [Simile](#))

lay in wait for us

"waited to attack us"

The breath in our nostrils

This phrase refers to the king. He is spoken of as if he were breath; the breath keeps the body alive, and the king keeps his people alive by ruling them well and protecting them from their enemies. AT: "The one who is like breath in our nostrils" or "The one who protects our lives" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Yahweh's anointed one

Here being “anointed” represents being the king. God had told people to anoint whomever he had chosen to be king. AT: “the one whom Yahweh had chosen to be anointed as king” or “the king Yahweh chose” (See: [Metonymy](#))

he was the one who was captured in their pits

Here “pits” refers to the enemies’ plans to capture him. This can be stated in active form. AT: “he was the one whom our enemies captured by their plans” or “our enemies made plans to capture our king, and they did capture him” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

of whom it was said

This phrase with the quote following it gives us more information about the king. The quote shows what the people had hoped the king would do for them before he was trapped. It can be expressed in active form. AT: “even though we had said about him” (See: [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Under his shadow we will live among the nations

Here “his shadow” represents him protecting them. AT: “Under his protection we will live among the nations” or “Though we may have to live in other nations, he will protect us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [eagle](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)
- [breathe, breath](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [anoint, anointed, anointing](#)
- [pit](#)
- [nation](#)

Links:

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

Lamentations 4:21-22**UDB:**

²¹ You people of Edom and Uz,
you should be happy while you can,
but Yahweh will punish you also.

You will become so drunk that you will strip off your own clothes.

²² You people of Zion (whose home is in Jerusalem),
the time when Yahweh punishes you for your sins will come to an end.
He will bring an end to the time you must spend in exile.

But you people who are from Edom, Yahweh will punish you for your sins
and he will make known to everyone the wicked things you have done.

ULB:

²¹ Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Edom,
you who live in the land of Uz.

But to you also the cup will be passed;
you will be drunk and strip yourself naked.

²² Daughter of Zion, your punishment will come to an end;
he will not extend your exile.

But daughter of Edom, he will punish;
he will uncover your sins.

translationNotes**Rejoice and be glad**

“Rejoice” and “be glad” mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of gladness. The writer uses these words to mock the people. He knew that the people of Edom would be glad that Jerusalem is being destroyed. AT: “Be very glad” (See: **Doublet** and **Irony**)

daughter of Edom

The people of the land of Edom are spoken of as if they were a woman. They were Israel’s enemy. (See: **Personification**)

But to you also the cup will be passed

The cup is a metonym for the wine in it. The wine is a metaphor for punishment. AT: “But Yahweh will also punish you” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Daughter of Zion

The people of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were a woman. (See: [Personification](#))\

your punishment will come to an end

“your punishment will end.” The abstract noun punishment can be expressed with the verb “punish.” AT: “Yahweh will stop punishing you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

he will not extend your exile

“Yahweh will not make your time in exile longer” or “Yahweh will not make you stay in exile longer”

he will uncover your sins

Here the sins not being known by others are spoken of as if they are under a cover. Removing the cover represents letting other people know about them. AT: “he will expose your sins” or “he will cause other people to know how you have sinned” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

- [rejoice](#)
- [Edom, Edomite, Idumea](#)
- [drunk, drunkard](#)
- [punish, punishment](#)
- [daughter of Zion](#)
- [exile, the Exile](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 04 General Notes](#)
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Lamentations 05 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Judah was destroyed for her sin. As slaves, life was very hard. The author wondered if God would be angry forever. (See: [sin](#), [sins](#), [sinned](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [forever](#))

Links:

- [Lamentations 05:01 Notes](#)

Lamentations 5:1-4**UDB:**

¹ Yahweh, think about what has happened to us.

See how no one respects us any longer.

² Foreigners have seized our property,
and now they live in our homes.

³ Our enemies have killed our fathers,
and caused our mothers to become widows.

⁴ Now they make us pay for water to drink,
and pay for firewood.

ULB:

¹ Remember, Yahweh, what has happened to us;
look and see our disgrace.

² Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers;
our houses to foreigners.

³ We have become orphans, the fatherless,
and our mothers are like widows.

⁴ We must pay silver for the water we drink,
and we must pay silver to get our own wood.

translationNotes**General Information:**

A new poem begins. See [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#).

Remember, Yahweh, what has happened to us

“Remember” is an idiom. AT: “Yahweh, think about what has happened to us” (See: [Idiom](#))

look and see our disgrace

“look at the shameful state we are in”

Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers; our houses to foreigners

The phrase “has been turned over” can be stated in active form. And, the missing words may be added to the second part of the sentence. AT: “You have allowed strangers to take possession of our inheritance; you have allowed foreigners to take possession of our houses” (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Ellipsis](#))

We have become orphans ... our mothers are like widows

The people of Jerusalem have no one to protect them because the men have either died in battle or have gone into exile. This speaks of the people not having their fathers and husbands present as if they had actually become orphans and widows. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Simile](#))

orphans, the fatherless

These two phrases have the same meaning and emphasize that the people no longer have their fathers. AT: “orphans who have no fathers” (See: [Parallelism](#))

We must pay silver for the water we drink ... our own wood

This means that their enemies are making them pay money to have the water and wood that they once used for free. AT: “We have to pay silver to our enemies in order to drink our own water ... our own wood” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

we must pay silver to get our own wood

This can be stated in active form. AT: “our enemies sell us our own wood” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir](#)
- [foreigner, foreign, alien](#)
- [silver](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:5-7**UDB:**

- ⁵ The enemy runs after us and is very close to us;
we are exhausted, but they do not allow us to rest.
- ⁶ In order to get enough food to remain alive,
we begged Egypt and Assyria to help us.
- ⁷ Our ancestors sinned, and now they are dead,
but we are suffering for the sins that they committed.

ULB:

- ⁵ Those who are coming after us are close behind us;
we are weary and we can find no rest.
- ⁶ We have given ourselves to Egypt and to Assyria
to get enough food.
- ⁷ Our fathers sinned, and they are no more,
and we bear their iniquities.

translationNotes**Those who are coming after us**

“Our enemies who are chasing after us.” This refers to the Babylonian army.

we can find no rest

This speaks of being able to rest as if “rest” were an object that could be found. AT: “we are unable to rest” (See: [Metaphor](#))

We have given ourselves to Egypt and to Assyria to get enough food

This phrase “given ourselves” is an idiom. AT: “We have made a treaty with Egypt and with Assyria so that we would have food to eat” or “We have surrendered to Egypt and to Assyria to have enough food to remain alive” (See: [Idiom](#))

they are no more

This refers to them being dead. AT: “they have died” (See: [Euphemism](#))

we bear their iniquities

Here “iniquities” represents the punishment received because of their ancestors’ sins. AT: “we bear the punishment for their sins” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- [rest](#)
- [Egypt, Egyptian](#)
- [Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire](#)
- [ancestor, father, forefather](#)
- [sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:8-10**UDB:**

⁸ Now the people who rule over us are themselves slaves to their own masters in Babylon.

There is no one who can rescue us from their power.

⁹ We go far to look for food, but we are in danger of dying when we do so,

because of the robbers who live in the wilderness.

¹⁰ Our skin has become hot like an oven,

and we have a very high fever because we are extremely hungry.

ULB:

⁸ Slaves rule over us,

and there is no one to deliver us from their hand.

⁹ We get our bread only by risking our lives,

because of the sword in the wilderness.

¹⁰ Our skin has grown as hot as an oven

because of the burning heat of hunger.

translationNotes**Slaves rule over us**

Possible meanings are 1) “Now the people who rule over us are themselves slaves to their own masters in Babylon” or 2) “People who used to be slaves in Babylon now rule over us.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to deliver us from their hand

Here the word “hand” refers to control. AT: “to rescue us from their control” (See: [Metonymy](#))

bread

Here “bread” refers to food in general. AT: “food” (See: [Metonymy](#))

because of the sword in the wilderness

Here robbers with swords are represented by their “swords.” AT: “because there are robbers in the wilderness who kill others with swords” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Our skin has grown as hot as an oven because of the burning heat of hunger

This speaks of the peoples' bodies being hot and feverish as if their skin was as hot as an oven. The people have fever because of their hunger. AT: "Our skin has become hot like an oven, and we have a very high fever because we are extremely hungry" (See: [Simile](#))

translationWords

- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [ruler, rule](#)
- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [life, live, lived, lives, living, alive](#)
- [bread](#)
- [sword](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:11-12**UDB:**

¹¹ Our enemies have violated the women in Jerusalem,
and they have done that to the young women in all the towns of Judea.

¹² Our enemies have hanged our leaders,
and they have not respected our elders.

ULB:

¹¹ Women are raped in Zion,
and virgins in the cities of Judah.

¹² Princes are hung up by their own hands,
and no honor is shown to the elders.

translationNotes**Women are raped in Zion, and virgins in the cities of Judah**

These two phrases have similar meaning and emphasize that the women are being violated. The missing words may be added. AT: “Women are raped in Zion, and virgins are raped in the cities of Judah” (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Ellipsis](#))

Women are raped ... and virgins

This can be stated in active form. AT: “Our enemies have raped the women ... and the virgins” or “Our enemies have violated the women ... and the virgins” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Princes are hung up by their own hands

Possible meanings are 1) the word “their” refers to their enemies. AT: “With their own hands, they hung princes” or 2) they tied each prince’s hands together with one end of a rope and tied the other end so the prince’s feet could not touch the ground.

no honor is shown to the elders

This can be stated in active form. AT: “they have shown no honor to the elders” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

translationWords

- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [virgin](#)
- [Judah, kingdom of Judah](#)
- [prince, princess](#)
- [honor, honors, to honor](#)
- [elder](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:13-14**UDB:**

¹³ They force our young men to grind flour with millstones,
and young boys stagger while they are forced to carry heavy loads of firewood.

¹⁴ Our elders no longer sit at the city gates to make important decisions;
the young men no longer play their musical instruments.

ULB:

¹³ Young men are forced to grind grain with a millstone,
and boys stagger under heavy loads of wood.

¹⁴ The elders have left the city gate,
and the young men have left their music.

translationNotes**Young men are forced**

This can be stated in active form. AT: “They force young men” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

boys stagger under heavy loads of wood

The boys are forced to carry the loads of wood. AT: “boys stagger because they are forced to carry heavy loads of wood” or “they force the boys to carry heavy loads of wood which make them stagger” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the city gate

This is where the elders would give legal advice, but also where people would meet socially.

the young men have left their music

Playing music was part of the social life at the city gate. This speaks of the men no longer playing their music as if the act of playing music were a place that they left. AT: “the young men have stopped playing their music” (See: [Metaphor](#))

translationWords

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

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:15-16**UDB:**

¹⁵ We are no longer joyful;
instead of dancing joyfully, we now mourn.

¹⁶ The wreaths of flowers have fallen off our heads.
Terrible things have happened to us because of the sins that we committed.

ULB:

¹⁵ The joy of our heart has ceased
and our dancing has turned into mourning.

¹⁶ The crown has fallen from our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!

translationNotes**The joy of our heart**

Here the word “heart” refers to the whole person and emphasizes their emotions. AT: “Our joy” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

The crown has fallen from our head

Possible meanings are 1) “We no longer wear flowers on our heads for celebrations” or 2) The “crown” represents their king and their “head” represents a place of authority over the people. AT: “We no longer have a king” (See: [Metonymy](#))

translationWords

- joy, joyful
- heart, hearts
- mourn, mourning
- crown, to crown
- woe
- sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:17-18**UDB:**

¹⁷ We are tired and discouraged,
and we cannot see well because our eyes are full of tears.

¹⁸ Jerusalem has no one living any more in it,
and jackals prowl around in it.

ULB:

¹⁷ For this our heart has become sick,
for these things our eyes grow dim
¹⁸ for Mount Zion lies desolate, with jackals prowling over it.

translationNotes**For this our heart has become sick**

The “heart” represents a person’s emotions. This speaks of a person being discouraged as if their emotions were sick. AT: “Because of this we are discouraged” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

for these things our eyes grow dim

This means that they have a hard time seeing because they are crying. AT: “and we can hardly see because our eyes are full of tears” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

for Mount Zion lies desolate

Here “Mount Zion” refers to Jerusalem. The phrase “lies desolate” means that no one lives there.

jackals

These are fierce wild dogs. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 4:3](#).

translationWords

- [heart, hearts](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5 translationQuestions](#)

Lamentations 5:19-22**UDB:**

¹⁹ But Yahweh, you rule forever!

You continue to rule from one generation to the next generation.

²⁰ So why have you forgotten us?

Will you abandon us for a very long time?

²¹ Please enable us to return to you,

and enable us to prosper as we did previously.

²² Please do that, or is it really true that you have rejected us forever?

Is it really true that you will never stop being extremely angry with us?

ULB:

¹⁹ But you, Yahweh, reign forever,

and you will sit upon your throne from generation to generation.

²⁰ Why do you forget us forever?

Why do you forsake us for so many days?

²¹ Restore us to yourself, Yahweh, and we will be restored.

Renew our days as they were long ago—

²² unless you have utterly rejected us

and you are angry with us beyond measure.

translationNotes**sit upon your throne**

Here sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. AT: “rule as king” (See: [Metonymy](#))

from generation to generation

This is an idiom. AT: “always” (See: [Idiom](#))

Why do you forget us forever? Why do you forsake us for so many days?

The author uses these rhetorical questions to express his feelings that Yahweh has forgotten them. These questions can be written as a statement. AT: "It is as though you will forget us forever or not come back to us for a very long time!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Restore us to yourself

"Bring us back to yourself"

Renew our days as they were long ago

Here "days" represents their lives. AT: "Make our lives good, like they used to be" or "Make us as great as we used to be" (See: [Metonymy](#))

unless you have utterly rejected us and you are angry with us beyond measure

Possible meanings are 1) that the writer is afraid that Yahweh might be too angry to restore them or 2) that he is saying that Yahweh is too angry to restore them.

are angry with us beyond measure

This speaks of Yahweh being very angry as if his anger cannot be measured. This is an exaggeration. AT: "are extremely angry with us" (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

translationWords

- [Yahweh](#)
- [reign](#)
- [forever](#)
- [throne](#)
- [generation](#)
- [forsake, forsakes, forsaken, forsook](#)
- [restore, restores, restored, restoration](#)
- [reject](#)
- [angry, anger](#)

Links:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
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translationQuestions

Lamentations 1

What has the city of Jerusalem become like even though she was once a mighty nation?

The city has become like a widow. [1:1]

What can Judah not find even though she lives among the nations?

Judah can find no rest even though she lives among the nations. [1:3]

Why has Yahweh afflicted the city of Jerusalem?

Yahweh has afflicted the city of Jerusalem because of her many sins. [1:5]

What has left the daughter of Zion?

Beauty has left the daughter of Zion. [1:6]

What did Jerusalem have in former days that she now calls to mind?

Jerusalem recalls all her precious treasures that she had in former days. [1:7]

Because Jerusalem sinned greatly, what has she become like?

Jerusalem has become like a menstrual rag. [1:8]

What has Jerusalem seen enter her sanctuary even though Yahweh had commanded that they must not enter?

Jerusalem has seen the nations enter her sanctuary. [1:10]

What do the people do as they search for bread?

The people groan as they search for bread. [1:11]

What has Yahweh spread before the feet of Jerusalem to turn her back?

Yahweh has spread a net before the feet of Jerusalem. [1:13]

What has failed because of the yoke of Jerusalem's transgressions that are knit together and placed on her neck?

Jerusalem's strength has failed because of the yoke of her transgressions placed on her neck. [1:14]

Like what has the Lord trampled the virgin daughter of Judah?

The Lord has trampled the virgin daughter of Judah like grapes in a wine press. [1:15]

Why are Jerusalem's children desolate?

Jerusalem's children are desolate because the enemy has triumphed. [1:16]

Who have gone into captivity because Jerusalem rebelled against Yahweh's commandment?

Jerusalem's virgins and vigorous men have gone into captivity. [1:18]

Who perished in the city while they sought food to restore their lives?

Jerusalem's priests and elders perished in the city. [1:19]

What is turned within Jerusalem because she grievously rebelled?

Jerusalem's heart is turned within her. [1:20]

What do the enemies of Jerusalem do when they hear of her adversity?

The enemies of Jerusalem rejoice. [1:21]

What does Jerusalem request Yahweh to do to her enemies as they come before Yahweh?

Jerusalem asks that Yahweh would torment her enemies as Yahweh has tormented her for all her transgressions. [1:22]

Lamentations 2

How does the Lord express his anger because of Jeremiah's rebellion?

He has taken away the beauty of Israel, has no compassion for the towns of Jacob, and has struck down the fortified cities of Judah. [2:1]

How does the Lord express his anger because of Jeremiah's rebellion?

He has taken away the beauty of Israel, has no compassion for the towns of Jacob, and has struck down the fortified cities of Judah. [2:2]

How does his anger affect Israel and Zion?

The Lord has removed all of Israel's strength and poured his wrath on Zion. [2:3]

How does his anger affect Israel and Zion?

The Lord has removed all of Israel's strength and poured his wrath on Zion. [2:4]

How is the Lord's anger shown?

The Lord has become like an enemy, he destroyed the palace and the tabernacle, and has despised both king and priest. [2:5]

How is the Lord's anger shown?

The Lord has become like an enemy, he destroyed the palace and the tabernacle, and has despised both king and priest. [2:6]

Why does the enemy feel victorious?

They feel victorious because the Lord rejected his altar and has given the walls of the palace over to them. [2:7]

What has happened to the gates and bars of Zion?

Her gates have sunk into the ground, and Yahweh has destroyed and broken her gate bars. [2:9]

How do the elders and virgins show they are grieving?

The elders sit on the ground, sprinkle their heads with dust while dressed in sackcloth. The virgins lower their heads to the ground. [2:10]

Why is Jeremiah lamenting?

Because there is nothing for his people to eat or drink. [2:11]

Why is Jeremiah lamenting?

Because there is nothing for his people to eat or drink. [2:12]

What do the mockers do as they pass through the city?

They clap their hands, hiss and shake their heads, they whistle and grind their teeth. [2:15]

What do the mockers do as they pass through the city?

They clap their hands, hiss and shake their heads, they whistle and grind their teeth. [2:16]

How do the people show their remorse?

They cry out to the Lord and lift their hands to him for the sake of their children. [2:18]

How do the people show their remorse?

They cry out to the Lord and lift their hands to him for the sake of their children. [2:19]

Why are the people begging for Yahweh's mercy?

Because he has dealt with them so severely, they are hungry, and they are concerned about their priests being slaughtered. [2:20]

How does Jeremiah describe the day of Yahweh's wrath?

On the day of Yahweh's wrath, Yahweh killed young and old, no one survived, and he showed no compassion. [2:21]

How does Jeremiah describe the day of Yahweh's wrath?

On the day of Yahweh's wrath, Yahweh killed young and old, no one survived, and he showed no compassion. [2:22]

Lamentations 3

What does the writer say that Yahweh has turned against him all the day?

Yahweh's hand is turned against him all the day. [3:3]

What does the writer say that Yahweh has built around him so that he cannot escape?

Yahweh has built a wall around him. [3:7]

To what animal does the writer compare Yahweh and say that it is waiting to ambush him?

The writer describes Yahweh as a bear that is waiting to ambush him. [3:10]

What has the writer become to all his people?

The writer has become a laughingstock to all his people. [3:14]

What can the writer no longer remember since Yahweh has removed peace from his life?

The writer can no longer remember any happiness. [3:17]

What is the writer's mood as he calls to mind his affliction?

The writer's mood is one of despair within himself as he calls to mind his affliction. [3:19]

What is the writer's mood as he calls to mind his affliction?

The writer's mood is one of despair within himself as he calls to mind his affliction. [3:20]

What does the writer say occurs afresh every morning?

The writer says that Yahweh's merciful actions occur afresh every morning. [3:23]

What is Yahweh like toward the one who waits for him and to those who wait in silence for the salvation of Yahweh?

Yahweh is good to those who wait for him, and wait in silence for Yahweh's salvation. [3:25]

What is Yahweh like toward the one who waits for him and to those who wait in silence for the salvation of Yahweh?

Yahweh is good to those who wait for him, and wait in silence for Yahweh's salvation. [3:26]

How should a person sit because Yahweh has laid it upon him?

A person should sit alone and silent because Yahweh has laid it upon him. [3:26]

How should a person sit because Yahweh has laid it upon him?

A person should sit alone and silent because Yahweh has laid it upon him. [3:27]

How should a person sit because Yahweh has laid it upon him?

A person should sit alone and silent because Yahweh has laid it upon him. [3:28]

What does Yahweh show, even though he brings grief?

Yahweh shows compassion even though he brings grief. [3:32]

From where does Yahweh not oppress or torment the sons of men?

Yahweh does not oppress from his heart or torment the sons of men. [3:33]

What two things come out of the mouth of the Most High?

Calamity and success come out of the mouth of the Most High. [3:38]

What should the people lift up to God in the heavens when they test and examine their ways and turn back to Yahweh?

The people should lift up their hearts and their hands to God in the heavens. [3:40]

What should the people lift up to God in the heavens when they test and examine their ways and turn back to Yahweh?

The people should lift up their hearts and their hands to God in the heavens. [3:41]

What should the people admit that they have done against Yahweh as they pray?

They should admit that they have sinned and rebelled against Yahweh. [3:42]

What does the writer say that Yahweh has made them to be among the peoples?

Yahweh has made them to be castoffs and refuse among the peoples. [3:45]

How does the writer describe the tears that flow from his eyes?

His tears are streams of water that flow out from his eyes. [3:48]

How does the writer describe the tears that flow from his eyes?

His tears are streams of water that flow out from his eyes. [3:49]

What does the writer say as his enemies hunt him and destroy his life in a well and place a stone over him?

He says, "I have been cut off!" [3:52]

What does the writer say as his enemies hunt him and destroy his life in a well and place a stone over him?

He says, "I have been cut off!" [3:53]

What does the writer say as his enemies hunt him and destroy his life in a well and place a stone over him?

He says, "I have been cut off!" [3:54]

What did Yahweh tell the writer when he called on Yahweh's name and asked Yahweh to hear his cry for help?

Yahweh told him, "Do not fear!" [3:55]

What did Yahweh tell the writer when he called on Yahweh's name and asked Yahweh to hear his cry for help?

Yahweh told him, "Do not fear!" [3:56]

What did Yahweh tell the writer when he called on Yahweh's name and asked Yahweh to hear his cry for help?

Yahweh told him, "Do not fear!" [3:57]

How does the writer ask Yahweh to judge his case?

He asks Yahweh to judge his case justly. [3:59]

Of what is the writer the object from his enemies, whether in their sitting or their rising up?

He is the object of their mocking song. [3:63]

What does the writer ask Yahweh to do to his enemies?

He asks Yahweh to pay back to them as much harm as what their hands have done. [3:64]

What does the writer ask Yahweh to do to his enemies?

he asks Yahweh to pursue his enemies in his anger and destroy them everywhere under the heavens. [3:66]

Lamentations 4

What has become of the gold and the holy stones?

The gold has become completely tarnished, the purest gold has changed and the holy stones have been poured out at the head of every street. [4:1]

What were the sons of Zion, and how are they now valued?

The sons of Zion were precious, valued greater than pure gold, but now they are regarded as clay jars made by potter's hands. [4:2]

How do the daughters of his people act?

They are as cruel as the ostrich in the desert. [4:3]

What happens to the tongue of the nursing baby and what are the children asking for?

The tongue of the nursing baby sticks to the roof of his mouth with thirst and the children are asking for bread but there is nothing for them. [4:4]

What has happened to the ones who used to eat expensive food and those who wore scarlet clothing?

The ones who used to eat expensive food are now abandoned and starving, and the ones who wore scarlet clothing are now on top of the garbage heaps. [4:5]

How great is the iniquity of the daughter of his people?

The iniquity of the daughter is greater than the sin of Sodom. [4:6]

What were her leaders like before, and how are they now?

Her leaders were like snow that shines, they were as white as milk, their bodies were more ruddy than coral, and their form like sapphire. Now darkness has blackened their appearance, they are unrecognizable, and their skin clings to their withered bones. [4:7]

What were her leaders like before, and how are they now?

Her leaders were like snow that shines, they were as white as milk, their bodies were more ruddy than coral, and their form like sapphire. Now darkness has blackened their appearance, they are unrecognizable, and their skin clings to their withered bones. [4:8]

What does Jeremiah say about those who have been killed by hunger compared to those killed by the sword?

Jeremiah says that those killed by the sword are better off than those killed by hunger. [4:9]

What did the compassionate women do with their children?

They boiled their own children and the children became their food. [4:10]

How did Yahweh satisfy his rage?

Yahweh satisfied his rage when he poured out his burning anger, kindled a fire in Zion, and devoured her foundations. [4:11]

What did the kings and the inhabitants of the world not believe could happen to Jerusalem?

They did not believe that an enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem. [4:12]

What did the enemy do because of the sins of the prophets and the iniquities of the priests?

The enemy entered the gates of Jerusalem. [4:13]

What happened to those prophets and priests?

They wandered like blind men in the streets and were defiled by that blood so no one was able to touch their clothes. [4:14]

What did the prophets and priests cry out?

The prophets and the priests cried out and said to flee and to not touch them. [4:15]

Where did the prophets and the priests go?

They wandered to other lands where the Gentiles said they could not live there any longer. [4:15]

What did Yahweh do to the prophets and the priests?

Yahweh scattered the prophets and priests and does not look on them with favor any longer. [4:16]

How are the priests received and how are the elders received?

The priests are not respected anymore and the elders are not shown any concern. [4:16]

What failed to find worthless help?

Their eyes failed to find help. [4:17]

What did the enemy do to them?

They hunted their steps going through their streets. [4:18]

What did the people say about their end?

They said their end was near, their days were finished, and their end had come. [4:18]

How did the people describe the pursuers, and what did the pursuers do to them?

The pursuers were swifter than the eagles and chased them to the mountains and lay in wait for them in the wilderness. [4:19]

What happened to their king?

Their king was captured in the enemy's pits. [4:20]

Why is the daughter of Edom told to rejoice and be glad?

She is told to rejoice and be glad for the cup will pass to her and she will be drunk and strip naked. [4:21]

What is the daughter of Zion told?

She is told her guilt is ended and Yahweh will no longer keep her in exile. [4:22]

What is the daughter of Edom told?

The daughter of Edom is told Yahweh will punish her guilt and will uncover her sins. [4:22]

Lamentations 5

What does Jeremiah ask Yahweh to do?

Jeremiah asks Yahweh to call to mind what has happened to them and to see their shame. [5:1]

What does Jeremiah tell Yahweh has happened to their inheritance?

Jeremiah tells Yahweh that their inheritance has been turned over to strangers, and their houses to foreigners. [5:2]

How does Jeremiah describe what is happening to them?

Their enemies run after them, they are weary, and they have reached out to the Egyptians and Assyrians for food. [5:5]

How does Jeremiah describe what is happening to them?

Their enemies run after them, they are weary, and they have reached out to the Egyptians and Assyrians for food. [5:6]

What are the people saying about sin?

They are saying their fathers sinned and they bear their fathers' sins. [5:7]

What are the people saying about the slaves?

The people are saying the slaves rule over them and there is no one to rescue them. [5:8]

How do they describe themselves when they go out to get bread?

They risk their lives to get bread in the face of the sword in the wilderness. [5:9]

How do they describe their skin?

Their skin is like an oven and burnt up from the fever of famine. [5:10]

What happened to the women and virgins?

The women of Zion and the virgins of the cities of Judah were raped. [5:11]

What happened to the princes and the elders?

The princes were hung by their hands and the elders were not honored. [5:12]

What happened to the vigorous men and youthful men?

The vigorous men were brought up to the grinding house and the youthful men staggered beneath logs. [5:13]

What happened to the elders and the vigorous men?

The elders were removed from the city gate and the vigorous men from their music. [5:14]

How do they describe the joy of their heart, their dances, and their crown?

Their joy has ceased, their dances have changed into mourning, and the crown has fallen from their head. [5:15]

How do they describe the joy of their heart, their dances, and their crown?

Their joy has ceased, their dances have changed into mourning, and the crown has fallen from their head. [5:16]

What do they say about their hearts and eyes?

Their hearts have become sick and their eyes have grown dim. [5:17]

What do they say about Yahweh's reign and throne?

Yahweh reigns forever and his throne is from generation to generation. [5:19]

What do they ask Yahweh?

They ask Yahweh whether he is forgetting them forever, and if he will turn them back to him. [5:20]

What do they ask Yahweh?

They ask Yahweh whether he is forgetting them forever, and if he will turn them back to him. [5:21]

translationWords

accuse, accusation, accuser

Definition:

The terms “accuse” and “accusation” refer to blaming someone for doing something wrong. A person who accuses others is an “accuser.”

- A false accusation is when a charge against someone is not true, as when Jesus was falsely accused of wrongdoing by the leaders of the Jews.
- In the New Testament book of Revelation, Satan is called “the accuser.”

Bible References:

- [Acts 19:38-41](#)
- [Hosea 04:4-5](#)
- [Jeremiah 02:9-11](#)
- [Luke 06:6-8](#)
- [Romans 08:33-34](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3198, H8799, G1458, G2147, G2596, G2724

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:62-63](#)

adversary, enemy

Definition:

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

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose you or harm you.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- Adversary may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 05:14-16](#)
- [Isaiah 09:11-12](#)
- [Job 06:21-23](#)
- [Lamentations 04:12-13](#)
- [Luke 12:57-59](#)
- [Matthew 13:24-26](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G476, G480, G2189, G2190, G4567, G5227

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 1:10](#)
- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 1:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 2:15-16](#)
- [Lamentations 2:17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:44-47](#)

- [Lamentations 3:51-54](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)

afflict, affliction

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: leprosy, plague, suffer)

Bible References:

- [2 Thessalonians 01:6-8](#)
- [Amos 05:12-13](#)
- [Colossians 01:24-27](#)
- Exodus 22:22-24
- Genesis 12:17-20
- Genesis 15:12-13
- Genesis 29:31-32

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H205, H1790, H3013, H3905, H3906, H4157, H4523, H6031, H6039, H6040, H6041, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7451, H7489, H7667, G2346, G2347, G2552, G2553, G2561, G3804,

G4777, G4778, G5003

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:3
- Lamentations 1:7
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 3:19-21
- Lamentations 3:30-33

altar, altars

Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living near the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: altar of incense, [false god](#), grain offering, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Genesis 08:20-22
- Genesis 22:9-10
- [James 02:21-24](#)
- [Luke 11:49-51](#)
- [Matthew 05:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 23:18-19](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:14** After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- **05:08** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- **13:09** A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- **16:06** He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H741, H2025, H4056, H4196, G1041, G2379

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:7](#)

ancestor, father, forefather

Definition:

When used literally, the term “father” refers to a person’s male parent. There are also several figurative uses of this term.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to the male ancestors 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.”
- 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 07:1-3](#)
- [Acts 07:31-32](#)
- [Acts 07:44-46](#)
- [Acts 22:3-5](#)
- [Genesis 31:29-30](#)
- [Genesis 31:41-42](#)
- [Genesis 31:51-53](#)
- [Hebrews 07:4-6](#)
- [John 04:11-12](#)
- [Joshua 24:3-4](#)
- [Malachi 03:6-7](#)
- [Mark 10:7-9](#)

- Matthew 01:7-8
- Matthew 03:7-9
- Matthew 10:21-23
- Matthew 18:12-14
- Romans 04:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1, H2, H25, H369, H539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G256, G540, G1080, G2495, G3737, G3962, G3964, G3966, G3967, G3970, G3971, G3995, G4245, G4269, G4613

Uses:

- Lamentations 5:5-7

angry, anger

Definition:

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

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

(See also: [wrath](#))

Bible References:

- [Ephesians 04:25-27](#)
- Exodus 32:9-11
- Isaiah 57:16-17
- [John 06:52-53](#)
- [Mark 10:13-14](#)
- [Matthew 26:6-9](#)
- Psalms 018:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H599, H639, H1149, H2152, H2194, H2195, H2198, H2534, H2734, H2787, H3179, H3707, H3708, H3824, H4751, H4843, H5674, H5678, H6225, H7107, H7110, H7266, H7307, G23, G1758, G2371, G2372, G3164, G3709, G3710, G3711, G3947, G3949, G5520

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 3:40-43](#)
- [Lamentations 4:11](#)
- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

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. The term is also used figuratively to refer to the Holy Spirit choosing and empowering someone.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship. One time Jesus commented that in doing this she was preparing him for his future burial.
- After Jesus died, his friends prepared his body for burial by anointing it with oils and spices.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour oil on” or “put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring perfumed oil on.”
- To “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil.” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated.”
- In some contexts the term “anoint” could be translated as “appoint.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: Christ, consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, [priest](#), [prophet](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:20-21](#)
- [1 John 02:27-29](#)
- [1 Samuel 16:2-3](#)
- [Acts 04:27-28](#)
- [Amos 06:5-6](#)
- [Exodus 29:5-7](#)
- [James 05:13-15](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H47, H430, H4397, H4398, H8136, G32, G743, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, G218, G1472, G2025, G3462, G5545, G5548

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:19-20](#)

assembly, assemble

Definition:

The term “assembly” usually refers to a group of people who come together to discuss problems, give advice, and make decisions.

- An assembly can be a group that is organized in an official and somewhat permanent way, or it can be a group of people who come together temporarily for a specific purpose or occasion.
- In the Old Testament there was a special kind of assembly called a “sacred assembly” in which the people of Israel would gather to worship Yahweh.
- Sometimes the term “assembly” referred to the Israelites in general, as a group.
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers was sometimes also referred to as an “assembly.” This could be translated as “army.”
- In the New Testament, an assembly of 70 Jewish leaders in major cities such as Jerusalem would meet to judge legal matters and to settle disputes between people. This assembly was known as the “Sanhedrin” or the “Council.”

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “assembly” could also be translated as “special gathering” or “congregation” or “council” or “army” or “large group.”
- When the term “assembly” refers generally to the Israelites as a whole, it could also be translated as “community” or “people of Israel.”
- The phrase, “all the assembly” could be translated as “all the people” or “the whole group of Israelites” or “everyone.” (See: [hyperbole](#))

(See also: council)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 08:14-16
- [Acts 07:38-40](#)
- Ezra 10:12-13
- [Hebrews 12:22-24](#)
- Leviticus 04:20-21
- Nehemiah 08:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H622, H627, H1413, H1481, H2199, H3259, H4150, H4186, H4744, H5475, H5712, H5789, H6116, H6633, H6908, H6950, H6951, H6952, H7284, G1577, G1997, G3831, G4863, G4864, G4871, G4905

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:10
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:21-22

Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire

Facts:

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

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

(See also: Samaria)

Bible References:

- Genesis 10:11-14
- Genesis 25:17-18
- Isaiah 07:16-17
- Jeremiah 50:17-18
- [Micah 07:11-13](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's: H804, H1121

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:5-7](#)

avenge, revenge, vengeance

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [punish](#), [just](#), [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:12-13
- [Ezekiel 25:15-17](#)
- Isaiah 47:3-5
- Leviticus 19:17-18
- Psalms 018:46-47
- [Romans 12:19-21](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H3467, H5358, H5359, H5360, H6544, H6546, H8199, G1349, G1556, G1557, G1558, G2917, G3709

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:58-61](#)

believe, believes, believed, belief

Definition:

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

1. believe

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

2. believe in

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

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”

(See also: [faith](#), believer)

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:23-24](#)
- [Acts 09:40-43](#)
- [Acts 28:23-24](#)
- Genesis 15:6-8
- Genesis 45:24-26
- [Habakkuk 01:5-7](#)
- Job 09:16-18
- [John 01:12-13](#)
- [Mark 01:14-15](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:04** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **04:08** Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- **11:02** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:06** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:05** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 4:12-13**

betray, betrayer

Definition:

The term “betray” means to act in a way that deceives and harms someone. A “betrayer” is a person who betrays a friend who was trusting him.

- Judas was “the betrayer” because he told the Jewish leaders how to capture Jesus.
- The betrayal by Judas was especially evil because he was an apostle of Jesus who received money in exchange for giving the Jewish leaders information that would result in Jesus’ unjust death.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “betray” could be translated as “deceive and cause harm to” or “turn over to the enemy” or “treat treacherously.”
- The term “betrayer” could be translated as “person who betrays” or “double dealer” or “traitor.”

(See also: Judas Iscariot, Jewish leaders, apostle)

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:51-53](#)
- [John 06:64-65](#)
- [John 13:21-22](#)
- [Matthew 10:2-4](#)
- [Matthew 26:20-22](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:11** Other prophets foretold that those who killed the Messiah would gamble for his clothes and he would be **betrayed** by a friend. The prophet Zechariah foretold that the friend would be paid thirty silver coins as payment for **betraying** the Messiah.
- **38:02** After Jesus and the disciples arrived in Jerusalem, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to **betray** Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- **38:03** The Jewish leaders, led by the high priest, paid Judas thirty silver coins to **betray** Jesus.
- **38:06** Then Jesus said to the disciples, “One of you will **betray** me.” | Jesus said, “The person to whom I give this piece of bread is the **betrayer**.”
- **38:13** When he returned the third time, Jesus said, “Wake up! My **betrayer** is here.”
- **38:14** Then Jesus said, “Judas, do you **betray** me with a kiss?”
- **39:08** Meanwhile, Judas, the **betrayer**, saw that the Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus to die. He became full of sorrow and went away and killed himself.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7411, G3860, G4273

Uses:

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

bind, bond, bound

Definition:

The term “bind” means to tie something or fasten it securely. Something that is tied or joined together is called a “bond.” The term “bound” is the past tense of this term.

- To be “bound” means to have something tied or wrapped around something else.
- In a figurative sense, a person can be “bound” to a vow, which means he is “required to fulfill” what he promised to do.
- The term “bonds” refers to anything that binds, confines, or imprisons someone. It usually refers to physical chains, fetters or ropes that keep a person from being free to move.
- In Bible times, bonds such as ropes or chains were used to attach prisoners to the wall or floor of a stone prison.
- The term “bind” can also be used to talk about wrapping cloth around a wound to help it heal.
- A dead person would be “bound” with cloth in preparation for burial.
- The term “bond” is used figuratively to refer to something, such as sin, that controls or enslaves someone.
- A bond can also be a close relationship between people in which they support each other emotionally, spiritually and physically. This applies to the bond of marriage.
- For example, a husband and wife are “bound” or tied to each other. It is a bond that God does not want broken.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “bind” could also be translated as “tie” or “tie up” or “wrap (around).”
- Figuratively, it could be translated as “to restrain” or “to prevent” or “to keep from (something).”
- A special use of “bind” in Matthew 16 and 18 means “forbid” or “not permit.”
- The term “bonds” could be translated as “chains” or “ropes” or “shackles.”
- Figuratively the term “bond” could be translated as “knot” or “connection” or “close relationship.”
- The phrase “bond of peace” means “being in harmony, which brings people in closer relationship to each other” or “the tying together that peace brings.”
- To “bind up” could be translated as “wrap around” or “put a bandage on.”
- To “bind” oneself with a vow could be translated as “promise to fulfill a vow” or “commit to fulfill a vow.”
- Depending on the context, the term “bound” could also be translated as “tied” or “tied up” or “chained” or “obligated (to fulfill)” or “required to do.”

(See also: [fulfill](#), [peace](#), [prison](#), [servant](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

- Leviticus 08:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H247, H481, H519, H615, H631, H632, H632, H640, H1366, H1367, H1379, H2280, H2706, H3256, H3533, H3729, H4147, H4148, H4205, H4562, H5650, H5656, H5659, H6029, H6123, H6616, H6696, H6872, H6887, H6887, H7194, H7405, H7573, H7576, H8198, H8244, H8379, G254, G331, G332, G1195, G1196, G1198, G1199, G1210, G1210, G1397, G1398, G1401, G1402, G2611, G2615, G3734, G3784, G3814, G4019, G4029, G4385, G4886, G4887, G5265

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)

blood

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [flesh](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 Samuel 14:31-32](#)
- [Acts 02:20-21](#)
- [Acts 05:26-28](#)
- [Colossians 01:18-20](#)
- [Galatians 01:15-17](#)
- [Genesis 04:10-12](#)
- [Psalms 016:4](#)
- [Psalms 105:28-30](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **08:03** Before Joseph’s brothers returned home, they tore Joseph’s robe and dipped it in goat’s **blood**.
- **10:03** God turned the Nile River into **blood**, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.

- **11:05** All the houses of the Israelites had **blood** around the doors, so God passed over those houses and everyone inside was safe. They were saved because of the lamb's **blood**.
- **13:09** The **blood** of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- **38:05** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my **blood** of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins.
- **48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the **blood** of Jesus takes away that person's sin, and God's punishment passes over him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1818, H5332, G129, G130, G131, G1420

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)
- [Lamentations 4:14-15](#)

bow and arrow

Definition:

This is a type of weapon that consists of shooting arrows from a stringed bow. In Bible times it was used for fighting against enemies and for killing animals for food.

- The bow is made out of wood, bone, metal, or other hard material, such as a deer's antler. It has a curved shape and is strung tightly with a string, cord, or vine.
- An arrow is a thin shaft with a sharp, pointed head on one end. In ancient times, the arrows could be made of a variety of materials such as wood, bone, stone, or metal.
- Bows and arrows are commonly used by hunters and warriors.
- The term "arrow" is also sometimes used figuratively in the Bible to refer to enemy attacks or divine judgment.

Bible References:

- Genesis 21:14-16
- [Habakkuk 03:9-10](#)
- Job 29:20-22
- [Lamentations 02:3-4](#)
- Psalms 058:6-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2671, H7198, G5115

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 3:12-15](#)

bow, bow down

Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To “bow down” means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include “bow the knee” (meaning to kneel) and “bow the head” (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is “bowed down” has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “bend forward” or “bend the head” or “kneel.”
- The term “bow down” could be translated as “kneel down” or “prostrate oneself.”
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: humble, worship)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 05:17-19
- Exodus 20:4-6
- Genesis 24:26-27
- Genesis 44:14-15
- Isaiah 44:19
- [Luke 24:4-5](#)
- [Matthew 02:11-12](#)
- [Revelation 03:9-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H86, H3721, H3766, H5186, H5753, H5791, H6915, H7743, H7812, H7817, G1120, G2578, G2827, G4781, G4794

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:19-21](#)

bread

Definition:

Bread is a food made from flour mixed with water and oil to form a dough. The dough is then shaped into a loaf and baked.

- When the term “loaf” occurs by itself, it means “loaf of bread.”
- Bread dough is usually made with something that makes it rise, such as yeast.
- Bread can also be made without yeast so that it does not rise. In the Bible this is called “unleavened bread” and was used for the Jews’ passover meal.
- Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, this term is also used in the Bible to refer to food in general. (See: [Synecdoche](#))
- The term “bread of the presence” referred to twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and were only for the priests to eat. This could be translated as “bread showing that God lived among them.”
- The figurative term “bread from heaven” referred to the special white food called “manna” that God provided for the Israelites when they were wandering through the desert.
- Jesus also called himself the “bread that came down from heaven” and the “bread of life.”
- When Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover meal together before his death, he compared the unleavened Passover bread to his body which would be wounded and killed on a cross.
- Many times the term “bread” can be translated more generally as “food.”

(See also: Passover, [tabernacle](#), [temple](#), unleavened bread, yeast)

Bible References:

- [Acts 02:46-47](#)
- [Acts 27:33-35](#)
- Exodus 16:13-15
- [Luke 09:12-14](#)
- [Mark 06:37-38](#)
- [Matthew 04:1-4](#)
- [Matthew 11:18-19](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2557, H3899, H4635, H4682, G106, G740, G4286

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:11-12](#)

- **Lamentations 5:8-10**

breathe, breath

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “breathe” and “breath” are often used figuratively to refer to giving life or having life.

- The Bible teaches that God “breathed into” Adam the breath of life. It was at that point that Adam became a living soul.
- When Jesus breathed on the disciples and told them to “receive the Spirit,” he was probably literally breathing out air onto them to symbolize the Holy Spirit coming to them.
- Sometimes the terms “breathing” and “breathing out” are used to refer to speaking.
- The figurative expression “breath of God” or “breath of Yahweh” often refers to God’s wrath being poured out on rebellious or godless nations. It communicates his power.

Translation Suggestions

- The expression “breathed his last” is a figurative way of saying “he died.” It could also be translated as “he took his last breath” or “he stopped breathing and died” or “he breathed in air one last time.”
- Describing the Scriptures as “God-breathed” means that God spoke or inspired the words of the Scriptures which human authors then wrote down. It is probably best, if possible, to translate “God-breathed” somewhat literally since it is difficult to communicate the exact meaning of this.
- If a literal translation of “God-breathed” is not acceptable, other ways to translate this could include “inspired by God” or “authored by God” or “spoken by God.” It could also be said that “God breathed out the words of Scripture.”
- The expressions “put breath in” or “breathe life into” or “gives breath to” could be translated as “cause to breathe” or “make alive again” or “enable them to live and breathe” or “give life to.”
- If possible, it is best to translate “breath of God” with the literal word that is used for “breath” in the language. If God cannot be said to have “breath,” this could be translated as “God’s power” or “God’s speech.”
- The expression “catch my breath” or “get my breath” could be translated as “relax in order to breathe more slowly” or “stop running in order to breathe normally.”
- The expression “is only a breath” means “lasts a very short time.”
- Similarly the expression “man is a single breath” means “people live a very short time” or “the lives of human beings are very short, like a single breath” or “compared to God, the life of a person seems as short as the time it takes to breathe in one breath of air.”

(See also: Adam, Paul, word of God, [life](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 17:17-18
- Ecclesiastes 08:8-9
- Job 04:7-9
- Revelation 11:10-12
- Revelation 13:15-17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3307, H5301, H5396, H5397, H7307, H7309, G1709, G1720, G4157

Uses:

- Lamentations 4:19-20

burden

Definition:

A burden is a heavy load. It literally refers to a physical load such as a work animal would carry. The term “burden” also has several figurative meanings:

- A burden can refer to a difficult duty or important responsibility that a person has to do. He is said to be “bearing” or “carrying” a “heavy burden.”
- A cruel leader may put difficult burdens on the people he is ruling, for example by forcing them to pay large amounts of taxes.
- A person who does not want to be a burden to someone does not want to cause that other person any trouble.
- The guilt of a person’s sin is a burden to him.
- The “burden of the Lord” is a figurative way of referring to a “message from God” that a prophet must deliver to God’s people.
- The term “burden” can be translated by “responsibility” or “duty” or “heavy load” or “message,” depending on the context.

Bible References:

- [2 Thessalonians 03:6-9](#)
- [Galatians 06:1-2](#)
- [Galatians 06:3-5](#)
- [Genesis 49:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 11:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 23:4-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H92, H3053, H4614, H4853, H4858, H4864, H4942, H5445, H5447, H5448, H5449, H5450, H6006, G4, G916, G922, G1117, G2347, G2599, G2655, G5413

call, calls, calling, called

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [pray](#))

Bible References:

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

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Word Data:

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

Uses:

- Lamentations 3:55-57

captive, captivity

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions

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

(See also: Babylon, [exile](#), [prison](#), seize)

Bible References:

- [2 Corinthians 10:5-6](#)
- Isaiah 20:3-4
- Jeremiah 43:1-3
- [Luke 04:18-19](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1546, H1547, H2925, H6808, H7617, H7622, H7628, H7633, H7870, G161, G162, G163, G164, G2221

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 1:18-19](#)

children, child

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “child” is often used to generally refer to someone who is young in age, including an infant. The term “children” is the plural form and it also has several figurative uses.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person’s descendants.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
 - children of the light
 - children of obedience
 - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to people who are like spiritual children. For example, “children of God” refers to people who belong to God through faith in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person’s great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as, “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God’s spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as, “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as, “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: descendant, promise, son, spirit, believer, beloved)

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:27-29](#)
- [3 John 01:1-4](#)
- [Galatians 04:19-20](#)
- Genesis 45:9-11
- Joshua 08:34-35
- Nehemiah 05:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1069, H1121, H1123, H1129, H1323, H1397, H1580, H2029, H2030, H2056, H2138, H2145, H2233, H2945, H3173, H3205, H3206, H3208, H3211, H3243, H3490, H4392, H5271, H5288, H5290, H5759, H5764, H5768, H5953, H6185, H7908, H7909, H7921, G730, G815, G1025, G1064, G1471, G3439, G3515, G3516, G3808, G3812, G3813, G3816, G5040, G5041, G5042, G5043, G5044, G5206, G5207, G5388

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 4:9-10](#)

comfort, comforter

Definition:

The terms “comfort” and “comforter” refer to helping someone who is suffering physical or emotional pain.

- A person who comforts someone is called a “comforter.”
- In the Old Testament, the term “comfort” is used to describe how God is kind and loving to his people and helps them when they are suffering.
- In the New Testament, it says that God will comfort his people through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive the comfort are then enabled to give the same comfort to others who are suffering.
- The expression “comforter of Israel” referred to the Messiah who would come to rescue his people.
- Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” who helps believers in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “comfort” could also be translated as, “ease the pain of” or “help (someone) overcome grief” or “encourage” or “console.”
- A phrase such as “our comfort” could be translated as “our encouragement” or “our consoling of (someone)” or “our help in times of grieving.”
- The term “comforter” could be translated as “person who comforts” or “someone who helps ease pain” or “person who encourages.”
- When the Holy Spirit is called “the Comforter” this could also be translated as “the Encourager” or “the Helper” or “the One who helps and guides.”
- The phrase “comforter of Israel” could be translated as, “the Messiah, who comforts Israel.”
- An expression like, “they have no comforter” could also be translated as, “No one has comforted them” or “There is no one to encourage or help them.”

(See also: encourage, Holy Spirit)

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 05:8-11](#)
- [2 Corinthians 01:3-4](#)
- [2 Samuel 10:1-3](#)
- [Acts 20:11-12](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2505, H5150, H5162, H5165, H5564, H8575, G302, G2174, G3870, G3874, G3875, G3888, G3890, G3931

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:13-14

command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions

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

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

Bible References:

- [Luke 01:5-7](#)
- [Matthew 01:24-25](#)
- [Matthew 22:37-38](#)
- [Matthew 28:20](#)
- Numbers 01:17-19
- [Romans 07:7-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H559, H560, H565, H1696, H1697, H1881, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2941, H2942, H2951, H3027, H3982, H3983, H4406, H4662, H4687, H4929, H4931, H4941, H5057, H5713, H5749, H6213, H6310, H6346, H6490, H6673, H6680, H7101, H7218, H7227, H7262, H7761, H7970, H8269, G1263, G1291, G1296, G1297, G1299, G1690, G1778, G1781, G1785, G2003, G2004, G2008, G2036, G2753, G3056, G3726, G3852, G3853, G4367, G4483, G4487, G5506

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:10](#)
- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 1:18-19](#)

compassion, compassionate

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 2:17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:22-24](#)
- [Lamentations 3:30-33](#)
- [Lamentations 4:9-10](#)

condemn, condemns, condemned, condemnation

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- [1 John 03:19-22](#)
- [Job 09:27-29](#)
- [John 05:24](#)
- [Luke 06:37](#)
- [Matthew 12:7-8](#)
- [Proverbs 17:15-16](#)
- [Psalms 034:21-22](#)
- [Romans 05:16-17](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G176, G843, G2607, G2613, G2631, G2632, G2633, G2917, G2919, G2920, G5272, G6048

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:64-66](#)

covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, loving kindness, unfailing love

Definition:

This term is used to describe God's commitment to fulfill the promises that he made to his people.

- God made promises to the Israelites in formal agreements called "covenants."
- The "covenant faithfulness" or "covenant loyalty" of Yahweh refers to the fact that he keeps his promises to his people.
- God's faithfulness to keep his covenant promises is an expression of his grace toward his people.
- The term "loyalty" is another word that refers to being committed and dependable, to do and say what has been promised, and what will benefit someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- The way this term is translated will also depend on how the terms "covenant" and "faithfulness" are translated.
- Other ways to translate this term could include, "faithful love" or "loyal, committed love" or "loving dependability."

(See also: covenant, [faithful](#), grace, [Israel](#), people of God, promise)

Bible References:

- Ezra 03:10-11
- Numbers 14:17-19

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2617

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:22-24](#)

crown, to crown

Definition:

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term “to crown” means to put a crown on someone’s head; figuratively it means, “to honor.”

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king’s power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus’ head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, “to crown” means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Pauls calls fellow believers his “joy and crown.” In this expression, “crown” is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, “crown” could be translated as “prize” or “honor” or “reward.”
- The figurative use of “to crown” could be translated as “to honor” or “to decorate.”
- If a person is “crowned” this could be translated as “a crown was put on his head.”
- The expression, “he was crowned with glory and honor” could be translated as, “glory and honor were bestowed on him” or “he was given glory and honor” or “he was endowed with glory and honor.”

(See also: glory, [king](#), olive)

Bible References:

- [John 19:1-3](#)
- [Lamentations 05:15-16](#)
- [Matthew 27:27-29](#)
- [Philippians 04:1-3](#)
- [Psalms 021:3-4](#)
- [Revelation 03:9-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2213, H3803, H3804, H4502, H5145, H5849, H5850, H6936, G1238, G4735, G4737

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:15-16](#)

cut off

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:12-14
- Judges 21:6-7
- Proverbs 23:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G609, G851, G1581, G2407, G5257, H1214, H1219, H1438, H1468, H1494, H1504, H1629, H1820, H1824, H1826, H2498, H2686, H3582, H3772, H5243, H5352, H6202, H6789, H6990, H7082, H7088, H7096, H7112, H7113

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 3:51-54](#)

darkness

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02:7-8](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 05:4-7](#)
- [2 Samuel 22:10-12](#)
- [Colossians 01:13-14](#)
- [Isaiah 05:29-30](#)
- [Jeremiah 13:15-17](#)
- [Joshua 24:7](#)
- [Matthew 08:11-13](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H652, H653, H2816, H2821, H2822, H2825, H3990, H3991, H4285, H5890, H6205, G2217, G4652, G4653, G4655, G4656

Uses:

- Lamentations 3:1-4
- Lamentations 3:5-8

daughter of Zion

Definition:

“Daughter of Zion” is a figurative way of referring to the people of Israel. It is usually used in prophecies.

- In the Old Testament, “Zion” is often used as another name for the city of Jerusalem.
- Both “Zion” and “Jerusalem” are also used to refer to Israel.
- The term “Daughter” is a term of endearment or affection. It is a metaphor for the patience and care that God has for his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate this could include “my daughter Israel, from Zion” or “people from Zion, who are like a daughter to me” or “Zion, my dear people Israel.”
- It is best to keep the term “Zion” in this expression since it is used many times in the Bible. A note could be included in the translation to explain its figurative meaning and prophetic use.
- It is also better to keep the term “Daughter” in the translation of this expression, as long as it is understood correctly.

(See also: [Jerusalem](#), [prophet](#), [Zion](#))

Bible References:

- [Jeremiah 06:1-3](#)
- [John 12:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 21:4-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1323, H6726

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:6](#)
- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

death, die, dead

Definition:

This term is used to refer to both physical and spiritual death. Physically, it refers to when the physical body of a person stops living. Spiritually, it refers to sinners being separated from a holy God because of their sin.

1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- A person’s spirit leaves his body when he dies.
- When Adam and Eve sinned, physical death came into the world.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Spiritual death

- Spiritual death is the separation of a person from God.
- Adam died spiritually when he disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- Every descendant of Adam is a sinner, and is spiritually dead. God makes us spiritually alive again when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression 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, physical life and death are often compared to spiritual life and death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and spiritual death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “spiritual death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: [nominal adjective](#))

- The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faith](#), [life](#), spirit)

Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 15:20-21](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 04:16-18](#)
- [Acts 10:42-43](#)
- [Acts 14:19-20](#)
- [Colossians 02:13-15](#)
- [Colossians 02:20-23](#)
- [Genesis 02:15-17](#)
- [Genesis 34:27-29](#)
- [Matthew 16:27-28](#)
- [Romans 05:10-11](#)
- [Romans 05:12-13](#)
- [Romans 06:10-11](#)

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:

- Strong’s: H1478, H4191, H4191, H4192, H4193, H4194, H4194, H4463, H5038, H5315, H6297, H6757, H7496, H7523, H8546, G336, G337, G520, G581, G599, G599, G615, G684, G1935, G2079, G2253, G2286, G2287, G2288, G2289, G2348, G2837, G3498, G3499, G3500, G4430, G4880, G5053, G5054

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:20](#)

- **Lamentations 3:5-8**

deceive, deceit, deception, deceptive

Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true. The act of deceiving someone is called “deceit.”

- Another term “deception” also refers to the act of causing someone to believe something that is not true.
- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated as “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: true)

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:8-10](#)
- [1 Timothy 02:13-15](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 02:3-4](#)
- [Genesis 03:12-13](#)
- [Genesis 31:26-28](#)
- [Leviticus 19:11-12](#)
- [Matthew 27:62-64](#)
- [Micah 06:11-12](#)

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Word Data:

- Strong's: H898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H6121, H6231, H6280, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8501, H8582, H8591, H8649, G538, G539, G1386, G1387, G1388, G1389, G1818, G3884, G4105, G4106, G4108, G5422, G5423

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)

decree

Definition:

A decree is a proclamation or law that is publicly declared to all the people.

- God's laws are also called decrees, statutes, or commandments.
- Like laws and commands, decrees must be obeyed.
- An example of a decree by a human ruler was the proclamation by Caesar Augustus that everyone living in the Roman Empire must go back to their hometown in order to be counted in a census.
- To decree something means to give an order that must be obeyed. This could be translated as "to order" or "to command" or "to formally require" or "to publicly make a law."
- Something that is "decreed" to happen means that this "will definitely happen" or "has been decided upon and will not be changed" or "declared absolutely that this will happen."

(See also: [command](#), declare, law, [proclaim](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 15:13-15
- 1 Kings 08:57-58
- [Acts 17:5-7](#)
- [Daniel 02:12-13](#)
- Esther 01:21-22
- [Luke 02:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H559, H633, H1697, H5715, H1504, H1510, H1881, H1882, H1696, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2711, H2782, H2852, H2940, H2941, H2942, H3791, H3982, H4055, H4406, H4941, H5407, H5713, H6599, H6680, H7010, H8421, G1378

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:37-39](#)

defile, be defiled

Definition:

The terms “defile” and “be defiled” refer to becoming polluted or dirty. Something can be defiled in a physical, moral, or ritual sense.

- God warned the Israelites to not defile themselves by eating or touching things that he had declared as “unclean” and “unholy.”
- Certain things such as dead bodies and contagious diseases were declared by God to be unclean and would defile a person if they touched them.
- God commanded the Israelites to avoid sexual sins. These would defile them and make them unacceptable to God.
- There were also certain kinds of bodily processes that defiled a person temporarily until he could become ritually pure again.
- In the New Testament, Jesus taught that sinful thoughts and actions are what truly defile a person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “defile” can also be translated as “cause to be unclean” or “cause to be unrighteous” or “cause to be ritually unacceptable.”
- To “be defiled” could be translated as “become unclean” or “be caused to be morally unacceptable (to God)” or “become ritually unacceptable.”

(See also: [unclean](#), clean)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 23:8-9
- Exodus 20:24-26
- Genesis 34:27-29
- Genesis 49:3-4
- Isaiah 43:27-28
- Leviticus 11:43-45
- [Mark 07:14-16](#)
- [Matthew 15:10-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1351, H1352, H1602, H2490, H2491, H2610, H2930, H2931, H2933, H2936, H5953, G733, G2839, G2840, G3392, G3435, G4696, G5351

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:14-15](#)

desert, wilderness

Definition:

A desert, or wilderness, is a dry, barren place where very few plants and trees can grow.

- A desert is a land area with a dry climate and few plants or animals.
- Because of the harsh conditions, very few people can live in the desert, so it is also referred to as “wilderness.”
- “Wilderness” conveys the meaning of being remote, desolate and isolated from people.
- This word can also be translated as “deserted place” or “remote place” or “uninhabited place.”

Bible References:

- [Acts 13:16-18](#)
- [Acts 21:37-38](#)
- Exodus 04:27-28
- Genesis 37:21-22
- [John 03:14-15](#)
- [Luke 01:80](#)
- [Luke 09:12-14](#)
- [Mark 01:1-3](#)
- [Matthew 04:1-4](#)
- [Matthew 11:7-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H776, H2723, H3293, H3452, H4057, H6160, H6723, H6728, H6921, H8047, H8414, G2047, G2048

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:3](#)
- [Lamentations 4:19-20](#)
- [Lamentations 5:8-10](#)

desolate, desolation

Definition:

The terms “desolate” and “desolation” refer to destroying an inhabited region so that it becomes uninhabited.

- When referring to a person, the term “desolate” describes a condition of ruin, loneliness, and grief.
- The term “desolation” is the state or condition of being desolated.
- If a field where crops are growing is made desolate, it means that something has destroyed the crops, such as insects or an invading army.
- A “desolate region” refers to an area of land where few people live because few crops or other vegetation grow there.
- A “desolate land” or “wilderness” was often where outcasts (such as lepers) and dangerous animals lived.
- If a city is “made desolate” it means that its buildings and goods have been destroyed or stolen, and its people have been killed or captured. The city becomes “empty” and “ruined.” This is similar to the meaning of “devastate” or “devastated,” but with more emphasis on the emptiness.
- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “ruined” or “destroyed” or “laid waste” or “lonely and outcast” or “deserted.”

(See also: [desert](#), devastate, ruin, waste)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 22:17-19
- [Acts 01:20](#)
- [Daniel 09:17-19](#)
- [Lamentations 03:9-11](#)
- [Luke 11:16-17](#)
- [Matthew 12:24-25](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H490, H816, H820, H910, H1327, H1565, H2717, H2720, H2721, H2723, H3173, H3341, H3456, H3582, H4875, H4876, H4923, H5352, H5800, H7582, H7612, H7701, H7722, H8047, H8074, H8076, H8077, G2048, G2049, G2050, G3443

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)

- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:44-47

devour

Definition:

The term “devour” means to eat or consume in an aggressive manner.

- Using this word in a figurative sense, Paul warned believers to not devour one another, meaning to not attack or destroy each other with words or actions (Galatians 5:15).
- Also in a figurative sense, the term “devour” is often used with a meaning of “completely destroy” as when talking about nations devouring each other or a fire devouring buildings and people.
- This term could also be translated as “completely consume” or “totally destroy.”

Bible References:

- [1 Peter 05:8-9](#)
- [Amos 01:9-10](#)
- Exodus 24:16-18
- [Ezekiel 16:20-22](#)
- [Luke 15:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 23:13-15](#)
- Psalms 021:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H398, H399, H400, H402, H1104, H1105, H3216, H3615, H3857, H3898, H7462, H7602, G2068, G2666, G2719, G5315

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 4:11](#)

disgrace, disgraceful

Facts:

The term “disgrace” refers to a loss of honor and respect.

- When a person does something sinful, it can cause him to be in a state of disgrace or dishonor.
- The term “disgraceful” is used to describe a sinful act or the person who did it.
- Sometimes a person who is doing good things is treated in a way that causes him disgrace or shame.
- For example, when Jesus was killed on a cross, this was a disgraceful way to die. Jesus had done nothing wrong to deserve this disgrace.
- Ways to translate “disgrace” could include “shame” or “dishonor.”
- Ways to translate “disgraceful” could include “shameful” or dishonoring.”

(See also: [dishonor](#), [honor](#), shame)

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 03:6-7](#)
- [Genesis 34:6-7](#)
- [Hebrews 11:23-26](#)
- [Lamentations 02:1-2](#)
- [Psalms 022:6-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H954, H1984, H2490, H2617, H2659, H2781, H2865, H3637, H3971, H5007, H5034, H5039, H6031, H7036, G149, G819, G3680, G3856

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 3:30-33](#)

dishonor, dishonorable

Definition:

The term “dishonor” means to do something that is disrespectful to someone. This can also cause that person shame or disgrace.

- The term “dishonorable” describes an action that is shameful or that causes someone to be dishonored.
- Sometimes “dishonorable” is used to refer to objects that are not useful for anything important.
- Children are commanded to honor and obey their parents. When children disobey, they dishonor their parents. They are treating their parents in a way that does not honor them.
- The Israelites dishonored Yahweh when they worshiped false gods and practiced immoral behavior.
- The Jews dishonored Jesus by saying that he was possessed by a demon.
- This could be translated as “to not honor” or “to treat with no respect.”
- The noun “dishonor” could be translated as “disrespect” or “loss of honor.”
- Depending on the context, “dishonorable” could also be translated as “not honorable” or “shameful” or “not worthwhile” or “not valuable.”

(See also: [disgrace](#), [honor](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 04:10-11](#)
- [1 Samuel 20:32-34](#)
- [2 Corinthians 06:8-10](#)
- [Ezekiel 22:6-9](#)
- [John 08:48-49](#)
- [Leviticus 18:6-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: 03639 05034 06173 07036 07043 818 819 2617 pizza

Uses:

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

drunk, drunkard

Facts:

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

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

(See also: [wine](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 05:11-13](#)
- 1 Samuel 25:36
- Jeremiah 13:12-14
- [Luke 07:33-35](#)
- [Luke 21:34-35](#)
- Proverbs 23:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5433, H5435, H7301, H7302, H7910, H7937, H7941, H7943, H8354, H8358, G3178, G3182, G3183, G3184, G3630, G3632

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

eagle

Definition:

An eagle is a very large, powerful bird of prey that eats small animals such as fish, mice, snakes, and chickens.

- The Bible compares the speed and strength of an army to how fast and suddenly an eagle swoops down to catch its prey.
- Isaiah states that those who trust in the Lord will soar as an eagle does. This is figurative language used to describe the freedom and strength that comes from trusting and obeying God.
- In the book of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar's hair length was compared to the length of an eagle's feathers, which can be more than 50 centimeters long.

(See also: Daniel, free, Nebuchadnezzar, power)

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 01:23-24
- [Daniel 07:4-5](#)
- Jeremiah 04:13-15
- Leviticus 11:13-16
- [Revelation 04:7-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5403, H5404, H7360, G105

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:19-20](#)

earth, earthly

Definition:

The term “earth” refers to the world that human beings live on, along with all other forms of life.

- “Earth” can also refer to the ground or soil that covers the land.
- This term is often used figuratively to refer to the people who live on the earth. (See: [metonymy](#))
- The expressions “let the earth be glad” and “he will judge the earth” are examples of figurative uses of this term.
- The term “earthly” usually refers to physical things in contrast to spiritual things.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated by the word or phrase that the local language or nearby national languages use to refer to the planet earth on which we live.
- Depending on the context, “earth” could also be translated as “world” or “land” or “dirt” or “soil.”
- When used figuratively, “earth” could be translated as “people on the earth” or “people living on earth” or “everything on earth.”
- Ways to translate “earthly” could include “physical” or “things of this earth” or “visible.”

(See also: spirit, world)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 01:38-40
- 2 Chronicles 02:11-12
- [Daniel 04:35](#)
- [Luke 12:51-53](#)
- [Matthew 06:8-10](#)
- [Matthew 11:25-27](#)
- [Zechariah 06:5-6](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H127, H772, H776, H778, H2789, H3007, H3335, H6083, H7494, G1093, G1919, G2709, G2886, G3625, G3749, G4578, G5517

Uses:

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

- [Lamentations 3:34-36](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)

Edom, Edomite, Idumea

Facts:

Edom was another name for Esau. The region where he lived also became known as “Edom” and later, “Idumea.” The “Edomites” were his descendants.

- The region of Edom changed locations over time. It was mostly located to the south of Israel and eventually extended into southern Judah.
- During New Testament times, Edom covered the southern half of the province of Judea. The Greeks called it “Idumea.”
- The name “Edom” means “red,” which may refer to the fact that Esau was covered with red hair when he was born. Or it may refer to the red lentil stew that Esau traded his birthright for.
- In the Old Testament, the country of Edom is often mentioned as an enemy of Israel.
- The entire book of Obadiah is about the destruction of Edom. Other Old Testament prophets also spoke negative prophecies against Edom.

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

(See also: [adversary](#), birthright, Esau, Obadiah, [prophet](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 25:29-30
- Genesis 32:3-5
- Genesis 36:1-3
- Isaiah 11:14-15
- Joshua 11:16-17
- [Obadiah 01:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H123, H130, H8165, G2401

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

Egypt, Egyptian

Facts:

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

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

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

(See also: Herod the Great, Joseph (NT), Nile River, patriarchs)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 04:7-9
- [Acts 07:9-10](#)
- Exodus 03:7-8
- Genesis 41:27-29
- Genesis 41:55-57
- [Matthew 02:13-15](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4713, H4714, G124, G125

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:5-7](#)

elder

Definition:

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

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:1-3
- 1 Timothy 03:1-3
- 1 Timothy 04:14-16
- Acts 05:19-21
- Acts 14:23-26
- Mark 11:27-28
- Matthew 21:23-24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1419, H2205, H7868, G1087, G3187, G4244, G4245, G4850

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 2:10
- Lamentations 4:16
- Lamentations 5:11-12
- Lamentations 5:13-14

Elisha

Facts:

Elisha was a prophet in Israel during the reigns of several kings of Israel: Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash.

- God told the prophet Elijah to anoint Elisha as prophet.
- When Elijah was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot, Elisha became God's prophet to the kings of Israel.
- Elisha did many miracles, including healing a man from Syria who had leprosy and raising from the dead the son of a woman from Shunem.

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

(See also: Elijah, Naaman, [prophet](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 19:15-16
- 2 Kings 03:15-17
- 2 Kings 05:8-10
- [Luke 04:25-27](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H477

endure, endurance

Definition:

The term “endure” means to last a long time or to bear something difficult with patience.

- It also means to stand firm when times of testing come, without giving up.
- The term “endurance” can mean “patience” or “bearing up under a trial” or “persevering when being persecuted.”
- The encouragement to Christians to “endure to the end” is telling them to obey Jesus, even if this causes them to suffer.
- To “endure suffering” can also mean to “experience suffering.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the term “endure” could include “persevere” or “keep believing” or “continue to do what God wants you to do” or “stand firm.”
- In some contexts, “to endure” could be translated as “to experience” or “to go through.”
- With the meaning of lasting for a long time, the term “endure” could also be translated as “last” or “continue.” The phrase “will not endure” could be translated as “will not last” or “will not continue to survive.”
- Ways to translate “endurance” could include “perseverance” or “continuing to believe” or “remaining faithful.”

(See also: persevere)

Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 02:11-13](#)
- [James 01:1-3](#)
- [James 01:12-13](#)
- [Luke 21:16-19](#)
- [Matthew 13:20-21](#)
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)
- [Romans 05:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H386, H3201, H3557, H3885, H5331, H5375, H5975, G430, G907, G1526, G2005, G2076, G2553, G2594, G3114, G3306, G4722, G5278, G5281, G5297, G5342

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:16-18](#)

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(See also: persevere)

Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 02:11-13](#)
- [James 01:1-3](#)
- [James 01:12-13](#)
- [Luke 21:16-19](#)
- [Matthew 13:20-21](#)
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)
- [Romans 05:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H386, H3201, H3557, H3885, H5331, H5375, H5975, G430, G907, G1526, G2005, G2076, G2553, G2594, G3114, G3306, G4722, G5278, G5281, G5297, G5342

evil, wicked, wickedness

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: disobey, [sin](#), [good](#), [righteous](#), demon)

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [02:04](#) ”God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”

- **03:01** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **03:02** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **04:02** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **08:12** "You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!"
- **14:02** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:01** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **18:11** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- **29:08** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- **45:02** They said, "We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!"
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 1:21-22**

exile, the Exile

Definition:

The term “exile” refers to people being forced to live somewhere away from their home country.

- People are usually sent into exile for punishment or for political reasons.
- A conquered people may be taken into exile to the country of the conquering army, in order to work for them.
- The “Babylonian Exile” (or “the Exile”) is a period in Bible history when many Jewish citizens of the region of Judah were taken from their homes and forced to live in Babylon. It lasted 70 years.
- The phrase “the exiles” refers to people who are living in exile, away from their home country.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to exile” could also be translated as “to send away” or “to force out” or “to banish.”
- The term “the Exile” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “the sent away time” or “the time of banishment” or “the time of forced absence” or “banishment.”
- Ways to translate “the exiles” could include “the exiled people” or “the people who were banished” or “the people exiled to Babylon.”

(See also: Babylon, [Judah](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 24:13-14
- [Daniel 02:25-26](#)
- [Ezekiel 01:1-3](#)
- Isaiah 20:3-4
- Jeremiah 29:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1547, H1541, H1546, H1547, H3212, H3318, H5080, H6808, H7617, H7622, H8689, G3927

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

face

Definition:

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings.

- The expression “your face” is often a figurative way of saying “you.” Similarly, the expression “my face” often means “I” or “me.”
- In a physical sense, “to face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine 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 05:4-6
- Genesis 33:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H600, H639, H5869, H6440, H8389, G3799, G4383, G4750

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)

faith

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)

faithful, faithfulness

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

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

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 02:9
- [1 Thessalonians 05:23-24](#)
- [3 John 01:5-8](#)
- [Colossians 01:7-8](#)
- Genesis 24:49
- Isaiah 01:26
- Joshua 02:14
- [Luke 16:10-12](#)
- Numbers 12:6-8
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Psalm 012:1

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, G4103

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:22-24](#)

favor, favors, favorable, favoritism

Definition:

To “favor” is to prefer. When someone favors a person, he regards that person positively and does more to benefit that person than he does to benefit others.

- The term “favoritism” means the 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.
- Jesus grew up “in favor with” God and men. This means they 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.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term “favor” could include, “blessing” or “benefit.”
- The “favorable year of Yahweh” could be translated as “the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing.”
- The term “favoritism” could be translated as “partiality” or “being prejudiced” or “unjust treatment.” This word is related to the word “favorite,” which means “the one who is preferred or loved best.”

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 02:25-26
- 2 Chronicles 19:6-7
- **2 Corinthians 01:11**
- **Acts 24:26-27**
- Genesis 41:14-16
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Genesis 50:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1293, H1921, H2580, H2603, H2896, H5375, H5414, H6437, H6440, H7522, H7965
pizza

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:16](#)

fear, fears, afraid

Definition:

The terms “fear” and “afraid” refer to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.

- The term “fear” can also refer to a deep respect and awe for a person in authority.
- The phrase “fear of Yahweh,” as well as related terms “fear of God” and “fear of the Lord,” refer to a deep respect of God and the showing of that respect by obeying him. This fear is motivated by knowing that God is holy and hates sin.
- The Bible teaches that a person who fears Yahweh will become wise.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “to fear” can be translated as “to be afraid” or “to deeply respect” or “to revere” or “to be in awe of.”
- The term “afraid” could be translated as “terrified” or “scared” or “fearful.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” could be translated as “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”
- Note that the phrase “fear of Yahweh” does not occur in the New Testament. The phrase “fear of the Lord” or “fear of the Lord God” is used instead.

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

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

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

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:44-47](#)
- [Lamentations 3:55-57](#)

feast

Definition:

The term “feast” refers to an event where a group of people eat a very large meal together, often for the purpose of celebrating something. The action “to feast” means to eat a large amount of food or to participate in eating a feast together.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In Bible times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- A feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.
- The term “to feast” could also be translated as “to eat lavishly” or “to celebrate by eating lots of food” or “to eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: festival)

Bible References:

- [2 Peter 02:12-14](#)
- [Genesis 26:30-31](#)
- [Genesis 29:21-22](#)
- [Genesis 40:20-23](#)
- [Jude 01:12-13](#)
- [Luke 02:41-44](#)
- [Luke 14:7-9](#)
- [Matthew 22:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H398, H2077, H2282, H2287, H3899, H3900, H4150, H4580, H4797, H4960, H7646, H8057, H8354, G26, G755, G1062, G1173, G1403, G1456, G1858, G1859, G2165, G3521, G4910

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 4:4-5](#)

fire

Definition:

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

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

(See also: [pure](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 16:18-20
- 2 Kings 01:9-10
- [2 Thessalonians 01:6-8](#)
- [Acts 07:29-30](#)
- [John 15:5-7](#)
- [Luke 03:15-16](#)
- [Matthew 03:10-12](#)
- Nehemiah 01:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H215, H217, H398, H784, H800, H801, H1197, H1200, H1513, H2734, H3341, H3857, H4071, H4168, H5135, H6315, H8316, G439, G440, G1067, G2741, G4442, G4443, G4447, G4448, G4451, G5394, G5457

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 4:11](#)

flesh

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “flesh” literally refers to the soft tissue of the physical body of a human being or animal.

- The Bible also uses the term “flesh” in a figurative way to refer to all human beings or all living creatures.
- In the New Testament, the term “flesh” is used to refer to the sinful nature of human beings. This is often used in contrast to their spiritual nature.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to someone who is biologically related to another person, such as a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.
- The expression “flesh and blood” can also refer to a person’s ancestors or descendants.
- The expression “one flesh” refers to the physical uniting of a man and woman in marriage.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of an animal’s body, “flesh” could be translated as “body” or “skin” or “meat.”
- When it is used to refer generally to all living creatures, this term could be translated as “living beings” or “everything that is alive.”
- When referring in general to all people, this term could be translated as “people” or “human beings” or “everyone who lives.”
- The expression “flesh and blood” could also be translated as “relatives” or “family” or “kin-folk” or “family clan.” There may be contexts where it could be translated as “ancestors” or “descendants.”
- Some languages may have an expression that is similar in meaning to “flesh and blood.”
- The expression “become one flesh” could be translated as “unite sexually” or “become as one body” or “become like one person in body and spirit.” The translation of this expression should be checked to make sure it is acceptable in the project language and culture. (See: [euphemism](#)). It should also be understood that this is figurative, and does not mean that a man and a woman who “become one flesh” literally become one person.

Bible References:

- [1 John 02:15-17](#)
- [2 John 01:7-8](#)
- [Ephesians 06:12-13](#)
- [Galatians 01:15-17](#)
- [Genesis 02:24-25](#)
- [John 01:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 16:17-18](#)
- [Romans 08:6-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H829, H1320, H1321, H2878, H3894, H4207, H7607, H7683, G2907, G4559, G4560, G4561

Uses:

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

fool, fools, foolish, folly

Definition:

The term “fool” refers to a person who often makes wrong choices, especially choosing to disobey. The term “foolish” describes a person or behavior that is not wise.

- In the Bible, the term “fool” usually refers to a person who does not believe or obey God. This is often contrasted to the wise person, who trusts in God and obeys God.
- In the Psalms, David describes a fool as a person who does not believe in God, one who ignores all the evidence of God in his creation.
- The Old Testament book of Proverbs also gives many descriptions of what a fool, or foolish person, is like.
- The term “folly” refers to an action that is not wise because it is against God’s will. Often “folly” also includes the meaning of something that is ridiculous or dangerous.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “fool” could be translated as “foolish person” or “unwise person” or “senseless person” or “ungodly person.”
- Ways to translate “foolish” could include “lacking understanding” or “unwise” or “senseless.”

(See also: wise)

Bible References:

- Ecclesiastes 01:16-18
- Ephesians 05:15-17
- Galatians 03:1-3
- Genesis 31:26-28
- Matthew 07:26-27
- Matthew 25:7-9
- Proverbs 13:15-16
- Psalms 049:12-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H191, H196, H200, H1198, H1984, H2973, H3684, H3687, H3688, H3689, H3690, H5034, H5036, H5039, H5528, H5529, H5530, H5531, H6612, H8417, H8602, H8604, G453, G454, G781, G801, G877, G878, G3471, G3472, G3473, G3474, G3912

Uses:

- Lamentations 2:13-14

footstool

Definition:

The term “footstool” refers to an object which a person puts his feet on, usually to rest them while sitting. This term also has figurative meanings of submission and lower status.

- People in Bible times considered feet to be the least honorable parts of the body. So a “footstool” was of even lower honor because feet were rested on it.
- When God says “I will make my enemies a footstool for my feet” he is declaring power, control, and victory over the people who rebel against him. They will be humbled and conquered to the point of submitting to God’s will.
- To “worship at God’s footstool” means to bow down in worship before him as he sits on his throne. This again communicates humility and submission to God.
- David refers to the temple as God’s “footstool.” This could refer to his absolute authority over his people. This could also be picturing God the King on his throne, with his feet resting on his footstool, which represents all that is in submission to him.

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:47-50](#)
- [Isaiah 66:1](#)
- [Luke 20:41-44](#)
- [Matthew 05:33-35](#)
- [Matthew 22:43-44](#)
- [Psalm 110:1](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1916, H3534, H7272, G4228, G5286

Uses:

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

foreigner, foreign, alien

Definition:

The term “foreigner” refers to a person living in a country that is not his own. Another name for a foreigner is an “alien.”

- In the Old Testament, this term especially refers to anyone who came from a different people group than the people he was living among.
- A foreigner is also a person whose language and culture is different from 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 02:17-18
- [Acts 07:29-30](#)
- Deuteronomy 01:15-16
- Genesis 15:12-13
- Genesis 17:24-27
- [Luke 17:17-19](#)
- [Matthew 17:24-25](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H312, H628, H776, H1471, H1481, H1616, H2114, H3363, H4033, H5236, H5237, H5361, H6154, H8453, G241, G245, G526, G915, G1854, G3581, G3927, G3941

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:14-15](#)
- [Lamentations 5:1-4](#)

forever

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “forever” refers to never-ending time. Sometimes it is used figuratively to mean “a very long time.”

- The term “forever and ever” emphasizes that something will always happen or exist.
- The phrase “forever and ever” is a way of expressing what eternity or eternal life is. It also has the idea of time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, everlasting, [reign](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 02:32-33
- 2 Samuel 03:28-30
- [Daniel 07:17-18](#)
- Exodus 15:17-18
- [Hebrews 06:19-20](#)
- [Hebrews 10:11-14](#)
- Job 04:20-21
- Psalms 021:3-4
- [Revelation 01:4-6](#)
- [Revelation 22:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5705, H5331, H5703, H5769, H5865, H5957, G165, G166, G1336

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:30-33](#)
- [Lamentations 05 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

forsake, forsakes, forsaken, forsook

Definition:

The term “forsake” means to abandon someone or to give up something. Someone who has been “forsaken” has been deserted or abandoned by someone else.

- When people “forsake” God, 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 24:26-27
- Joshua 24:16-18
- [Matthew 27:45-47](#)
- Proverbs 27:9-10
- Psalms 071:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H488, H2308, H5203, H5428, H5800, H5805, H7503, G646, G657, G863, G1459, G2641,

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

foundation, founded

Definition:

The verb “found” means build, create, or lay a base for. The phrase “founded on” means supported by or based on. A “foundation” is the base of support on which something is built or created.

- The foundation of a house or building must be strong and dependable in order to support the entire structure.
- The term “foundation” can also refer to the beginning of something or to the time when something was first created.
- In a figurative sense, believers in Christ are compared to a building that is founded on the teachings of the apostles and prophets, with Christ himself being the cornerstone of the building.
- A “foundation stone” was a stone that was laid as part of the foundation. These stones were tested to make sure they were strong enough to support an entire building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “before the foundation of the world” could be translated as “before the creation of the world” or “before the time when the world first existed” or “before everything was first created.”
- The term “founded on” could be translated as “securely built on” or “firmly based on.”
- Depending on the context, “foundation” could be translated as “strong base” or “solid support” or “beginning” or “creation.”

(See also: cornerstone, create)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 06:37-38
- 2 Chronicles 03:1-3
- [Ezekiel 13:13-14](#)
- [Luke 14:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 13:34-35](#)
- [Matthew 25:34-36](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H134, H787, H803, H808, H2713, H3245, H3247, H3248, H4143, H4144, H4146, H4328, H4349, H4527, H6884, H8356, G2310, G2311, G2602

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:11](#)

fruit, fruitful

Definition:

The term “fruit” literally refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” has a lot of fruit. These terms are also used figuratively in the Bible.

- The Bible often uses “fruit” to refer to a person’s actions. Just as fruit on a tree shows what kind of tree it is, in the same way a person’s words and actions reveal what his character is like.
- A person can produce good or bad spiritual fruit, but the term “fruitful” always has the positive meaning of producing much good fruit.
- The term “fruitful” is also used figuratively to mean “prosperous.” This often refers to having many children and descendants, as well as having plenty of food and other wealth.
- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the “fruit of wisdom” refers to the good things that come from being wise.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.
- The figurative expression “fruit of the Spirit” refers to godly qualities that the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of people who obey him.
- The expression “fruit of the womb” refers to “what the womb produces—”that is children.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term using the general word for “fruit” that is commonly used in the project language to refer to the edible fruit of a fruit tree. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural, “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- Depending on the context, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much spiritual fruit” or “having many children” or “prosperous.”
- The expression “fruit of the land” could also be translated as “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When God created animals and people, he commanded them to “be fruitful and multiply,” which refers to having many offspring. This could also be translated as “have many offspring” or “have many children and descendants” or “have many children so that you will have many descendants.”
- The expression “fruit of the womb” could be translated as “what the womb produces” or “children a woman gives birth to” or just “children.” When Elizabeth says to Mary “blessed is the fruit of your womb,” she means “blessed is the child you will give birth to.” The project language may also have a different expression for this.
- Another expression “fruit of the vine,” could be translated as “vine fruit” or “grapes.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as “will produce more fruit” or “will have more children” or “will be prosperous.”

- The apostle Paul’s expression “fruitful labor” could be translated as “work that brings very good results” or “efforts that result in many people believing in Jesus.”
- The “fruit of the Spirit” could also be translated as “works that the Holy Spirit produces” or “words and actions that show that the Holy Spirit is working in someone.”

(See also: descendant, [grain](#), [grape](#), Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

Bible References:

- [Galatians 05:22-24](#)
- [Genesis 01:11-13](#)
- [Luke 08:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 03:7-9](#)
- [Matthew 07:15-17](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3, H4, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2173, H2233, H2981, H3206, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H4395, H5108, H5208, H6500, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8256, H8393, H8570, G1081, G2590, G2592, G2593, G3703, G5052, G5352, G6013

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:20](#)

fruit, fruitful

Definition:

The term “fruit” literally refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” has a lot of fruit. These terms are also used figuratively in the Bible.

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(See also: descendant, [grain](#), [grape](#), Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

Bible References:

- [Galatians 05:22-24](#)
- [Genesis 01:11-13](#)
- [Luke 08:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 03:7-9](#)
- [Matthew 07:15-17](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3, H4, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2173, H2233, H2981, H3206, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H4395, H5108, H5208, H6500, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8256, H8393, H8570, G1081, G2590, G2592, G2593, G3703, G5052, G5352, G6013

fulfill, fulfilled

Definition:

The term “fulfill” means to complete or accomplish something that was expected.

- When a prophecy is fulfilled, it means that God causes to happen what was predicted in the prophecy.
- If a person fulfills a promise or a vow, it means that he does what he has promised to do.
- To fulfill a responsibility means to do the task that was assigned or required.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “fulfill” could be translated as “accomplish” or “complete” or “cause to happen” or “obey” or “perform.”
- The phrase “has been fulfilled” could also be translated as “has come true” or “has happened” or “has taken place.”
- Ways to translate “fulfill,” as in “fulfill your ministry,” could include “complete” or “perform” or “practice” or “serve other people as God has called you to do.”

(See also: [prophet](#), Christ, minister, [call](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 02:26-27
- [Acts 03:17-18](#)
- Leviticus 22:17-19
- [Luke 04:20-22](#)
- [Matthew 01:22-23](#)
- [Matthew 05:17-18](#)
- Psalms 116:12-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [24:04](#) John **fulfilled** what the prophets said, “See I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.”
- [40:03](#) The soldiers gambled for Jesus’ clothing. When they did this, they **fulfilled** a prophecy that said, “They divided my garments among them, and gambled for my clothing.”
- [42:07](#) Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in God’s word must be **fulfilled**.”
- [43:05](#) “This **fulfills** the prophecy made by the prophet Joel in which God said, ‘In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.’”
- [43:07](#) “This **fulfills** the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’”

- **44:05** "Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to **fulfill** the prophecies that the Messiah would suffer and die."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1214, H5487, G1096, G4138

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:17**

gate, gate bar

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

- [Acts 09:23-25](#)
- [Acts 10:17-18](#)
- Deuteronomy 21:18-19
- Genesis 19:1-3
- Genesis 24:59-60
- [Matthew 07:13-14](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1817, H5592, H6607, H8179, H8651, G2374, G4439, G4440

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)
- [Lamentations 5:13-14](#)

generation

UNDER REVIEW

Definition:

The term “generation” refers to a group of people who were all born around the same time period.

- A generation can also refer to a span of time. In Bible times, a generation was usually considered to be about 40 years.
- Parents and their children are from two different generations.
- In the Bible, the term “generation” is also used figuratively to refer generally to people who share common characteristics.

Translation Suggestions

- The phrase “this generation” or “people of this generation” could be translated as “the people living now” or “you people.”
- “This wicked generation” could also be translated as “these wicked people living now.”
- The expression “from generation to generation” or “from one generation to the next” could be translated as “people living now, as well as their children and grandchildren” or “people in every time period” or “people in this time period and future time periods” or “all people and their descendants.”
- “A generation to come will serve him; they will tell the next generation about Yahweh” could also be translated as “Many people in the future will serve Yahweh and will tell their children and grandchildren about him.”

(See also: descendant, [evil](#), [ancestor](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 15:19-21](#)
- Exodus 03:13-15
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Genesis 17:7-8
- [Mark 08:11-13](#)
- [Matthew 11:16-17](#)
- [Matthew 23:34-36](#)
- [Matthew 24:34-35](#)

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

Gentile, Gentiles

Facts:

The term “Gentile” refers to anyone who is not a Jew. Gentiles are people who are not descendants of Jacob.

- In the Bible, the term “uncircumcised” is also used figuratively to refer to Gentiles because many of them did not circumcise their male children as the Israelites did.
- Because God chose the Jews to be his special people, they thought of the Gentiles as outsiders who could never be God’s people.
- The Jews were also called “Israelites” or “Hebrews” at different times in history. They referred to anyone else as a “Gentile.”
- Gentile could also be translated as “not a Jew” or “non-Jewish” or “not an Israelite” (Old Testament) or “non-Jew.”
- Traditionally, Jews would neither eat with nor associate with Gentiles, which at first caused problems within the early church.

(See also: [Israel](#), [Jacob](#), [Jew](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 09:13-16](#)
- [Acts 14:5-7](#)
- [Galatians 02:15-16](#)
- [Luke 02:30-32](#)
- [Matthew 05:46-48](#)
- [Matthew 06:5-7](#)
- [Romans 11:25](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 4:14-15](#)

God

Facts:

In the Bible, the term “God” refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God’s personal name is “Yahweh.”

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as “Yahweh,” which means “he is” or “I am” or “the One who (always) exists.”
- The Bible also teaches about false “gods,” which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “God” could include “Deity” or “Creator” or “Supreme Being.”
- Other ways to translate “God” could be “Supreme Creator” or “Infinite Sovereign Lord” or “Eternal Supreme Being.”
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for “God” in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god.
- Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for “God” and “god.”
- The phrase “I will be their God and they will be my people” could also be translated as “I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me.”

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

(See also: create, [false god](#), God the Father, Holy Spirit, idol, Son of God, [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

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

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:01 God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- **01:15 God** made man and woman in his own image.
- **05:03** "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- **09:14 God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **10:02** Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- **22:07** You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- **24:09** There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **25:07** "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- **28:01** "There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."
- **49:09** But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- **50:16** But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:40-43](#)

god, gods, goddess

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [God](#), Asherah, Baal, Molech, idol, demon, image)

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:43](#)
- [Acts 19:26-27](#)
- [Galatians 04:8-9](#)
- Genesis 35:1-3
- Isaiah 44:20
- Psalms 081:8-10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **10:02** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt’s **gods**.

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

Word Data:

- Strong's: H430, H5236, H8267, G2299

Uses:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)

gold

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

- [1 Peter 01:6-7](#)
- [1 Timothy 02:8-10](#)
- [2 Chronicles 01:14-15](#)
- [Acts 03:4-6](#)
- [Daniel 02:31-33](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1220, H1222, H1722, H2091, H2742, H3800, H4062, H5458, H6884, H6885, G5552, G5553, G5554, G5557

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:1-2](#)

good, goodness

Definition:

The word “good” has different meanings depending on the context. Many languages will use different words to translate these different meanings.

- In general, something is good if it fits with God’s character, purposes, and will.
- Something that is “good” could be pleasing, excellent, helpful, suitable, profitable, or morally right.
- Land that is “good” could be called “fertile” or “productive.”
- A “good” crop could be a “plentiful” crop.
- A person can be “good” at what they do if they are skillful at their task or profession, as in, 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 01:11-13](#)
- [Genesis 02:9-10](#)
- [Genesis 02:15-17](#)
- [James 03:13-14](#)
- [Romans 02:3-4](#)

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:

- Strong’s: H117, H145, H155, H202, H239, H410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G14, G15, G18, G19, G515, G744, G865, G979, G1380, G2095, G2097, G2106, G2107, G2108, G2109, G2114, G2115, G2133, G2140, G2162, G2163, G2174, G2293, G2565, G2567, G2570, G2573, G2887, G2986, G3140, G3617, G3776, G4147, G4632, G4674, G4851, G5223, G5224, G5358, G5542, G5543, G5544

Uses:

- **Lamentations 3:25-29**

grain

Definition:

The term “grain” usually refers to the seed of a food plant such as wheat, barley, corn, millet, or rice. It can also refer to the whole plant.

- In the Bible, the main grains that are referred to are wheat and barley.
- 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 42:1-4
- Genesis 42:26-28
- Genesis 43:1-2
- [Luke 06:1-2](#)
- [Mark 02:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 13:7-9](#)
- Ruth 01:22

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:11-12](#)

grape

Definition:

A grape is a small, round, smooth-skinned berry fruit that grows in clusters on vines. The juice of grapes is used in making wine.

- There are different colors of grapes, such as light green, purple, or red.
- Individual grapes can be around one to three centimeters in size.
- People grow grapes in gardens called vineyards. These normally consist of long rows of vines.
- Grapes were a very important food during Bible times and having vineyards was a sign of wealth.
- In order to keep grapes from rotting, people would often dry them. Dried grapes are called “raisins” and they were used to make raisin cakes.
- Jesus told a parable about a grape vineyard to teach his disciples about God’s kingdom.

(See also: vine, vineyard, [wine](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 23:24-25
- [Hosea 09:10](#)
- Job 15:31-33
- [Luke 06:43-44](#)
- [Matthew 07:15-17](#)
- [Matthew 21:33-34](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:15](#)

hand, right hand, to hand over

Definition:

There are several figurative ways that “hand” is used in the Bible:

- To “hand” something to someone means to put something into that person’s hands.
- The term “hand” is often used in reference to God’s power and action, such as when God says “Has not my hand made all these things?” (See: [metonymy](#))
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- Some other figurative uses of “hand” include:
 - To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.”
 - To “save from the hand of” means to stop someone from harming someone else.
 - To be “close at hand” means to be “nearby.”
 - The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
 - The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, “by the hand of the Lord” means that the Lord is the one who caused something to happen.
- Placing hands on someone is often done while speaking a blessing over that person.
- The term “laying on of hands” refers to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God’s service or to pray for healing.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that this part of the letter was physically written down by him, rather than spoken to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- When “hand” refers to the person, such as in “the hand of God did this,” it could be translated as “God did this.”
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as, “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression

with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: [adversary](#), [bless](#), [captive](#), [honor](#), [power](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:22-25](#)
- [Acts 08:14-17](#)
- [Acts 11:19-21](#)
- [Genesis 09:5-7](#)
- [Genesis 14:19-20](#)
- [John 03:34-36](#)
- [Mark 07:31-32](#)
- [Matthew 06:3-4](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H405, H2026, H2651, H2947, H2948, H3027, H3028, H3225, H3231, H3233, H3709, H7126, H7138, H8040, H8042, H8168, G710, G1188, G1448, G1451, G1764, G2021, G2092, G2176, G2902, G4084, G4474, G4475, G5495, G5496, G5497

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:10](#)
- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 2:7](#)
- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 3:1-4](#)
- [Lamentations 5:8-10](#)

head

Definition:

In the Bible, the word “head” is used with several figurative meanings.

- Often this term is used to refer to being in authority over people, as in “you have made me the head over nations.” This could be translated as “You have made me the ruler...” or “You have given me authority over...”
- Jesus is called the “head of the church.” Just as a person’s head guides and directs the members of its body, so Jesus guides and directs the members of his “body,” the Church.
- The New Testament teaches that a husband is the “head” or authority of his wife. He is given the responsibility of leading and guiding his wife and family.
- The expression “no razor will ever touch his head” means” he will never cut or shave his hair.”
- The term “head” can also refer to the beginning or source of something, as in the “head of the street.”
- The expression “heads of grain” refers to the top parts of a wheat or barley plant that contains the seeds.
- Another figurative use for “head” is when it is used to represent the whole person, as in “this gray head,” referring to an elderly person, or as in “the head of Joseph,” which refers to Joseph. (See: [synecdoche](#))
- The expression “let their blood be on his own head” means that the man is responsible for their deaths and will receive the punishment for that.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “head” could be translated as “authority” or “the one who leads and directs” or “the one who is responsible for.”
- The expression “head of” can refer to the whole person and so this expression could be translated using just the person’s name. For example, “the head of Joseph” could simply be translated as “Joseph.”
- The expression “will be on his own head” could be translated as “will be on him” or “he will be punished for” or “he will be held responsible for” or “he will be considered guilty for.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “beginning” or “source” or “ruler” or “leader” or “top.”

(See also: [grain](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 01:51-54
- 1 Kings 08:1-2
- 1 Samuel 09:22

- Colossians 02:10-12
- Colossians 02:18-19
- Numbers 01:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 2:18-19

heal, cure

Definition:

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

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

(See also: miracle)

Bible References:

- [Acts 05:14-16](#)
- [Acts 08:6-8](#)
- [Luke 05:12-13](#)
- [Luke 06:17-19](#)
- [Luke 08:43-44](#)
- [Matthew 04:23-25](#)
- [Matthew 09:35-36](#)
- [Matthew 13:15](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

miracles that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, **healed** many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)

heart, hearts

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions

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

(See also: hard)

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 3:30-33
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 5:15-16
- Lamentations 5:17-18

heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: kingdom of God)

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:1-2**
- **Lamentations 3:40-43**
- **Lamentations 3:48-50**
- **Lamentations 3:64-66**

holy, holiness

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “holy” might include “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”
- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”

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

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 03:11-13](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 04:7-8](#)
- [Acts 07:33-34](#)
- [Colossians 01:21-23](#)
- [Ezekiel 20:18-20](#)
- [Lamentations 04:1-2](#)
- [Mark 08:38](#)
- [Matthew 07:6](#)
- [Romans 01:1-3](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:16** He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.

- **09:12** "You are standing on **holy** ground."
- **13:01** "If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation."
- **13:05** "Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**."
- **22:05** "So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God."
- **50:02** As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2623, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, G37, G38, G39, G40, G41, G42, G1859, G2150, G2412, G2413, G3741, G3742,

Uses:

- **Lamentations 4:1-2**

honor, honors, to honor

Definition:

The terms “honor” and “to honor” refer to giving someone respect, esteem, or reverence.

- Honor is usually given to someone who is of higher status and importance, such as a king or God.
- God instructs Christians to honor others.
- Children are instructed to honor their parents in ways that include respecting them and obeying them.
- The terms “honor” and “glory” are often used together, especially when referring to Jesus. These may be two different ways of referring to the same thing.
- Ways of honoring God include thanking and praising him, and showing him respect by obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “honor” could include “respect” or “esteem” or “high regard.”
- The term “to honor” could be translated as “to show special respect to” or “to cause to be praised” or “to show high regard for” or “to highly value.”

(See also: [dishonor](#), glory, glorify, praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 02:8
- [Acts 19:15-17](#)
- [John 04:43-45](#)
- [John 12:25-26](#)
- [Mark 06:4-6](#)
- [Matthew 15:4-6](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 4:16](#)
- [Lamentations 5:11-12](#)

hope, hoped, hopes

Definition:

The term “hope” refers to expecting and strongly desiring something to happen. It can also mean to not be certain that it will happen.

- 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 ULB 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 as “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 02:17-20**
- **Acts 24:14-16**
- **Acts 26:6-8**
- **Acts 27:19-20**
- **Colossians 01:4-6**
- Job 11:20

Word Data:

- Strong's: H982, H983, H986, H2620, H2976, H3175, H3176, H3689, H4009, H4268, H4723, H7663, H7664, H8431, H8615, G91, G560, G1679, G1680, G2070

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:16-18](#)
- [Lamentations 3:25-29](#)

house of God, Yahweh's house

Definition:

In the Bible, the phrases “house of God” (God’s house) and “house of Yahweh (Yahweh’s house) refer to a place where God is worshiped.

- This term is also used more specifically to refer to the tabernacle or the temple.
- Sometimes “God’s house” is used to refer to the people of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a place of worship, this term could be translated as “a house for worshipping God” or “a place for worshipping God.”
- If it is referring to the temple or tabernacle, this could be translated as “the temple (or tabernacle) where God is worshiped (or “where God is present” or “where God meets with his people.”)
- The word “house” may be important to use in the translation in order to communicate that God “dwells” there, that is, his spirit is in that place to meet with his people and to be worshiped by them.

(See also: people of God, [tabernacle](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 03:14-15](#)
- [2 Chronicles 23:8-9](#)
- [Ezra 05:12-13](#)
- [Genesis 28:16-17](#)
- [Judges 18:30-31](#)
- [Mark 02:25-26](#)
- [Matthew 12:3-4](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H426, H430, H1004, H1005, H3068, G2316, G3624

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:7](#)

inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir

Definition:

The term “inherit” refers to receiving something valuable from a parent or other person because of a special relationship with that person. The “inheritance” is what is received.

- A physical inheritance that is received may be money, land, or other kinds of property.
- A spiritual inheritance is everything that God gives people who trust in Jesus, including blessings in the present life as well as eternal life with him.
- The Bible also calls God’s people his inheritance, which means that they belong to him; they are his valued possession.
- God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would inherit the land of Canaan, that it would belong to them forever.
- There is also a figurative or spiritual sense in which people who belong to God are said to “inherit the land.” This means that they will prosper and be blessed by God in both physical and spiritual ways.
- In the New Testament, God promises that those who trust in Jesus will “inherit salvation” and “inherit eternal life.” It is also expressed as, “inherit the kingdom of God.” This is a spiritual inheritance that lasts forever.
- There are other figurative meanings for these terms:
- The Bible says that wise people will “inherit glory” and righteous people will “inherit good things.”
- To “inherit the promises” means to receive the good things that God has promised to give his people.
- This term is also used in a negative sense to refer to foolish or disobedient people who “inherit the wind” or “inherit folly.” This means they receive the consequences of their sinful actions, including punishment and worthless living.

Translation Suggestions:

- As always, consider first whether there are already terms in the target language for the concept of an heir or an inheritance, and use those terms.
- Depending on the context, other ways that the term “inherit” could be translated might include “receive” or “possess” or “come into possession of.”
- Ways to translate “inheritance” could include “promised gift” or “secure possession.”
- When God’s people are referred to as his inheritance this could be translated as “valued ones belonging to him.”
- The term “heir” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “privileged child who receives the father’s possessions” or “person chosen to receive (God’s) spiritual possessions or blessings.”
- The term “heritage” could be translated as “blessings from God” or “inherited blessings.”

(See also: heir, Canaan, Promised Land)

Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 06:9-11](#)
- [1 Peter 01:3-5](#)
- 2 Samuel 21:2-3
- [Acts 07:4-5](#)
- Deuteronomy 20:16-18
- [Galatians 05:19-21](#)
- Genesis 15:6-8
- [Hebrews 09:13-15](#)
- Jeremiah 02:7-8
- [Luke 15:11-12](#)
- [Matthew 19:29-30](#)
- Psalm 079:1-3

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:22-24](#)
- [Lamentations 5:1-4](#)

iniquity, iniquities

Definition:

The term “iniquity” is a word that is very similar in meaning to the term “sin,” but may more specifically refer to conscious acts of wrongdoing or great wickedness.

- The word “iniquity” literally means a twisting or distorting (of the law). It refers to major injustice.
- Iniquity could be described as deliberate, harmful actions against other people.
- Other definitions of iniquity include “perversity” and “depravity,” which are both words that describe conditions of terrible sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “iniquity” could be translated as “wickedness” or “perverse actions” or “harmful acts.”
- Often, “iniquity” occurs in the same text as the word “sin” and “transgression” so it is important to have different ways of translating these terms.

(See also: [sin](#), [transgress](#), trespass)

Bible References:

- [Daniel 09:12-14](#)
- Exodus 34:5-7
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Genesis 44:16-17
- [Habakkuk 02:12-14](#)
- [Matthew 13:40-43](#)
- [Matthew 23:27-28](#)
- [Micah 03:9-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H205, H1942, H5753, H5758, H5766, H5771, H5932, H5999, H7562, G92, G93, G458, G3892, G4189

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)

Israel, Israelites

Facts:

The term “Israel” is the name that God gave to Jacob. It means “he struggles with God.”

- The descendants of Jacob became known as the “people of Israel” 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 10:1-3
- 1 Kings 08:1-2
- [Acts 02:34-36](#)
- [Acts 07:22-25](#)
- [Acts 13:23-25](#)
- [John 01:49-51](#)
- [Luke 24:21](#)
- [Mark 12:28-31](#)
- [Matthew 02:4-6](#)
- [Matthew 27:9-10](#)
- [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 each tribe of **Israel** its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave **Israel** peace along all its borders. ***16:16** So God punished **Israel** again for worshiping idols. ***43:06** “Men of **Israel**, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

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

Jacob, Israel

Facts:

Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac and Rebekah.

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

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

(See also: Canaan, [deceive](#), Esau, Isaac, [Israel](#), Rebekah, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:11-13](#)
- [Acts 07:44-46](#)
- Genesis 25:24-26
- Genesis 29:1-3
- Genesis 32:1-2
- [John 04:4-5](#)
- [Matthew 08:11-13](#)
- [Matthew 22:31-33](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)

Jerusalem

Facts:

Jerusalem was originally an ancient Canaanite city that later became the most important city in Israel. It is located about 34 kilometers west of the Salt Sea and just north of Bethlehem. It is still the capital city of Israel today.

- The name “Jerusalem” is first mentioned in the book of Joshua. Other Old Testament names for this city include “Salem” “city of Jebus,” and “Zion.” Both “Jerusalem” and “Salem,” have the root meaning of “peace.”
- Jerusalem was originally a Jebusite fortress called “Zion” which King David captured and made into his capital city.
- It was in Jerusalem that David’s son Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, which was the mountain where Abraham had offered his son Isaac to God. The temple was rebuilt there after it was destroyed by the Babylonians.
- Because the temple was in Jerusalem, the major Jewish festivals were celebrated there.
- People normally referred to going “up” to Jerusalem since it is located in the mountains.

(See also: Babylon, Christ, David, Jebusites, Jesus, Solomon, [temple](#), [Zion](#))

Bible References:

- [Galatians 04:26-27](#)
- [John 02:13-14](#)
- [Luke 04:9-11](#)
- [Luke 13:4-5](#)
- [Mark 03:7-8](#)
- [Mark 03:20-22](#)
- [Matthew 03:4-6](#)
- [Matthew 04:23-25](#)
- [Matthew 20:17-19](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:05** David conquered **Jerusalem** and made it his capital city.
- **18:02** In **Jerusalem**, Solomon built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- **20:07** They (Babylonians) captured the city of **Jerusalem**, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- **20:12** So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of Jews returned to the city of **Jerusalem** in Judah.

- **38:01** About three years after Jesus first began preaching and teaching publicly, Jesus told his disciples that he wanted to celebrate this Passover with them in **Jerusalem**, and that he would be killed there.
- **38:02** After Jesus and the disciples arrived in **Jerusalem**, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to betray Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- **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."
- **42:11** Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, "Stay in **Jerusalem** until you receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:10](#)
- [Lamentations 2:15-16](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)

joy, joyful

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [rejoice](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 01:6-7](#)
- [3 John 01:1-4](#)
- [Galatians 05:22-24](#)
- [Isaiah 56:6-7](#)
- [James 01:1-3](#)
- [Jeremiah 15:15-16](#)
- [Matthew 02:9-10](#)
- [Nehemiah 08:9-10](#)
- [Philemon 01:4-7](#)
- [Psalm 048:1-3](#)
- [Romans 15:30-32](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- [33:07](#) “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with **joy**.”

- **34:04** "The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field."
- **41:07** The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1523, H1524, H1525, H1750, H2304, H2305, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5970, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G20, G21, G2167, G2744, G3685, G4640, G5463, G5479

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:15-16**
- **Lamentations 5:15-16**

Judah

Facts:

Judah was one of Jacob's older sons. His mother was Leah. His descendants were called the "tribe of Judah."

- It was Judah who told his brothers to sell their younger brother Joseph as a slave instead of leaving him to die in a deep pit.
- King David and all the kings after him were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
- When Solomon's reign ended and the nation of Israel divided, the kingdom of Judah was the southern 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 01:9-10
- Genesis 29:35
- Genesis 38:1-2
- [Luke 03:33-35](#)
- Ruth 01:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:3](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)

Judah, kingdom of Judah

Facts:

The tribe of Judah was the largest of the twelve tribes of Israel. The kingdom of Judah was made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

- After King Solomon died, the nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. The kingdom of Judah was the southern kingdom, located west of the Salt Sea.
- The capital city of the kingdom of Judah was Jerusalem.
- Eight kings of Judah obeyed Yahweh and led the people to worship him. The other kings of Judah were evil and led the people to worship idols.
- Over 120 years after Assyria defeated Israel (the northern kingdom), Judah was conquered by the nation of Babylon. The Babylonians destroyed the city and the temple, and took most of the people of Judah to Babylon as captives.

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

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 30:26-28
- 2 Samuel 12:7-8
- [Hosea 05:14-15](#)
- Jeremiah 07:33-34
- Judges 01:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

***18:07** Only two tribes remained faithful to him (Rehoboam). These two tribes became the **kingdom of Judah**.\ ***18:10** The **kingdoms of Judah** and Israel became enemies and often fought against each other.\ ***18:13** The **kings of Judah** were descendants of David. Some of these kings were good men who ruled justly and worshiped God. But most of **Judah's** kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols.\ ***20:01** The **kingdoms of Israel and Judah** both sinned against God.\ ***20:05** The people in the **kingdom of Judah** saw how God had punished the people of the kingdom of Israel for not believing and obeying him. But they still worshiped idols, including the gods of the Canaanites.\ ***20:06** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Babylonians, to attack the **kingdom of Judah**.\ ***20:09** Nebuchadnezzar and his army took almost all of the people of **the kingdom of Judah** to Babylon, leaving only the poorest people behind to plant the fields.\

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:15](#)
- [Lamentations 5:11-12](#)

judge, judges, judgment, judgments

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 3:58-61**

just, justice, justly

Definition:

These terms refer to treating people fairly according to God's laws. Human laws that reflect God's standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

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

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "just" could include "morally right" or "fair."
- The term "justice" could be translated as "fair treatment" or "deserved consequences."
- To "act justly" could be translated as "treat fairly" or "behave in a just way."
- In some contexts, "just" could be translated as "righteous" or "upright."

(See also: [judge](#), [righteous](#), upright)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:14-17
- [Acts 28:3-4](#)
- Isaiah 04:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:1-3
- [Luke 18:3-5](#)
- [Luke 21:20-22](#)
- [Luke 23:39-41](#)
- [Matthew 23:23-24](#)
- [Micah 03:8](#)
- [Revelation 15:3-4](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

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

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3477, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, G1342, G1344, G1345, G1346, G1347, G1738

Uses:

- **Lamentations 3:34-36**

king

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 4:12-13

kingdom

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 02:10-12](#)
- [2 Timothy 04:17-18](#)
- [Colossians 01:13-14](#)
- [John 18:36-37](#)
- [Mark 03:23-25](#)
- [Matthew 04:7-9](#)
- [Matthew 13:18-19](#)
- [Matthew 16:27-28](#)
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:02** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, "If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation."
- **18:04** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon's unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon's death.
- **18:07** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- **18:08** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.
- **21:08** A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:1-2**

lament, laments, lamentation

Definition:

The terms “lament” and “lamentation” refer to a strong expression of mourning, sorrow, or grief.

- Sometimes this includes deep regret for sin, or compassion for people who have experienced disaster.
- A lamentation could include moaning, weeping, or wailing.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to lament” could be translated as “to deeply mourn” or “to wail in grief” or “to be sorrowful.”
- A “lamentation” (or a “lament”) could be translated as “loud wailing and weeping” or “deep sorrow” or “sorrowful sobbing” or “mournful moaning.”

Bible References:

- [Amos 08:9-10](#)
- [Ezekiel 32:1-2](#)
- [Jeremiah 22:17-19](#)
- [Job 27:15-17](#)
- [Lamentations 02:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 02:8-9](#)
- [Micah 02:3-5](#)
- [Psalm 102:1-2](#)
- [Zechariah 11:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H56, H421, H578, H592, H1058, H4553, H5091, H5092, H5594, H6088, H6969, H7015, H8567, G2354, G2355, G2870, G2875

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)

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

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

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

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)

life, live, lived, lives, living, alive

Definition:

All these terms refer to being physically alive, not dead. They are also used figuratively to refer to being alive spiritually. The following discusses what is meant by “physical life” and “spiritual life.”

1. Physical life

- Physical life is the presence of the spirit in the body. God breathed life into Adam’s body, and he became a living being.
- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Spiritual life

- A person has spiritual life when he believes in Jesus with God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- This life is also called “eternal life” to indicate that it does not end.
- The opposite of spiritual life is spiritual death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives’ could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about being alive spiritually, “life” could be translated as “spiritual life” or “eternal life,” depending on the context.
- The concept of “spiritual life” could also be translated as “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: **death**, everlasting)

Bible References:

- **2 Peter 01:3-4**
- **Acts 10:42-43**
- Genesis 02:7-8
- Genesis 07:21-22
- **Hebrews 10:19-22**
- Jeremiah 44:1-3
- **John 01:4-5**
- Judges 02:18-19
- **Luke 12:22-23**
- **Matthew 07:13-14**

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 1:11-12**
- **Lamentations 1:16-17**
- **Lamentations 2:11-12**
- **Lamentations 2:18-19**
- **Lamentations 5:8-10**

light

Definition:

There are several figurative uses of the term “light” in the Bible. It is often used as a metaphor for righteousness, holiness, and truth. (See: [Metaphor](#))

- Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” to express that he brings God’s true message to the world and rescues people from the darkness of their sin.
- Christians are commanded to “walk in the light,” which means they should be living the way God wants them to and avoiding evil.
- The apostle John stated that “God is light” and in him there is no darkness at all.
- Light and darkness are complete opposites. Darkness is the absence of all light.
- Jesus said that he was “the light of the world” and that his followers should shine like lights in the world by living in a way that clearly shows how great God is.
- “Walking in the light” represents living in a way that pleases God, doing what is good and right. Walking in darkness represents living in rebellion against God, doing evil things.

Translation Suggestions:

- When translating, it is important to keep the literal terms “light” and “darkness” even when they are used figuratively.
- It may be necessary to explain the comparison in the text. For example, “walk as children of light” could be translated as, “live openly righteous lives, like someone who walks in bright sunlight.”
- Make sure that the translation of “light” does not refer to an object that gives light, such as a lamp. The translation of this term should refer to the light itself.

(See also: [darkness](#), [holy](#), [righteous](#), true)

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 John 02:7-8](#)
- [2 Corinthians 04:5-6](#)
- [Acts 26:15-18](#)
- [Isaiah 02:5-6](#)
- [John 01:4-5](#)
- [Matthew 05:15-16](#)
- [Matthew 06:22-24](#)
- [Nehemiah 09:12-13](#)
- [Revelation 18:23-24](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H216, H217, H3313, H3974, H4237, H5051, H5094, H5105, H5216, H6348, H7052, H7837, G681, G796, G1645, G2985, G3088, G5338, G5457, G5458, G5460, G5462

Uses:

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

lion

Definition:

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

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

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:22-23
- 1 Kings 07:27-29
- Proverbs 19:11-12
- Psalms 017:11-12
- [Revelation 05:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:9-11](#)

Lord

Facts:

The term “Lord” refers to someone who has ownership or authority over people. It 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 ULB and UDB, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages translate this term as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme 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: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [God](#), [Jesus](#), [lord](#), [ruler](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Peter 01:3-5](#)
- [Daniel 09:9-11](#)
- [Daniel 09:17-19](#)
- [Ezekiel 18:29-30](#)
- [Hebrews 12:14-17](#)
- [Joshua 03:9-11](#)
- [Jude 01:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 02:1-2](#)

- Luke 01:30-33
- Malachi 03:1-3
- Matthew 07:21-23
- Psalms 086:15-17
- Revelation 15:3-4
- Romans 06:22-23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H113, H136, H4756, G1203, G2962

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:7
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 3:30-33
- Lamentations 3:34-36
- Lamentations 3:58-61

lord, lords, master, masters, sir, Sir, Sirs

Definition:

The term “lord” refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term 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: [Lord](#))

Bible References:

- [Colossians 03:22-25](#)
- [Ephesians 06:9](#)
- [Genesis 39:1-2](#)
- [James 02:1-4](#)
- [Jeremiah 27:1-4](#)
- [Luke 16:13](#)
- [Philippians 02:9-11](#)

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."
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Word Data:

- Strong's: H113, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G203, G634, G962

Uses:

- **Lamentations 1:4-5**

lover

Definition:

The term “lover” literally means “person who loves.” Usually this refers to people who are in a sexual relationship with each other.

- When the term “lover” is used in the Bible, it usually refers to a person who is involved in a sexual relationship with someone he or she is not married to.
- This wrong sexual relationship is often used in the Bible to refer to Israel’s disobedience to God in worshiping idols. So the term “lovers” is also used in a figurative way to refer to the idols that the people of Israel worshiped. In these contexts, this term could possibly be translated by “immoral partners” or “partners in adultery” or “idols.” [See Metaphor]
- A “lover” of money is someone who puts too much importance on getting money and being rich.
- In the Old Testament book Song of Songs, the term “lover” is used in a positive way.

(See also: adultery, [false god](#), idol, love)

Bible References:

- [Hosea 02:4-5](#)
- [Jeremiah 03:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 01:1-2](#)
- [Luke 16:14-15](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

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

mighty, might

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: Almighty, miracle, power, [strength](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:22-25](#)
- Genesis 06:4
- [Mark 09:38-39](#)
- [Matthew 11:23-24](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:15

mind

Definition:

The term “mind” refers to the part of a person that thinks and makes decisions.

- The mind of each person is the total of his or her thoughts and reasoning.
- To “have the mind of Christ” means to be thinking and acting as Jesus Christ would think and act. It means being obedient to God the Father, obeying the teachings of Christ, being enabled to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- To “change his mind” means someone made a different decision or had a different opinion than he had previously.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “mind” could also be translated as “thoughts” or “reasoning” or “thinking” or “understanding.”
- The expression “keep in mind” could be translated as “remember” or “pay attention to this” or “be sure to know this.”
- The expression “heart, soul, and mind” could also be translated as “what you feel, what you believe, and what you think about.”
- The expression “call to mind” could be translated as “remember” or “think about.”
- The expression “changed his mind and went” could also be translated as “decided differently and went” or “decided to go after all” or “changed his opinion and went.”

(See also: [believe](#), [heart](#), [soul](#))

Bible References:

- [Luke 10:25-28](#)
- [Mark 06:51-52](#)
- [Matthew 21:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 22:37-38](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:7](#)

mock, ridicule, scoff at, mocker

Definition:

The terms “mock,” “ridicule,” and “scoff at” all refer to making fun of someone, especially in a cruel way.

- Mocking often involves imitating people’s words or actions with the intent to embarrass them or show contempt for them.
- The Roman soldiers mocked or ridiculed Jesus when they put a robe on him and pretended to honor him as king.
- A group of young people ridiculed or scoffed at Elisha when they called him a name, making fun of his bald head.
- The term “scoff at” can also refer to ridiculing an idea that is not considered believable or important.
- A “mocker” is someone who mocks and ridicules consistently.

Bible References:

- [2 Peter 03:3-4](#)
- [Acts 02:12-13](#)
- [Galatians 06:6-8](#)
- [Genesis 39:13-15](#)
- [Luke 22:63-65](#)
- [Mark 10:32-34](#)
- [Matthew 09:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 20:17-19](#)
- [Matthew 27:27-29](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

***21:12** Isaiah prophesied that people would spit on, **mock**, and beat the Messiah. ***39:05** The Jewish leaders all answered the high priest, “He deserves to die!” Then they blindfolded Jesus, spit on him, hit him, and **mocked** him. ***39:12** The soldiers whipped Jesus, and put a royal robe and a crown made of thorns on him. Then they **mocked** him by saying, “Look, the King of the Jews!” ***40:04** Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them **mocked** Jesus, but the other said, “Do you have no fear of God?” ***40:05** The Jewish leaders and the other people in the crowd **mocked** Jesus. They said to him, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and save yourself! Then we will believe you.”

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Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 2:15-16
- Lamentations 3:44-47
- Lamentations 3:62-63

Most High

Facts:

The term “Most High” is a title for God. It refers to his greatness or authority.

- The meaning of this term is similar to the meaning of “Sovereign” or “Supreme.”
- The word “high” in this title does not refer to physical height or distance. It refers to greatness.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can also be translated as “Most High God” or “Most Supreme being” or “God Most High” or “Greatest One” or “Supreme One” or “God, who is Greater than all.”
- If a word like “high” is used, make sure it does not refer to being physically high or tall.

(See also: [God](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 07:47-50](#)
- [Acts 16:16-18](#)
- [Daniel 04:17-18](#)
- Deuteronomy 32:7-8
- Genesis 14:17-18
- [Hebrews 07:1-3](#)
- [Hosea 07:16](#)
- [Lamentations 03:34-36](#)
- [Luke 01:30-33](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5945, G5310

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:34-36](#)

mourn, mourning

Facts:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: [sackcloth](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 01:11-13
- Genesis 23:1-2
- [Luke 07:31-32](#)
- [Matthew 11:16-17](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 5:15-16](#)

name, names, named

Definition:

In the Bible, the word “name” was used in several figurative ways.

- 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 02:12-14](#)
- [2 Timothy 02:19-21](#)
- [Acts 04:5-7](#)
- [Acts 04:11-12](#)
- [Acts 09:26-27](#)
- [Genesis 12:1-3](#)
- [Genesis 35:9-10](#)
- [Matthew 18:4-6](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5344, H7121, H7761, H8034, H8036, G2564, G3686, G3687, G5122

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:55-57](#)

nation

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [Assyria](#), [Babylon](#), [Canaan](#), [Gentile](#), [Greek](#), [people group](#), [Philistines](#), [Rome](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 14:15-17
- 2 Chronicles 15:6-7
- 2 Kings 17:11-12
- [Acts 02:5-7](#)
- [Acts 13:19-20](#)
- [Acts 17:26-27](#)
- [Acts 26:4-5](#)
- [Daniel 03:3-5](#)
- Genesis 10:2-5
- Genesis 27:29

- Genesis 35:11-13
- Genesis 49:10
- Luke 07:2-5
- Mark 13:7-8
- Matthew 21:43-44
- Romans 04:16-17

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:10
- Lamentations 4:17-18
- Lamentations 4:19-20

on high, in the highest

Definition:

The terms “on high” and “in the highest” are expressions that usually mean “in heaven.”

- Another meaning for the expression “in the highest” could be “the most honored.”
- This expression could also be used literally, as in the expression “in the highest tree,” which means “in the tallest tree.”
- The expression “on high” could also refer to being high in the sky, such as a bird’s nest that is on high. In that context it could be translated as “high in the sky” or “at the top of a tall tree.”
- The word “high” could also indicate the elevated location or importance of a person or thing.
- The expression “from on high” could be translated as “from heaven.”

(See also: [heaven](#), [honor](#))

Bible References:

- [Lamentations 01:13-14](#)
- [Psalms 069:28-29](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)

oppress, oppression, oppressor

Definition:

The terms “oppress” and “oppression” refer to treating people harshly. An “oppressor” is a person who oppresses people.

- The term “oppression” especially refers to a situation where people of greater strength mistreat or enslave people who are under their power or rule.
- The term “oppressed” describes the people who are being harshly treated.
- Often enemy nations and their rulers were oppressors to the people of Israel.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “oppress” could be translated as, “severely mistreat” or “cause to be heavily burdened” or “put under miserable bondage” or “rule harshly.”
- Ways to translate “oppression” could include “heavy suppression and bondage” or “burdensome control.”
- The phrase “the oppressed” could be translated as “oppressed people” or “people in terrible bondage” or “those who are treated harshly.”
- The term “oppressor” could be translated as “person who oppresses” or “nation who controls and rules harshly” or “persecutor.”

(See also: [bind](#), enslave, persecute)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:17-19
- Deuteronomy 26:6-7
- Ecclesiastes 04:1
- Job 10:1-3
- Judges 02:18-19
- Nehemiah 05:14-15
- Psalms 119:133-134

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1790, H1792, H2541, H2555, H3238, H3905, H3906, H4642, H4939, H5065, H6115, H6125, H6184, H6206, H6216, H6217, H6231, H6233, H6234, H6693, H7429, H7533, H7701, G2616, G2669

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:58-61](#)

palace

Definition:

The term “palace” refers to the building or house where a king lived, along with his family members and servants.

- The high priest also lived in a palace complex, as mentioned in the New Testament.
- Palaces were very ornate, with beautiful architecture and furnishings.
- The buildings and furnishings of a palace were constructed of stone or wood, and often were overlaid with expensive wood, gold, or ivory.
- Many other people also lived and worked in the palace complex, which usually included several buildings and courtyards.

(See also: courtyard, high priest, [king](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 28:7-8
- 2 Samuel 11:2-3
- [Daniel 05:5-6](#)
- [Matthew 26:3-5](#)
- Psalms 045:8-9

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)

peace, peaceful

Definition:

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

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

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 05:1-3](#)
- [Acts 07:26-28](#)
- [Colossians 01:18-20](#)
- [Colossians 03:15-17](#)
- [Galatians 05:22-24](#)
- [Luke 07:48-50](#)
- [Luke 12:51-53](#)
- [Mark 04:38-39](#)
- [Matthew 05:9-10](#)
- [Matthew 10:11-13](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

***15:06** God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.

***15:12** Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders. ***16:03** Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land. ***21:13** He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people. ***48:14** David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He

will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever. *50:17 Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:16-18](#)

people group, peoples, the people, a people

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 08:51-53
- 1 Samuel 08:6-7
- Deuteronomy 28:9-10

- Genesis 49:16-18
- Ruth 01:16-18

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:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 3:12-15
- Lamentations 3:44-47
- Lamentations 4:3

perfect

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “perfect” means to be mature in our Christian life. To perfect something means to work at it until it is excellent and without flaws.

- Being perfect and mature means that a Christian is obedient, not sinless.
- The term “perfect” also has the meaning of being “complete” or “whole.”
- The New Testament Book of James states that persevering through trials will produce completeness and maturity in the believer.
- When Christians study the Bible and obey it, they will become more spiritually perfect and mature because they will be more like Christ in their character.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “without flaw” or “without error” or “flawless” or “without fault” or “not having any faults.”

Bible References:

- [Hebrews 12:1-3](#)
- [James 03:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 05:46-48](#)
- [Psalms 019:7-8](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H724, H998, H1584, H1585, H3632, H3634, H4357, H4359, H4512, H8003, H8502, H8503, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G195, G197, G199, G739, G1295, G2005, G2675, G2676, G2677, G3647, G5046, G5047, G5048, G5050, G5052

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:15-16](#)

perish, perished, perishing, perishable

Definition:

The term “perish” means to die or be destroyed, usually as the result of violence or other disaster. In the Bible, it especially has the meaning of being punished for eternity in hell.

- People who are “perishing” are those who are destined for hell because they have refused to believe in Jesus for their salvation.
- John 3:16 teaches that “perish” means to not live eternally in heaven.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include “die eternally” or “be punished in hell” or “be destroyed.”
- Make sure that the translation of “perish” can mean living eternally in hell and does not only mean “cease to exist.”

(See also: [death](#), everlasting)

Bible References:

- [1 Peter 01:22-23](#)
- [2 Corinthians 02:16-17](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 02:8-10](#)
- [Jeremiah 18:18-20](#)
- [Psalms 049:18-20](#)
- [Zechariah 09:5-7](#)
- [Zechariah 13:8-9](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6, H7, H8, H1478, H1820, H5486, H5595, H6544, H8045, G599, G622, G684, G853, G1311, G2704, G4881, G5356

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 3:16-18](#)

pit

Definition:

A pit is a deep hole that has been dug in the ground.

- People dig pits for the purpose of trapping animals or finding water.
- A pit can also be used as a temporary place to hold a prisoner.
- Sometimes the phrase “the pit” refers to the grave or to hell. Other times it may refer to “the abyss.”
- A very deep pit can also be called a “cistern.”
- The term “pit” is also used figuratively in phrases such as, “pit of destruction” which describes being trapped in a disastrous situation or being deeply involved in sinful, destructive practices.

(See also: abyss, hell, [prison](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 37:21-22
- Job 33:16-18
- [Luke 06:39-40](#)
- Proverbs 01:12-14

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:44-47](#)
- [Lamentations 3:55-57](#)
- [Lamentations 4:19-20](#)

pray, prayer, prayers, prayed

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Lamentations 3:44-47

precious

Facts:

The term “precious” describes people or things that are considered to be very valuable.

- The term “precious stones” or “precious jewels” refers to rocks and minerals that are colorful or have other qualities that make them beautiful or useful.
- Examples of precious stones include diamonds, rubies, and emeralds.
- Gold and silver are called “precious metals.”
- Yahweh says that his people are “precious” in his sight (Isaiah 43:4).
- Peter wrote that a gentle and quiet spirit is precious in God’s sight (1 Peter 3:4).
- This term could also be translated as “valuable” or “very dear” or “cherished” or “highly valued.”

(See also: [gold](#), [silver](#))

Bible References:

- [2 Peter 01:1-2](#)
- [Acts 20:22-24](#)
- [Daniel 11:38-39](#)
- [Lamentations 01:7](#)
- [Luke 07:2-5](#)
- [Psalms 036:7-9](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:10](#)
- [Lamentations 1:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 4:1-2](#)

priest, priests, priesthood

Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him."
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: Aaron, chief priests, high priest, mediator, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 06:40-42
- Genesis 14:17-18
- Genesis 47:20-22

- [John 01:19-21](#)
- [Luke 10:31-32](#)
- [Mark 01:43-44](#)
- [Mark 02:25-26](#)
- [Matthew 08:4](#)
- [Matthew 12:3-4](#)
- [Micah 03:9-11](#)
- [Nehemiah 10:28-29](#)
- [Nehemiah 10:34-36](#)
- [Revelation 01:4-6](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

***04:07** "Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High" ***13:09** Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight. God chose Moses' brother, Aaron, and Aaron's descendants to be his **priests**. ***19:07** So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire. ***21:07** An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3547, H3548, H3549, H3550, G748, G749, G2405, G2406, G2407, G2409, G2420

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 1:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 2:20](#)
- [Lamentations 04 General Notes](#)
- [Lamentations 4:12-13](#)

prince, princess

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: angel, authority, Christ, demon, [lord](#), power, [ruler](#), Satan, Savior, spirit)

Bible References:

- [Acts 05:29-32](#)
- Genesis 12:14-16
- Genesis 49:26
- [Luke 01:52-53](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

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

- Lamentations 1:6
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 5:11-12

prison, prisoner, imprison

Definition:

The term “prison” refers to a place where criminals are kept as a punishment for their crimes. A “prisoner” is someone who has been put in the prison.

- A person may be kept in a prison while waiting to be judged in a trial.
- The term “imprisoned” means “kept in a prison” or “kept in captivity.”
- Many prophets and other servants of God were put in prison even though they had not done anything wrong.

Translation Suggestions:

- Another word for “prison” is “jail.”
- This term could also be translated as “dungeon” in contexts where the prison is probably underground or beneath the main part of a palace or other building.
- The term “prisoners” can also refer in general to people who have been captured by an enemy and kept somewhere against their will. Another way to translate this meaning would be “captives.”
- Other ways to translate “imprisoned” could be, “kept as a prisoner” or “kept in captivity” or “held captive.”

(See also: [captive](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 25:4-5](#)
- [Ephesians 04:1-3](#)
- [Luke 12:57-59](#)
- [Luke 22:33-34](#)
- [Mark 06:16-17](#)
- [Matthew 05:25-26](#)
- [Matthew 14:3-5](#)
- [Matthew 25:34-36](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:34-36](#)

proclaim, proclamation

Definition:

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

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

(See also: preach)

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:17](#)

prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: Baal, divination, [false god](#), false prophet, [fulfill](#), [law](#), [vision](#))

Bible References:

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

- Matthew 02:17-18
- Matthew 05:17-18
- Psalm 051:1-2

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:20
- Lamentations 4:12-13

punish, punishment

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

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

their

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:37-39](#)
- [Lamentations 4:6](#)
- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

pure, purify, purification

Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase “provided purification for sins” could be translated as “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See also: atonement, clean, spirit)

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 01:5-8](#)
- [Exodus 31:6-9](#)
- [Hebrews 09:13-15](#)
- [James 04:8-10](#)
- [Luke 02:22-24](#)
- [Revelation 14:3-5](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1249, H1252, H1253, H1305, H1865, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2212, H2398, H2403, H2561, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2892, H2893, H3795, H3800, H4795, H5343, H5462, H6337, H6884, H6942, H8562, G48, G49, G53, G54, G1506, G2511, G2512, G2513, G2514

Uses:

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

rage

Facts:

Rage is excessive anger what is out of control. When someone rages, it means that person is expressing anger in a destructive way.

- Rage happens when the emotion of anger causes a person to lose self control.
- When controlled by rage, people commit destructive acts and say destructive things.
- The term “to rage” can also mean to move powerfully, in descriptions such as a “raging” storm or ocean waves that “rage.”
- When the “nations rage,” their to ungodly people disobey God and rebel against him.
- To be “filled with rage” means to have an overwhelming feeling of extreme anger.

(See also: [angry](#), self-control)

Bible References:

- [Acts 04:23-25](#)
- [Daniel 03:13-14](#)
- [Luke 04:28-30](#)
- Numbers 25:10-11
- Proverbs 19:3-4

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:11](#)

rebel, rebellious, rebellion

Definition:

The term “rebel” means to refuse to submit to someone’s authority. A “rebellious” person often disobeys and does evil things. This kind of person is called “a rebel.”

- A person is rebelling when he does something the authorities over him have told him not to do.
- A person can also rebel by refusing to do what the authorities have commanded him to do.
- Sometimes people rebel against their government or leader who is ruling over them.
- The term “to rebel” could also be translated as “to disobey” or “to revolt,” depending on the context.
- “Rebellious” could also be translated as “continually disobedient” or “refusing to obey.”
- The term “rebellion” means “refusal to obey” or “disobedience” or “law-breaking.”
- The phrase “the rebellion” or “a rebellion” can also refer to an organized group of people who publicly rebel against ruling authorities by breaking the law and attacking leaders and other people. Often they try to get other people to join them in rebelling.

(See also: authority, governor)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 12:18-19
- 1 Samuel 12:14-15
- [1 Timothy 01:9-11](#)
- 2 Chronicles 10:17-19
- [Acts 21:37-38](#)
- [Luke 23:18-19](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

***14:14** After the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness for forty years, all of them who had **rebelled** against God were dead. ***18:07** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel **rebelled** against Rehoboam. ***18:09** Jeroboam **rebelled** against God and caused the people to sin. ***18:13** Most of the people of Judah also **rebelled** against God and worshiped other gods. ***20:07** But after a few years, the king of Judah **rebelled** against Babylon. ***45:03** Then he (Stephen) said, “You stubborn and **rebellious** people always reject the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors always rejected God and killed his prophets.

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 3:40-43

reign

Definition:

The term “to reign” means to rule over the people of a particular country or kingdom. The reign of a king is the time period during which he is ruling.

- The term “reign” is also used to refer to God reigning as king over the entire world.
- God allowed human kings to reign over Israel after the people rejected him as their king.
- When Jesus Christ returns, he will openly reign as king over the whole world, and Christians will reign with Him.
- This term could also be translated as “absolute rule” or “rule as king.”

(See also: [kingdom](#))

Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 02:11-13](#)
- [Genesis 36:34-36](#)
- [Luke 01:30-33](#)
- [Luke 19:26-27](#)
- [Matthew 02:22-23](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

reject

Definition:

To “reject” someone or something means to refuse to accept that person or thing.

- The term “reject” can also mean to “refuse to believe in” something.
- To reject God also means to refuse to obey him.
- When the Israelites rejected Moses’ leadership, it means that they were rebelling against his authority. They did not want to obey him.
- The Israelites showed that they were rejecting God when they worshiped false gods.
- The term “push away” is the literal meaning of this word. Other languages may have a similar expression that means to reject or refuse to believe someone or something.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “reject” could also be translated by “not accept” or “stop helping” or “refuse to obey” or “stop obeying.”
- In the expression “stone that the builders rejected,” the term “rejected” could be translated as “refused to use” or “did not accept” or “threw away” or “got rid of as worthless.”
- In the context of people who rejected God’s commandments, rejected could be translated as “refused to obey” his commands or “stubbornly chose to not accept” God’s laws.

(See also: [command](#), disobey, obey, stiff-necked)

Bible References:

- [Galatians 04:12-14](#)
- [Hosea 04:6-7](#)
- [Isaiah 41:8-9](#)
- [John 12:48-50](#)
- [Mark 07:8-10](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:7](#)
- [Lamentations 3:30-33](#)
- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

rejoice

Definition:

The term “rejoice” means to be full of joy and gladness.

- This term often refers to being very happy about the good things that God has done.
- It could be translated as “be very happy” or “be very glad” or “be full of joy.”
- When Mary said “my soul rejoices in God my Savior,” she meant “God my Savior has made me very happy” or “I feel so joyful because of what God my Savior has done for me.”

(See also: [joy](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 05:15-18](#)
- [Acts 16:32-34](#)
- [John 03:29-30](#)
- [Luke 15:6-7](#)
- [Luke 19:37-38](#)
- [Matthew 02:9-10](#)
- [Philippians 04:10-13](#)
- [Romans 05:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 2:17](#)
- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

report

Definition:

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

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

Bible References:

- [Acts 05:22-23](#)
- [John 12:37-38](#)
- [Luke 05:15-16](#)
- [Luke 08:34-35](#)
- [Matthew 28:14-15](#)

shows the interruption of thought and

shows the interruption of thought and

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

rest

Definition:

The term “to rest” literally means to stop working in order to relax or regain strength. The phrase “the rest of” refers to the remainder of something. A “rest” is to stop working.

- 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 06:40-42
- Genesis 02:1-3
- Jeremiah 06:16-19
- [Matthew 11:28-30](#)
- [Revelation 14:11-12](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H14, H1824, H1826, H2308, H3498, H3499, H4494, H4496, H4771, H5117, H5118, H5183, H5564, H6314, H7258, H7280, H7599, H7604, H7605, H7606, H7611, H7673, H7677,

H7901, H7931, H7954, H8058, H8172, H8252, H8300, G372, G373, G425, G1515, G1879, G1954, G1981, G2270, G2663, G2664, G2681, G2838, G3062, G4520

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:3](#)
- [Lamentations 5:5-7](#)

restore, restores, restored, restoration

Definition:

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

- When a diseased body part is restored, this means it has been “healed.”
- A broken relationship that is restored has been “reconciled.” God restores sinful people and brings them back to himself.
- If people 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 05:8-10
- [Acts 03:21-23](#)
- [Acts 15:15-18](#)
- Isaiah 49:5-6
- Jeremiah 15:19-21
- [Lamentations 05:19-22](#)
- Leviticus 06:5-7
- [Luke 19:8-10](#)
- [Matthew 12:13-14](#)
- Psalm 080:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7725, H7999, H8421, G600, G2675

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)

- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 5:19-22

reveal, reveals, revealed, revelation

Definition:

The term “reveal” means to cause something to be known. A “revelation” is something that has been made known.

- God has revealed himself through everything he has created and through his communication with people by spoken and written messages.
- God also reveals himself through dreams or visions.
- When Paul said that he received the gospel by “revelation from Jesus Christ,” he means that Jesus himself explained the gospel to him.
- In the New Testament book “Revelation” is about God revealed events that will happen in the end times. He revealed them to the apostle John through visions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “reveal” could include “make known” or “disclose” or “show clearly.”
- Depending on the context, possible ways to translate “revelation” could be “communication from God” or “things that God has revealed” or “teachings about God.” It is best to keep the meaning of “reveal” in the translation.
- The phrase “where there is no revelation” could be translated as “when God is not revealing himself to people” or “when God is not speaking to people” or “among people whom God has not communicating.”

(See also: good news, good news, dream, [vision](#))

Bible References:

- [Daniel 11:1-2](#)
- [Ephesians 03:3-5](#)
- [Galatians 01:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 02:13-14](#)
- [Matthew 10:26-27](#)
- [Philippians 03:15-16](#)
- [Revelation 01:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H241, H1540, H1541, G601, G602, G5537

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)

right hand

Definition:

The figurative expression “right hand” refers to the place of honor or strength on the right side of a ruler or other important individual.

- The right hand is also used as a symbol of power, authority, or strength.
- The Bible describes Jesus as sitting “at the right hand of” God the Father as the head of the body of believers (the Church) and in control as ruler of all creation.
- A person’s right hand was used to show special honor when placed on the head of someone being given a blessing (as when the patriarch Jacob blessed Joseph’s son Ephraim).
- To “serve at the right hand” of someone means to be the one whose service is especially helpful and important to that person.

Translation Suggestions:

- Sometimes the term “right hand” literally refers to a person’s right hand, as when Roman soldiers put a staff into Jesus’ right hand to mock him. This should be translated using the term that the language uses to refer to this hand.
- Regarding figurative uses, if an expression that includes the term “right hand” does not have the same meaning in the project language, then consider whether that language has a different expression with the same meaning.
- The expression “at the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of” or “in the place of honor beside” or “in the position of strength” or “ready to help.”
- Ways to translate “with his right hand” could include “with authority” or “using power” or “with his amazing strength.”
- The figurative expression “his right hand and his mighty arm” uses two ways of emphasizing God’s power and great strength. One way to translate this expression could be “his amazing strength and mighty power.” (See: [parallelism](#))
- The expression “their right hand is falsehood” could be translated as, “even the most honorable thing about them is corrupted by lies” or “their place of honor is corrupted by deception” or “they use lies to make themselves powerful.”

(See also: [accuse](#), [evil](#), [honor](#), [mighty](#), [punish](#), [rebel](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 02:32-33](#)
- [Colossians 03:1-4](#)
- [Galatians 02:9-10](#)
- [Genesis 48:14-16](#)
- [Hebrews 10:11-14](#)
- [Lamentations 02:3-4](#)

- [Matthew 25:31-33](#)
- [Matthew 26:62-64](#)
- [Psalms 044:3-4](#)
- [Revelation 02:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3225, H3231, H3233, G1188

Uses:

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

righteous, righteousness

Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good
- Sometimes “the righteous” was used figuratively and referred to “people who think they are good” or “people who seem to be righteous.”

(See also: [good](#), [holy](#), [evil](#), [just](#), [faithful](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:8-10](#)
- [2 Timothy 03:16-17](#)
- [Acts 03:13-14](#)
- [Ezekiel 33:12-13](#)
- [Galatians 03:6-9](#)
- [Isaiah 48:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 06:1-2](#)
- [Psalms 037:28-30](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **03:02** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **04:08** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:02** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:01** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3072, H3477, H4334, H4339, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, G1341, G1342, G1343, G1344, G1345, G1346, G2118

Uses:

- **Lamentations 1:18-19**
- **Lamentations 4:12-13**

rod

Definition:

The term “rod” refers to a narrow, solid, stick-like tool that was used in several different ways. It was probably at least a meter in length.

- A wooden rod was used by a shepherd to defend the sheep from other animals. It was also thrown toward a wandering sheep to bring it back to the the flock.
- In Psalm 23, King David used the terms “rod” and “staff” as metaphors to refer to God’s guidance and discipline for his people.
- A shepherd’s rod was also used to count the sheep as they passed under it.
- Another metaphorical expression, “rod of iron,” refers to God’s punishment for people who rebel against him and do evil things.
- In ancient times, measuring rods made of metal, wood, or stone were used to measure the length of a building or object.
- In the Bible, a wooden rod was also referred to as an instrument to discipline children.

(See also: staff, [sheep](#), shepherd)

Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 04:19-21](#)
- [1 Samuel 14:43-44](#)
- [Acts 16:22-24](#)
- [Exodus 27:9-10](#)
- [Revelation 11:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

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

ruler, rule

Definition:

The term “ruler” is a general reference to a person who has authority over other people, such as a leader of a country, kingdom, or religious group. A ruler is one who “rules,” and his authority is his “rule.”

- In the Old Testament, a king was sometimes referred to generally as a “ruler,” as in the phrase “appointed him ruler over Israel.”
- God was referred to as the ultimate ruler, who rules over all other rulers.
- In the New Testament, the leader of a synagogue was called a “ruler.”
- Another type of ruler in the New Testament was a “governor.”
- Depending on the context, “ruler” could be translated as “leader” or “person who has authority over.”
- The action “to rule” means to “lead” to “have authority over.” It means the same thing as “reign” when it refers to the ruling of a king.

(See also: authority, governor, [king](#), synagogue)

Bible References:

- [Acts 03:17-18](#)
- [Acts 07:35-37](#)
- [Luke 12:11-12](#)
- [Luke 23:35](#)
- [Mark 10:41-42](#)
- [Matthew 09:32-34](#)
- [Matthew 20:25-28](#)
- [Titus 03:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:8-10](#)

Sabbath

Definition:

The term “Sabbath” refers to the seventh day of the week, which God commanded the Israelites to set apart as a day of rest and doing no work.

- After God finished creating the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day. In the same way, God commanded the Israelites to set aside the seventh day as a special day to rest and worship him.
- The command to “keep the Sabbath holy” is one of the ten commandments that God wrote on the stone tablets that he gave Moses for the Israelites.
- Following the Jewish system of counting days, the Sabbath begins on Friday at sundown and lasts until Saturday at sundown.
- Sometimes in the Bible the Sabbath is called “Sabbath day” rather than only the Sabbath.

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “resting day” or “day for resting” or “day of not working” or “God’s day of rest.”
- Some translations capitalize this term to show that it is a special day, as in “Sabbath Day” or “Resting Day.”
- Consider how this term is translated in a local or national language.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: [rest](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:2-3
- [Acts 13:26-27](#)
- Exodus 31:12-15
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- [Lamentations 02:5-6](#)
- Leviticus 19:1-4
- [Luke 13:12-14](#)
- [Mark 02:27-28](#)
- [Matthew 12:1-2](#)
- Nehemiah 10:32-33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:05** “Always be sure to keep the **Sabbath day** holy. That is, do all your work in six days, for the seventh day is a day for you to rest and to honor me.”

- **26:02** Jesus went to the town of Nazareth where he had lived during his childhood. On the **Sabbath**, he went to the place of worship.
- **41:03** The day after Jesus was buried was a **Sabbath** day, and the Jews were not permitted to go to the tomb on that day.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4868, H7676, H7677, G4315, G4521

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:5-6**

sackcloth

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

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

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:10](#)

salvation

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: [save](#), Savior)

Bible References:

- [Acts 04:11-12](#)
- [Acts 28:28](#)
- [Ephesians 06:17-18](#)
- [Genesis 49:16-18](#)
- [Luke 02:30-32](#)
- [Philippians 01:28-30](#)
- [Revelation 19:1-2](#)
- [Romans 01:16-17](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H8668, G4991, G4992

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:25-29](#)

sanctuary

Definition:

The term “sanctuary” literally means “holy place” and refers to a place that God has made sacred and holy. It also can refer to a place that provides protection and safety.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sanctuary” was often used to refer to the tabernacle or temple building where the “holy place” and “most holy place” were located.
- God referred to the sanctuary as the place where he lived among his people, the Israelites.
- He also called himself a “sanctuary” or safe place for his people where they can find protection.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term has a basic meaning of “holy place” or “place that is set apart.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sanctuary” could be translated as “holy place” or “sacred building” or “God’s holy dwelling place” or “holy place of protection” or “sacred place of safety.”
- The phrase “shekel of the sanctuary” could be translated as “kind of shekel given for the tabernacle” or “shekel used in paying the tax to take care of the temple.”
- Note: Be careful that the translation of this term does not refer to a worship room in a modern-day church.

(See also: [holy](#), Holy Spirit, sacred, set apart, [tabernacle](#), [tax](#), [temple](#),)

Bible References:

- [Amos 07:12-13](#)
- Exodus 25:3-7
- [Ezekiel 25:3-5](#)
- [Hebrews 08:1-2](#)
- [Luke 11:49-51](#)
- Numbers 18:1-2
- Psalms 078:67-69

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4720, H6944, G39

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:10](#)

- [Lamentations 2:7](#)
- [Lamentations 2:20](#)

save, saves, saved, safe

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”

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

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 01:15-17](#)
- [Acts 02:20-21](#)
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- [Luke 08:36-37](#)
- [Micah 06:3-5](#)
- Psalm 080:1-3
- [Romans 10:8-10](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:08** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:02** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:05** Moses told the Israelites, “Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you.”
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.

- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:08** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be **saved**?" Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**."
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- **Lamentations 3:58-61**

servant, slave, slavery

Definition:

The word for “servant” can also mean “slave” and refers to a person who works for another person, either by choice or by force. The surrounding text usually makes it clear whether a person is a servant or a slave.

- In Bible times, there was less of a difference between a servant and a slave than there is today. Both servants and slaves were an important part of their master’s household and many were treated almost like members of the family. Sometimes a servant would choose to become a lifetime servant to his master.
- A slave 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 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.
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God were often referred to as his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- Christians are also called “slaves to righteousness,” which is a metaphor that compares the commitment to obey God to a slave’s commitment to obey his master.

(See: [Metaphor](#))

(See also: [commit](#), [enslave](#), [household](#), [lord](#), [obey](#), [righteous](#), [serve](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 04:29-31](#)
- [Acts 10:7-8](#)
- [Colossians 01:7-8](#)
- [Colossians 03:22-25](#)
- [Genesis 21:10-11](#)
- [Luke 12:47-48](#)
- [Mark 09:33-35](#)
- [Matthew 10:24-25](#)
- [Matthew 13:27-28](#)

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:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 5:8-10](#)

sheep, ram, ewe

Definition:

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. A male sheep is called a “ram.” A female sheep is called a “ewe.” The plural of “sheep” is also “sheep.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially male sheep and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: [Israel](#), lamb, sacrifice, shepherd)

Bible References:

- [Acts 08:32-33](#)
- [Genesis 30:31-32](#)
- [John 02:13-14](#)
- [Luke 15:3-5](#)
- [Mark 06:33-34](#)
- [Matthew 09:35-36](#)
- [Matthew 10:5-7](#)
- [Matthew 12:11-12](#)
- [Matthew 25:31-33](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:12** One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- **17:02** David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father’s **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- **30:03** To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.
- **38:08** Jesus said, “All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.’”

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

siege, besiege, besieged, besieger

Definition:

A “siege” occurs when an attacking army surrounds a city and keeps it from receiving any supplies of food and water. To “besiege” a city or to put it “under siege” means to attack it by means of a siege.

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 20:1
- 1 Kings 20:1-3
- 1 Samuel 11:1-2
- Jeremiah 33:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- **Lamentations 3:5-8**

silver

Definition:

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

- The various containers that are made include silver cups and bowls, and other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, a shekel was a unit of weight, and a purchase was often priced at a certain number of shekels of silver. By New Testament times there were silver coins of various weights that were measured in shekels.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 02:36
- 2 Kings 25:13-15
- [Acts 03:4-6](#)
- [Matthew 26:14-16](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:1-4](#)

sin, sins, sinned, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: disobey, [evil](#), [flesh](#), tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 09:1-3

- 1 John 01:8-10
- 1 John 02:1-3
- 2 Samuel 07:12-14
- Acts 03:19-20
- Daniel 09:24-25
- Genesis 04:6-7
- Hebrews 12:1-3
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- Jeremiah 18:21-23
- Leviticus 04:13-15
- Luke 15:17-19
- Matthew 12:31-32
- Romans 06:22-23
- Romans 08:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

Word Data:

- Strong's: H817, H819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G264, G265, G266, G268, G361, G3781, G3900, G4258

Uses:

- Introduction to Lamentations
- Lamentations 01 General Notes
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 4:12-13
- Lamentations 4:21-22
- Lamentations 05 General Notes
- Lamentations 5:5-7
- Lamentations 5:15-16

slaughter

Definition:

The term “slaughter” refers to killing a large number of animals or people, or to killing in a violent way. It can also refer to killing an animal for the purpose of eating it. The act of slaughtering is also called “slaughter.”

- When Abraham received three visitors at his tent in the desert, he ordered his servants to slaughter and cook a calf for his guests.
- The prophet Ezekiel prophesied that God would send his angel to slaughter all those who would not follow His word.
- 1 Samuel records a great slaughter in which 30,000 Israelites were killed by their enemies because of disobedience to God.
- “Weapons of slaughter” could be translated as “weapons for killing.”
- The expression “the slaughter was very great” could be translated as “a large number were killed” or “the number of deaths was very great” or “a terribly high number of people died.”
- Other ways to translate “slaughter” could include “kill” or “slay” or “killing.”

(See also: angel, cow, disobey, Ezekiel, [servant](#), slay)

Bible References:

- [Ezekiel 21:10-11](#)
- [Hebrews 07:1-3](#)
- Isaiah 34:1-2
- Jeremiah 25:34-36

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 2:20](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)

snow

Facts:

The term “snow” refers to white flakes of frozen water that can fall from clouds in places where the air temperature is cold.

- Snow falls in places of higher elevation in Israel, but does not always stay on the ground very long before melting. The peaks of mountains tend to have snow that lasts longer. One example of a place mentioned in the Bible as having snow is Mount Lebanon.
- Something that is very white often has its color compared to the color of snow. For example, in the book of Revelation Jesus’ clothing and hair were described as being “white as snow.”
- The whiteness of snow also symbolizes purity and cleanliness. For example, the statement that our “sins will be as white as snow” means that God will completely cleanse his people from their sins.
- Some languages might refer to snow as “frozen rain” or “flakes of ice” or “frozen flakes.”
- “Snow water” refers to the water that comes from melted snow.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

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

(See also: Lebanon, [pure](#))

Bible References:

- Exodus 04:6-7
- Job 37:4-6
- [Matthew 28:3-4](#)
- Psalms 147:15-16
- [Revelation 01:14-16](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:7-8](#)

Sodom

Definition:

Sodom was a city in the southern part of Canaan where Abraham's nephew Lot lived with his wife and children.

- The land of the region surrounding Sodom was very well watered and fertile, so Lot chose to live there when he first settled in Canaan.
- The exact location of this city is not known because Sodom and the nearby city of Gomorrah were completely destroyed by God as punishment for the evil things the people there were doing.
- The most significant sin that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were practicing was homosexuality.

(See also: Canaan, Gomorrah)

Bible References:

- Genesis 10:19-20
- Genesis 13:12-13
- [Matthew 10:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 11:23-24](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:6](#)

soul, souls

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: spirit)

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:16-18](#)

strength, strengthen

Facts:

The term “strength” refers to physical, emotional, or spiritual power. To “strengthen” someone or something means to make that person or object stronger.

- “Strength” can also refer to the power to withstand some kind of opposing force.
- A person has “strength of will” if he is able to avoid sinning when tempted.
- One writer of the Psalms called Yahweh his “strength” because God helped him to be strong.
- If a physical structure like a wall or building is being “strengthened,” people are rebuilding the structure, reinforcing it with more stones or brick so that it can withstand an attack.

Translation Suggestions

- In general, the term “strengthen” can be translated as “cause to be strong” or “make more powerful.”
- In a spiritual sense, the phrase “strengthen your brothers” could also be translated as “encourage your brothers” or “help your brothers to persevere.”
- The following examples show the meaning of these terms, and therefore how they can be translated, when they are included in longer expressions.
- “puts strength on me like a belt” means “causes me to be completely strong, like a belt that completely surrounds my waist.”
- “in quietness and trust will be your strength” means “acting calmly and trusting in God will make you spiritually strong.”
- “will renew their strength” means “will become stronger again.”
- “by my strength and by my wisdom I acted” means “I have done all this because I am so strong and wise.”
- “strengthen the wall” means “reinforce the wall” or “rebuild the wall.”
- “I will strengthen you” means “I will cause you to be strong”
- “in Yahweh alone are salvation and strength” means “Yahweh is the only one who saves us and strengthens us.”
- “the rock of your strength” means “the faithful one who makes you strong”
- “with the saving strength of his right hand” means “he strongly rescues you from trouble like someone who holds you safely with his strong hand.”
- “of little strength” means “not very strong” or “weak.”
- “with all my strength” means “using my best efforts” or “strongly and completely.”

(See also: [faithful](#), [persevere](#), [right hand](#), [salvation](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:19-21
- [2 Peter 02:10-11](#)

- [Luke 10:25-28](#)
- [Psalm 021:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:17](#)

stronghold, fortress, fortified

Definition:

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

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

(See also: [false god](#), idol, refuge, [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- [2 Corinthians 10:3-4](#)
- [2 Kings 08:10-12](#)
- [2 Samuel 05:8-10](#)
- [Acts 21:34-36](#)
- [Habakkuk 01:10-11](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

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

sword

Definition:

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

- In ancient times the length of a sword's blade was about 60 to 91 centimeters.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called "double-edged" or "two-edged" swords.
- Jesus' disciples had swords for self defense. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

Translation Suggestions

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

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: James (brother of Jesus), John (the Baptist), tongue, word of God)

Bible References:

- [Acts 12:1-2](#)
- [Genesis 27:39-40](#)
- [Genesis 34:24-26](#)
- [Luke 02:33-35](#)
- [Luke 21:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 10:34-36](#)
- [Matthew 26:55-56](#)
- [Revelation 01:14-16](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 5:8-10

tabernacle

Definition:

The tabernacle was a special tent-like structure where the Israelites worshiped God during the 40 years they traveled around in the desert.

- God had given the Israelites detailed instructions for building this large tent, which had two rooms and was surrounded by an enclosed courtyard.
- Each time the Israelites moved to a different place in the desert to live, the priests would take the tabernacle apart and carry it to their next campsite. Then they would set it up again in the center of their new camp.
- The tabernacle was constructed of wood frames hung with curtains made of cloth, goat hair, and animal skins. The courtyard surrounding it was enclosed with more curtains.
- The two sections of the tabernacle were the Holy Place (where the altar for burning incense was located) and the Most Holy Place (where the ark of the covenant was kept).
- The courtyard of the tabernacle had an altar for burning animal sacrifices and a special washbasin for ritual cleansing.
- The Israelites stopped using the tabernacle when the temple was built in Jerusalem by Solomon.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “tabernacle” means “dwelling place.” Other ways to translate it could include, “sacred tent” or “tent where God was” or “God’s tent.”
- Make sure that the translation of this term is different from the translation of “temple.”

(See also: [altar](#), altar of incense, ark of the covenant, [temple](#), tent of meeting)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:28-30
- 2 Chronicles 01:2-5
- [Acts 07:43](#)
- [Acts 07:44-46](#)
- Exodus 38:21-23
- Joshua 22:19-20
- Leviticus 10:16-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H168, H4908, H5520, H5521, H5522, H7900, G4633, G4634, G4636, G4638

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)

temple

Facts:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

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

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

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

Word Data:

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

Uses:

- [Lamentations 01 General Notes](#)

tent

Definition:

A tent is a portable shelter made of sturdy fabric that is draped over a structure of poles and attached to them.

- Tents can be small, with just enough space for a few people to sleep in, or they can be very large, with space for an entire family to sleep, cook, and live in.
- For many people, tents are used as permanent dwelling places. For example, during most of the time that Abraham's family lived in the land of Canaan, they dwelled in large tents constructed from sturdy cloth made of goat hair.
- The Israelites also lived in tents during their forty-year wanderings through the desert of Sinai.
- The tabernacle building was a kind of very large tent, with thick walls made of cloth curtains.
- When the apostle Paul traveled to different cities to share the gospel, he supported himself by making tents.
- The term "tents" is sometimes used figuratively to refer generally to where people live. This could also be translated as "homes" or "dwellings" or "houses" or even "bodies." (See: [synecdoche](#))

(See also: Abraham, Canaan, curtain, Paul, Sinai, [tabernacle](#), tent of meeting)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 05:10
- [Daniel 11:44-45](#)
- Exodus 16:16-18
- Genesis 12:8-9

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

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

terror, terrify

Definition:

The term “terror” refers to a feeling of extreme fear. To “terrify” someone means to cause that person to feel very afraid.

- A “terror” is something or someone that causes great fear or dread. An example of a terror could be an attacking enemy army or a plague or disease that is widespread, killing many people.
- These terrors can be described as “terrifying.” This term could be translated as, “fear-causing” or “terror-producing.”
- The judgment of God will someday cause terror in unrepentant people who reject his grace.
- The “terror of Yahweh” could be translated as “the terrifying presence of Yahweh” or “the dreaded judgment of Yahweh” or “when Yahweh causes great fear.”
- Ways to translate “terror” could also include “extreme fear” or “deep dread.”

(See also: [adversary](#), [fear](#), [judge](#), [plague](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 02:24-25
- Exodus 14:10-12
- [Luke 21:7-9](#)
- [Mark 06:48-50](#)
- [Matthew 28:5-7](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)

test, tests, tested

Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “to test” could also be translated as, “to challenge” or “to cause to experience difficulties” or “to prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as “to test” or “to set up a challenge” or “to force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as, “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: tempt)

Bible References:

- [1 John 04:1-3](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 05:19-22](#)
- [Acts 15:10-11](#)
- [Genesis 22:1-3](#)
- [Isaiah 07:13-15](#)
- [James 01:12-13](#)
- [Lamentations 03:40-43](#)
- [Malachi 03:10-12](#)
- [Philippians 01:9-11](#)
- [Psalm 026:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G1242, G1263, G1303, G1957, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3143, G4303, G4828, G6020

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:40-43](#)

testimony, testify

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.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as, “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as, “to show them what is true” or “to prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as, “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, [prophet](#), [witness](#))

Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 01:8-11](#)
- [3 John 01:11-12](#)
- [Acts 04:32-33](#)
- [Acts 07:44-46](#)
- [John 03:31-33](#)
- [Mark 01:43-44](#)
- [Matthew 26:59-61](#)
- [Micah 06:3-5](#)
- [Revelation 12:11-12](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G1263, G1957, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3143, G4303, G4828, G6020

throne

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

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

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

to bear

Facts:

The term “to bear” literally means “to carry” something. There are also many figurative uses of this term.

- When speaking of a woman who will bear a child, this means “give birth to” a child.
- To “bear a burden” means to “experience difficult things.” These difficult things could include physical or emotional suffering.
- A common expression in the Bible is “bear fruit” which means “produce fruit” or “have fruit.”
- The expression “bear witness” means to “testify” or to “report what one has seen or experienced.”
- The statement that “a son will not bear the iniquity of his father” means that he “will not be held responsible for” or “will not be punished for” his father’s sins.
- In general, this term could be translated as “to carry” or “to be responsible for” or “to produce” or “to have” or “to endure,” depending on the context.

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

(See also: [burden](#), [Elisha](#), [endure](#), [fruit](#), [iniquity](#), [report](#), [sheep](#), [strength](#), [testimony](#), [witness](#))

Bible References:

- [Lamentations 03:25-29](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H3201, H3205, H5187, H5375, H5445, H5449, H6030, H6509, H6779, G142, G399, G430, G503, G941, G1080, G1627, G2592, G3114, G3140, G4064, G4160, G4722, G4828, G4901, G5041, G5088, G5297, G5342, G5409, G5576

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:25-29](#)

torment

Facts:

The term “torment” refers to terrible suffering. To torment someone means to cause that person to suffer, often in a cruel way.

- Sometimes the term “torment” refers to physical pain and suffering. For example, the book of Revelation describes physical torment that worshipers of the “beast” will suffer in the end times.
- Suffering may also take the form of spiritual and emotional pain, as experienced by Job.
- The apostle John wrote in the book of Revelation that people who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior will experience eternal torment in the lake of fire.
- This term could be translated as “terrible suffering” or “cause someone to suffer greatly” or “agony.” Some translators may add “physical” or “spiritual” to make the meaning clear.

(See also: beast, everlasting, Job, Savior, spirit, suffer, worship)

Bible References:

- [2 Peter 02:7-9](#)
- [Jeremiah 30:20-22](#)
- [Lamentations 01:11-12](#)
- [Luke 08:28-29](#)
- [Revelation 11:10-12](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 1:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:30-33](#)

transgress, transgresses, transgression

Definition:

The term “transgression” refers to the breaking of a command, rule, or moral code. To “transgress” is to commit a “transgression.”

- Figuratively, “to transgress” can also be described as “to cross a line,” that is, to go beyond a limit or boundary that has been set for the good of the person and others.
- The terms “transgression,” “sin,” “iniquity,” and “trespass” all include the meaning of acting against God’s will and disobeying his commands.

Translation Suggestions:

- “To transgress” could be translated as “to sin” or “to disobey” or “to rebel.”
- If a verse or passage uses two terms that mean “sin” or “transgress” or “trespass,” it is important, if possible, to use different ways to translate these terms. When the Bible uses two or more terms with similar meanings in the same context, usually its purpose is to emphasize what is being said or to show its importance.

(See: [parallelism](#))

(See also: [sin](#), [trespass](#), [iniquity](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 04:3-6](#)
- [Daniel 09:24-25](#)
- [Galatians 03:19-20](#)
- [Galatians 06:1-2](#)
- [Numbers 14:17-19](#)
- [Psalm 032:1-2](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H898, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G458, G459, G3845, G3847, G3848, G3928

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 1:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:40-43](#)

trial

Definition:

The term “trial” refers to a situation in which something or someone is “tried” or tested.

- A trial can be a judicial hearing in which evidence is given to prove whether a person is innocent or guilty of wrongdoing.
- The term “trial” can also refer to difficult circumstances that a person goes through as God tests their faith. Another word for this is “a testing” or “a temptation” is one particular type of trial.
- Many people in the Bible were tested to see if they would continue to believe and obey God. They went through trials which included being beaten, imprisoned, or even killed because of their faith.

(See also: tempt, [test](#), innocent, guilt)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 04:34
- [Ezekiel 21:12-13](#)
- [Lamentations 03:58-61](#)
- Proverbs 25:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:58-61](#)

turn, turn away, turn back

Definition:

To “turn” means to physically change direction or to cause something else to change direction.

- The term “turn” can also mean “turn around” to look behind or to face a different direction.
- To “turn back” or “turn away” means to “go back” or “go away” or “cause to go away.”
- To “turn away from” can mean to “stop” doing something or to reject someone.
- To “turn toward” someone means to look directly at that person.
- To “turn and leave” or “turn his back to leave” means to “go away.”
- To “turn back to” means to “start doing something again.”
- To “turn away from” means to “stop doing something.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “turn” can be translated as “change direction” or “go” or “move.”
- In some contexts, “turn” could be translated as “cause” (someone) to do something. To “turn (someone) away from” could be translated as “cause (someone) to go away” or “cause (someone) to stop.”
- The phrase “turn away from God” could be translated as “stop worshiping God.”
- The phrase “turn back to God” could be translated as “start worshiping God again.”
- When enemies “turn back,” it means they “retreat.” To “turn back the enemy” means to “cause the enemy to retreat.”
- Used figuratively, when Israel “turned to” false gods, they “started to worship” them. When they “turned away” from idols, they “stopped worshiping” them.
- When God “turned away from” his rebellious people, he “stopped protecting” or “stopped helping” them.
- The phrase “turn the hearts of the fathers to their children” could be translated as “cause fathers to care for their children again.”
- The expression “turn my honor into shame” could be translated as “cause my honor to become shame” or “dishonor me so that I am shamed” or “shame me (by doing what is evil) so that people no longer honor me.”
- “I will turn your cities into ruin” could be translated as “I will cause your cities to be destroyed” or “I will cause enemies to destroy your cities.”
- The phrase “turn into” could be translated as “become.” When Moses’ rod “turned into” a snake, it “became” a snake.” It could also be translated as “changed into.”

(See also: idol, leprosy, worship)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 11:1-2
- [Acts 07:41-42](#)

- Acts 11:19-21
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 01:16-17
- Malachi 04:4-6
- Revelation 11:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H541, H1750, H2015, H2015, H2017, H2186, H2559, H3399, H3943, H3943, H4142, H4672, H4740, H4878, H4878, H5186, H5186, H5253, H5414, H5437, H5437, H5472, H5472, H5493, H5493, H5528, H5627, H5753, H5844, H6437, H6437, H6801, H7227, H7725, H7725, H7734, H7750, H7760, H7847, H8159, H8447, H8447, G344, G387, G387, G402, G576, G654, G654, G665, G868, G1294, G1294, G1578, G1612, G1624, G1624, G1994, G1994, G2827, G3179, G3179, G3313, G3329, G3344, G3344, G3346, G3346, G4762, G4762, G5077, G5157, G5290, G6060

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:13-14

unclean

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “unclean” is used figuratively to refer to things that God declared to be unfit for his people to touch, eat, or sacrifice.

- God gave the Israelites instructions about which animals were “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” The unclean animals were not permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice.
- People with certain skin diseases were said to be “unclean” until they were healed.
- If the Israelites touched something “unclean,” they themselves would be considered unclean for a certain period of time.
- Obeying God’s commands about not touching or eating unclean things kept the Israelites set apart for God’s service.
- This physical and ritual uncleanness was also symbolic of moral uncleanness.
- In another figurative sense, an “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “unclean” could also be translated as “not clean” or “unfit in God’s eyes” or “physically unclean” or “defiled.”
- When referring to a demon as an unclean spirit, “unclean” could be translated as “evil” or “defiled.”
- The translation of this term should allow for spiritual uncleanness. It should be able to refer to anything that God declared as unfit for touching, eating, or sacrifice.

(See also: clean, [defile](#), demon, [holy](#), sacrifice, unholy)

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 04:7-8](#)
- [Acts 08:6-8](#)
- [Acts 10:27-29](#)
- [Colossians 03:5-8](#)
- [Genesis 07:1-3](#)
- [Matthew 23:27-28](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2930, H2931, H2932, H5079, H6172, H6945, H7137, G167, G169, G2839, G2840, G3394

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 4:14-15

unfaithful, unfaithfulness

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: adultery, disobey, [faithful](#), unbeliever)

Bible References:

- [Hosea 05:5-7](#)
- [Jeremiah 09:7-9](#)
- [Judges 02:16-17](#)
- [Leviticus 26:40-42](#)
- [Luke 12:45-46](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H898

Uses:

- [Introduction to Lamentations](#)

virgin

Definition:

A virgin is a woman who has never had sexual relations.

- The prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- Mary was a virgin when she was pregnant with Jesus. He did not have a human father.
- Some languages may have a term that is a polite way of referring to a virgin. (See: [Euphemism](#))

(See also: Christ, Isaiah, Jesus, Mary)

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:15-16
- [Luke 01:26-29](#)
- [Luke 01:34-35](#)
- [Matthew 01:22-23](#)
- [Matthew 25:1-4](#)

Examples from the Bible stories:

***21:09** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a **virgin**. ***22:04** She (Mary) was a **virgin** and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. ***22:05** Mary replied, "How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?" ***49:01** An angel told a **virgin** named Mary that she would give birth to God's Son. So while she was still a **virgin**, she gave birth to a son and named him Jesus.

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 1:15](#)
- [Lamentations 1:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 2:10](#)
- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 5:11-12](#)

vision

Facts:

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

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

Translation Suggestion

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

(See also: dream)

Bible References:

- [Acts 09:10-12](#)
- [Acts 10:3-6](#)
- [Acts 10:9-12](#)
- [Acts 12:9-10](#)
- [Luke 01:21-23](#)
- [Luke 24:22-24](#)
- [Matthew 17:9-10](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)

voice

Definition:

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

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

(See also: [call](#), [proclaim](#), splendor)

Bible References:

- [John 05:36-38](#)
- [Luke 01:42-45](#)
- [Luke 09:34-36](#)
- [Matthew 03:16-17](#)
- [Matthew 12:19-21](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:55-57](#)

walk, walks, walked, walking

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as, “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, [honor](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 01:5-7](#)
- [1 Kings 02:1-4](#)
- [Colossians 02:6-7](#)
- [Galatians 05:25-26](#)
- [Genesis 17:1-2](#)
- [Isaiah 02:5-6](#)
- [Jeremiah 13:8-11](#)
- [Micah 04:2-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1869, H1979, H1980, H1981, H3212, H4108, H4109, G1330, G1704, G3716, G4043, G4198, G4748

Uses:

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

watch, watchman

Definition:

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 05:4-7](#)
- [Hebrews 13:15-17](#)
- [Jeremiah 31:4-6](#)
- [Mark 08:14-15](#)
- [Mark 13:33-34](#)
- [Matthew 25:10-13](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 4:16](#)

well, cistern

Definition:

The terms “well” and “cistern” refer to two different kinds of sources for water in Bible times.

- A well is a deep hole dug into the ground so that underground water can flow into it.
- A cistern is a deep hole dug into rock that was used as a holding tank for collecting rain water.
- Cisterns were usually dug into rock and sealed with plaster to keep the water in. A “broken cistern” happened when the plaster became cracked so that the water leaked out.
- Cisterns were often located in the courtyard area of people’s homes to catch the rainwater that would run off the roof.
- Wells were often located where they could be accessed by several families or a whole community.
- Because water was very important for both people and livestock, the right to use a well was often a cause of strife and conflict.
- Both wells and cisterns were usually covered with a large stone to prevent anything falling in it. Often there was a rope with a bucket or pot attached to it to bring the water up to the surface.
- Sometimes a dry cistern was used as a place to imprison someone, such as happened to Joseph and Jeremiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “well” could include “deep water hole” or “deep hole for spring water” or “deep hole for drawing water.”
- The term “cistern” could be translated as “stone water pit” or “deep and narrow pit for water” or “underground tank for holding water.”
- These terms are similar in meaning. The main difference is that a well continually receives water from underground springs, whereas a cistern is a holding tank for water that usually comes from rain.

(See also: Jeremiah, [prison](#), strife)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:15-17
- 2 Samuel 17:17-18
- Genesis 16:13-14
- [Luke 14:4-6](#)
- Numbers 20:17

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 3:51-54](#)

wine, wineskin, new wine

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “wine” refers to a kind of fermented drink made from the juice of a fruit called grapes. Wine was stored in “wineskins,” which were containers made out of animal skin.

- The term “new wine” referred to grape juice that had just been taken from the grape and was not fermented yet. Sometimes the term “wine” also referred to unfermented grape juice.
- To make wine, grapes are crushed in a winepress so that the juice comes out. The juice eventually ferments and alcohol forms in it.
- In Bible times, wine was the normal drink with meals. It did not have as much alcohol as present-day wine has.
- Before wine was served for a meal, it was often mixed with water.
- A wineskin that was old and brittle would get cracks in it, which allowed the wine to leak out. New wineskins were soft and flexible, which meant they did not tear easily and could store the wine safely.
- If wine is unknown in your culture, it could be translated as “fermented grape juice” or “fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes” or “fermented fruit juice.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- Ways to translate “wineskin” could include “bag for wine” or “animal skin wine bag” or “animal skin container for wine.”

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

Bible References:

- [1 Timothy 05:23-25](#)
- [Genesis 09:20-21](#)
- [Genesis 49:11-12](#)
- [John 02:3-5](#)
- [John 02:9-10](#)
- [Matthew 09:17](#)
- [Matthew 11:18-19](#)

smashed

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:11-12](#)

winepress

Definition:

During Bible times, a “winepress” was a large container or open place where the juice of grapes was extracted in order to make wine.

- In Israel, winepresses were usually large, wide basins that were dug out of solid rock. Clusters of grapes were put on the flat bottom of the hole and people trampled the grapes with their feet to get the grape juice to flow out.
- Usually a winepress had two levels, with the grapes being trampled in the top level so that the juice would run down into the lower level where it could be collected.
- The term “winepress” is also used figuratively in the Bible as a picture of God’s wrath being poured out on wicked people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

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

Bible References:

- Isaiah 63:1-2
- [Mark 12:1-3](#)
- [Matthew 21:33-34](#)
- [Revelation 14:19-20](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:15](#)

witness, witnesses, eyewitness, eyewitnesses

Definition:

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 “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- “To witness to” could be translated as “to tell what was seen” or “to testify” or “to state what happened.”
- “To witness” something could be translated as “to see something” or “to experience something happen.”

(See also: [guilt](#), [judge](#), [true](#), [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- [1 John 05:6-8](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 02:10-12](#)
- [1 Timothy 05:19-20](#)
- [2 Peter 01:16-18](#)
- [Acts 13:30-31](#)
- [Deuteronomy 31:27-29](#)
- [John 01:6-8](#)
- [Romans 01:8-10](#)

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, G267, G1263, G2649, G3140, G3141, G3142, G3144, G4828, G4901, G5575, G5576, G5577

woe**Definition:**

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

- [Ezekiel 13:17-18](#)
- [Habakkuk 02:12-14](#)
- [Isaiah 31:1-2](#)
- [Jeremiah 45:1-3](#)
- [Jude 01:9-11](#)
- [Luke 06:24-25](#)
- [Luke 17:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 23:23-24](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H188, H190, H337, H480, H1929, H1945, H1958, G3759

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:15-16](#)

word, words

Definition:

A “word” refers to something that someone has said.

- An example of this would be when the angel told Zechariah, “You did not believe my words,” which means, “You did not believe what I said.”
- This term almost always refers to an entire message, not just one word.
- Sometimes “word” refers to speech in general, such as “powerful in word and deed” which means “powerful in speech and behavior.”
- Often in the Bible “the word” refers to everything God has said or commanded, as in “the word of God” or “the word of truth.”
- A very special use of this term is when Jesus is called “the Word.” For these last two meanings, see word of God

Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways of translating “word” or “words” include “teaching” or “message” or “news” or “a saying” or “what was said.”

(See also: word of God)

Bible References:

- [2 Timothy 04:1-2](#)
- [Acts 08:4-5](#)
- [Colossians 04:2-4](#)
- [James 01:17-18](#)
- [Jeremiah 27:1-4](#)
- [John 01:1-3](#)
- [John 01:14-15](#)
- [Luke 08:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 02:7-8](#)
- [Matthew 07:26-27](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H561, H562, H565, H1697, H1703, H3983, H4405, H4406, H6310, H6600, G518, G1024, G3050, G3054, G3055, G3056, G4086, G4487, G4935, G5023, G5542

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:17](#)

worthy, worth, unworthy, worthless

Definition:

The term “worthy” describes someone or something that deserves respect or honor. To “have worth” means to be valuable or important. The term “worthless” means to not have any value.

- Being worthy is related to being valuable or having importance
- To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any special notice.
- To not feel worthy means to feel less important than someone else or to not feel deserving of being treated with honor or kindness.
- The term “unworthy” and the term “worthless” have related, but different meanings. To be “unworthy” means to not be deserving of any honor or recognition. To be “worthless” means to not have any purpose or value.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Worthy” could be translated as “deserving” or “important” or “valuable.”
- The word “worth” could be translated as “value” or “importance.”
- The phrase “to have worth” could also be translated as “to be valuable” or “to be important.”
- The phrase “is worth more than” could be translated as “is more valuable than.”
- Depending on the context, the term, “unworthy” could also be translated as “unimportant” or “dishonorable” or “undeserving.”
- The term “worthless” could be translated as “with no value” or “with no purpose” or “worth nothing.”

(See also: [honor](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 22:3-4
- [2 Thessalonians 01:11-12](#)
- [Acts 13:23-25](#)
- [Acts 25:25-27](#)
- [Acts 26:30-32](#)
- [Colossians 01:9-10](#)
- Jeremiah 08:18-19
- [Mark 01:7-8](#)
- [Matthew 03:10-12](#)
- [Philippians 01:25-27](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H117, H639, H1929, H3644, H4242, H4373, H4392, H4592, H4941, H6994, H7939, G514, G515, G516, G2425, G2661, G2735

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 4:17-18

wrath, fury

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [judge](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 01:8-10](#)
- [1 Timothy 02:8-10](#)
- [Luke 03:7](#)
- [Luke 21:23-24](#)
- [Matthew 03:7-9](#)
- [Revelation 14:9-10](#)
- [Romans 01:18-19](#)
- [Romans 05:8-9](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's: H639, H2197, H2528, H2534, H2534, H2740, H2740, H3707, H3708, H5678, H7107, H7109, H7110, H7265, H7267, G2372, G3709, G3949, G3950

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:1-4](#)

Yahweh

Facts:

The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name that he revealed when he spoke to Moses at the burning bush.

- The name “Yahweh” comes from the word that means, “to be” or “to exist.”
- Possible meanings of “Yahweh” include, “he is” or “I am” or “the one who causes to be.”
- This name reveals that God has always lived and will continue to live forever. It also means that he is always present.
- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term “LORD” or “the LORD” to represent “Yahweh.” This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh’s name and started saying “Lord” every time the term “Yahweh” appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write “LORD” with all capital letters to show respect for God’s personal name and to distinguish it from “Lord” which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULB and UDB texts always translates this term as, “Yahweh,” as it literally occurs in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” does not ever occur in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even in quotes from the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.
- By adding the pronoun “I” or “me,” the ULB indicates to the reader that God is the speaker.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Yahweh” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “I am” or “living one” or “the one who is” or “he who is alive.”
- This term could also be written in a way that is similar to how “Yahweh” is spelled.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term “Yahweh” and instead use the traditional rendering, “LORD.” An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title “Lord.” Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish “LORD” as a name (Yahweh) from “Lord” as a title.
- It is best if possible to keep the name Yahweh where it literally occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places, to make the text more natural and clear.
- Introduce the quote with something like, “This is what Yahweh says.”

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

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

Bible References:

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

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:14** God said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **13:04** Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- **13:05** "Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God."
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:4-5

- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:17
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 3:1-4
- Lamentations 3:16-18
- Lamentations 3:25-29
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Lamentations 3:55-57
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 4:11
- Lamentations 4:16
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:19-22

yoke

Definition:

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

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

(See also: [bind](#), [burden](#), [oppress](#), [persecute](#), [servant](#))

Bible References:

- [Acts 15:10-11](#)
- [Galatians 05:1-2](#)
- [Genesis 27:39-40](#)
- [Isaiah 09:4-5](#)
- [Jeremiah 27:1-4](#)
- [Matthew 11:28-30](#)
- [Philippians 04:1-3](#)

Word Data:

- Strong's:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 3:25-29](#)

Zion, Mount Zion

Definition:

Originally, the term “Zion” or “Mount Zion” referred to a stronghold or fortress that King David captured from the Jebusites. Both these terms became other ways of referring to Jerusalem.

- Mount Zion and Mount Moriah were two of the hills that the city of Jerusalem was located on. Later, “Zion” and “Mount Zion” became used as general terms to refer to both of these mountains and to the city of Jerusalem. Sometimes they also referred to the temple that was located in Jerusalem. (See: [metonymy](#))
- David named Zion, or Jerusalem, the “City of David.” This is different from David’s hometown, Bethlehem, which was also called the City of David.
- The term “Zion” is used in other figurative ways, to refer to Israel or to God’s spiritual kingdom or to the new, heavenly Jerusalem that God will create.

(See also: Abraham, David, [Jerusalem](#), Bethlehem, Jebusites)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:4-6
- [Amos 01:1-2](#)
- Jeremiah 51:34-35
- Psalm 076:1-3
- [Romans 11:26-27](#)

Word Data:

- Strong’s:

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:4-5](#)
- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 2:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 4:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 4:11](#)
- [Lamentations 5:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 5:17-18](#)

translationAcademy

Abstract Nouns

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

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

Description

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

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

Reason this is a translation issue

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

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:3
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:7
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 3:22-24
- Lamentations 3:22-24
- Lamentations 3:25-29
- Lamentations 3:44-47
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 4:17-18
- Lamentations 4:21-22

Active or Passive

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

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

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

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

Description

Some languages have both active and passive forms of sentences.

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

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

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

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

Purposes for the passive

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

Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

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

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

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:20
- Lamentations 3:48-50
- Lamentations 4:4-5
- Lamentations 4:6
- Lamentations 4:6
- Lamentations 4:7-8
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:11-12
- Lamentations 5:11-12
- Lamentations 5:13-14

Apostrophe

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

Definition

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him.

Description

He does this to tell his listeners his message or feelings about that person or thing in a very strong way.

Reason this is a translation issue

Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to, or think that the speaker is crazy to talk to things or people who cannot hear.

Examples from the Bible

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

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

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. (Luke 13:34 ULB)

Jesus was expressing his feelings for the people of Jerusalem in front of his disciples and a group of Pharisees. By speaking directly to Jerusalem as though its people could hear him, Jesus showed how deeply he cared about them.

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "Altar, altar! This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.' " (1 Kings 13:2 ULB)

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

Translation Strategies

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

1. If this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells them his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells them his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him.
 - **He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "Altar, altar! This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.' "** (1 Kings 13:2 ULB)
 - He said this about the altar: "This is what Yahweh says about this altar. 'See, ... they will burn people's bones on it.' "
 - **Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on you** (2 Samuel 1:21 ULB)
 - As for these mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on them

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:18-19**

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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

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

Description

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

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

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

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

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

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
 - **Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:20 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.
 - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes to live in, and the birds of the sky have nests to live in, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."
 - **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.
 - ... it will be more tolerable for those cities Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked, at the day of judgment than for you
 - ◇ Or:
 - ... it will be more tolerable for those wicked cities Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you
 - **Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.** (Matthew 15:2 ULB) - Assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.
 - Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness when they eat.
2. If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.
 - **Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."** (Matthew 8:19, 20 ULB) - Implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, he would have to live like Jesus without a house.
 - Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live."
 - **it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you** (Matthew 11:22 ULB) - Implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.
 - At the day of judgment, God will punish Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked, less severely than he will punish you

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

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

- Lamentations 1:7
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:48-50
- Lamentations 3:51-54
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 4:7-8
- Lamentations 4:7-8
- Lamentations 4:17-18
- Lamentations 4:17-18
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:8-10
- Lamentations 5:13-14
- Lamentations 5:17-18

Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding

This page answers the question: *When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?*

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either distinguish the noun from other similar items, or they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

Some languages use a comma to mark the difference between making a distinction between similar items and giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that it is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to her sister who was very thankful.
 - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could **distinguish this sister** of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the sentence is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to her sister, who was very thankful.
 - This same phrase can be used give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about **how Mary’s sister responded** when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun **both** for distinguishing the noun from another similar item **and also** for giving more information about the noun. The translator must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun **only** for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, people who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples from the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items: These usually do not cause a problem in translation.

... The curtain is to separate the holy place from the most holy place. (Exodus 26:33 ULB)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to the woman who bore him. (Proverbs 17:25 ULB)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item: These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.

... for your righteous judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39 ULB)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgements from his unrighteous judgements, because all of his judgments are righteous.

Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son? - (Genesis 17:17-18 ULB)

The phrase “who is ninety years old” is the reason that Abraham did not think that Sarah could bear a son. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age, and he was not telling anyone something new about her age. He simply did not think that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

I will wipe away mankind whom I have created from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULB)

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. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are 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 that this is just added information. 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 ULB) - 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 ULB)
 - ... for your judgments are good because they are righteous.
 - **Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son?** (Genesis 17:17-18 ULB) - The phrase “who is ninety years old” is 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 ULB) - 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 that this is just added information.
 - **You are my Son, whom I love. I am pleased with you.** (Luke 3:22 ULB)
 - You are my Son. I love you and I am pleased with you.
 - Receiving my love, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 4:19-20](#)

Double Negatives

This page answers the question: *What are 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 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.”

A double negative occurs when a sentence has two words that each express the meaning of “not.”

It is not that we do not have authority... (2 Thessalonians 3:9 ULB)

And this better confidence did not happen without the taking of an oath, ... (Hebrews 7:20 ULB.)

Be sure of this—wicked people will not go unpunished (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The following Spanish sentence *No ví a nadie* is literally, “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” 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

... so that they may not be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14 ULB)

This means “so that they will be fruitful.”

All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULB)

By using a double negative, John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything.

Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

1. If the 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.”

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 ULB)
 - “For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”
 - **... so that they may not be unfruitful.** (Titus 3:14 ULB)
 - “... so that they may be fruitful.”
2. If the 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.”
 - **Be sure of this—wicked people will not go unpunished ...** (Proverbs 11:21 ULB)
 - “Be sure of this—wicked people will certainly be punished ...”
 - **All things were made through him and without him there was not one thing made that has been made.** (John 1:3 ULB)
 - “All things were made through him. He made absolutely everything that has been made.”

Uses:

- **Lamentations 2:8-9**

Doublet

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or very short phrases that mean the same thing or very close to the same thing and that are used together. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Often they are used to emphasize or intensify the idea expressed by the two words.

Reason this is a translation issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. In either case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

Examples from the Bible

King David was old and advanced in years. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

The underlined words mean the same thing. Together they mean that he was “very old.”

... he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself ... (1 Kings 2:32 ULB)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

This means that they had prepared “many false things to say.”

... as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any blemish—not even one.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using one. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate only one of the words.
 - **You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words** (Daniel 2:9 ULB)
 - "You have decided to prepare false things to say."
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."
 - **King David was old and advanced in years.** (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)
 - "King David was very old."
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.
 - **... a lamb without blemish and without spot...** (1 Peter 1:19 ULB) - English can emphasize this with "any" and "at all."
 - " ... a lamb without any blemish at all ..."

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 3:19-21
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Lamentations 3:44-47
- Lamentations 3:48-50
- Lamentations 4:12-13
- Lamentations 4:21-22

Ellipsis

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis?*

Description

Ellipsis is what happens when a speaker or writer leaves one or more words out of a sentence because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and fill in the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. The information that is omitted has usually already been stated in a preceding sentence or phrase.

... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5)

This is ellipsis because “sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause.

Reason this is a translation issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know what the missing information is if they do not use ellipsis in their language.

Examples from the Bible

... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” (Luke 18:40-41 ULB)

The man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox. (Psalm 29:6 ULB)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. He did not say that Yahweh makes Sirion skip like a young ox because he knew that his readers could fill in the information themselves.

Translation Strategies

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

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

- **... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.** (Psalm 1:5)
 - ... the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and sinners will not stand in the assembly of the righteous
- **... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.”** (Luke 18:40-41)
 - ... when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, I want you to heal me that I might receive my sight.”
- **He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6)
 - He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and he makes Sirion skip like a young ox.

Uses:

- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:11-12

Euphemism

This page answers the question: *What is a 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 ULB)

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 ULB)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he 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 ULB)

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 ULB) - 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 ULB)
 - 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 ULB)
 - "they found Saul and his sons dead on Mount Gilboa."

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 5:5-7](#)

Exclamations

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULB and UDB, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people say helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25 ULB)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULB)

Reason this is a translation issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

Examples from the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULB)

The word "Ah" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. Gideon said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULB)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33 ULB)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22 ULB)

Translation Strategies

1. If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”
2. Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
3. Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
4. Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.
5. If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”
 - **You worthless person!** (Matthew 5:22 ULB)
 - “You are such a worthless person!”
 - **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!** (Romans 11:33 ULB)
 - “Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God are so deep!”
2. Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. The word “wow” below shows that they were astonished. The expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.
 - **They were absolutely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”** (Mark 7:36 ULB)
 - “They were absolutely astonished, saying, “Wow! He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.” ”
 - **Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!** (Judges 6:22 ULB)
 - “**Oh no**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”
3. Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
 - **Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!** (Judges 6:22 ULB)
 - Lord Yahweh, what will happen to me? For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”
 - Help, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!
4. Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.
 - **How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering!** (Romans 11:33 ULB)
 - “His judgements are so unsearchable and his ways are far beyond discovering!”
5. If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

- **Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. Gideon said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!"** (Judges 6:22 ULB)
 - "Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. He was terrified and said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULB)

Uses:

- **Lamentations 4:1-2**

How to Translate Names

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

Description

The Bible has names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to. But sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULB)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness,” and also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2 ULB)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title, because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples from the Bible

You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites (Joshua 24:11 ULB)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beerlahairoi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

She named him Moses and said, “Because I drew him from the water.” (Exodus 2:11 ULB)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his death (Acts 8:1 ULB)

It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULB)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
5. Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

- **You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites** (Joshua 24:11 ULB)
 - You went over the Jordan River and came to the city of Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the tribe of the Amorites
 - **Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you."** (Luke 13:31 ULB)
 - Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because King Herod wants to kill you."
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
- **She named him Moses and said, "Because I drew him from the water."** (Exodus 2:11 ULB)
 - She named him Moses, which sounds like 'drawn out,' and said, "Because I drew him from the water."
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
- **... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi;** (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)
 - ... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Well of the Living One who sees me;
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called "Saul" before Acts 13 and "Paul" after Acts 13. You could translate his name as "Paul" all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.
- **... a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - ... a young man named Paul¹ The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]Most versions say Saul here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called Paul.
 - **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
 - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
5. Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write "Saul" where the source text has "Saul" and "Paul" where the source text has "Paul."
- **a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
 - a young man named Saul The footnote would look like:

- ◇ ^[1]This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.
- **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
 - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
- **It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue** (Acts 14:1 ULB)
 - It came about in Iconium that Paul¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue The footnote would look like:
 - ◇ ^[1]This is the man that was called Saul before Acts 13.

Uses:

- **Introduction to Lamentations**

Hyperbole and Generalization

This page answers the question: *What are hyperboles? What are generalizations?*

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something he means as completely true, as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement.

- It rains here every night.
- The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.
- The speaker means this as a generalization if he means that it rains here most nights.
- The speaker means this as a hyperbole if he wants to say 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.

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 ULB)

- This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.

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.

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 may have done this.

Even though 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.”

Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22 ULB)

- This generalization means that he had learned much of what the Egyptians knew and taught.

Reason this is a translation issue

1. Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is completely true.
2. If readers realize that a statement is not completely 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 Exaggeration

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

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

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

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

Examples of Generalization

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

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

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

This is a generalization. God's Spirit teaches us about all things that we need to know, not about everything that is possible to know.

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 ULB)

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 ULB)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the exaggeration 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 generalization, add a word like “most” or “almost” to show that the generalization is not exact.
4. For 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 ULB)
 - The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and a great number of troops.
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 ULB)
 - 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 generalization, add a word like “most” or “almost” to show that the generalization is not exact.
 - **The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.** (Mark 1:5 ULB)

- Almost all the country of Judea and almost all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”
 - Most of the country of Judea and most of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.”
4. For 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 ULB)
 - The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 3:12-15](#)
- [Lamentations 3:48-50](#)

Hypothetical Situations

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

“If the sun stopped shining...”, “What if the sun stopped shining...”, “Suppose the sun stopped shining...”, “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. These occur often in the Bible. We need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen, and that they will understand why the event was imagined.

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions are the phrase that start with “if.”)

- If he had known about the party, he would have come to it. (But he did not come.)
- If he knew about the party, he would be here. (But he is not here.)
- If he knew about the party, he would come to it. (But he probably will not come.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason this is a translation issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples from the Bible

1. Hypothetical situations in the past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULB)

Here in Matthew 11:21 Jesus said that if the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles and repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” (John 11:21 ULB)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus had come sooner. But Jesus did not come sooner, and her brother did die.

1. Hypothetical situations in the present

Also, no man puts new wine into old wineskins. If he did that, the new wine would burst the skins, and the wine would be spilled, and the wineskins would be destroyed. (Luke 5:37 ULB)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out? (Matthew 12:11 ULB)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

1. Hypothetical situation in the future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULB)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show about how bad those days will be - so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble, so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

1. Expressing emotion about a hypothetical situation

Regrets and wishes are very similar.

The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full. For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger."
(Exodus 16:3 ULB)

Here the Israelites were afraid they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot! (Revelation 3:15 ULB)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Know how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at http://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 5:19-22](#)

Idiom

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg (This means, “You are telling me a lie”)
- Do not push the envelope (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme”)
- This house is under water (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value”)
- We are painting the town red (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely”)

Description

An idiom is a phrase that has a special meaning to the people of the language or culture who use it. Its meaning is different than what a person would understand from the meanings of the individual words that form the phrase.

he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51 ULB)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. (Luke 7:6 ULB)

The phrase “enter under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

Let these words go deeply into your ears. (Luke 9:44 ULB)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is created in a culture probably somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that produced the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

Examples from the Bible

Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone."
(1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)

This means, "We and you belong to the same race, the same family."

the children of Israel went out with a high hand. (Exodus 14:8 ASV)

This means, "The Israelites went out defiantly."

the one who lifts up my head (Psalm 3:3 ULB)

This means, "the one who helps me."

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
2. Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
 - **Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone."** (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULB)
 - ...Look, we all belong to the same nation.
 - **he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem.** (Luke 9:51 ULB)
 - He started to travel to Jerusalem, determined to reach it.
 - **I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof.** (Luke 7:6 ULB)
 - I am not worthy that you should enter my house.
2. Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.
 - **Let these words go deeply into your ears** (Luke 9:44 ULB)
 - Be all ears when I say these words to you.
 - **"My eyes grow dim from grief** (Psalm 6:7 ULB)
 - I am crying my eyes out

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:8-9](#)

- Lamentations 1:10
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:7
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:15-16
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:19-21
- Lamentations 3:30-33
- Lamentations 3:51-54
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:5-7
- Lamentations 5:19-22

Irony

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

Jesus answered them, "People who are in good health do not need a physician, only people who are sick need one. I did not come to call righteous people to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31-32 ULB)

When Jesus spoke of "righteous people," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

Reason this is a translation issue

- If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

Examples from the Bible

How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9 ULB)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. "Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled." (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
 Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
 Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
 "the number of your days is so large!" (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two underlined phrases above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you have all you could want! Already you have become rich! You began to reign—and that quite apart from us! (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULB)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

1. Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
2. Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. The actual meaning of the irony is not found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

- **How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!** (Mark 7:9 ULB)
 - You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!
 - You act like it is good to reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!
- **I did not come to call righteous people to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.** (Luke 5:32 ULB)
 - I did not come to call people who think that they are righteous to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.

2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

- **How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!** (Mark 7:9 ULB)

- You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!
- **“Present your case,” says Yahweh; “present your best arguments for your idols,” says the King of Jacob. “Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.” (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULB)**
 - ‘Present your case,’ says Yahweh; ‘present your best arguments for your idols,’ says the King of Jacob. Your idols cannot bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen so we may know these things well. We cannot hear them because they cannot speak to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.
- **Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?**

Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

**Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
the number of your days is so large!” (Job 38:20, 21 ULB)**

- Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:7](#)
- [Lamentations 4:21-22](#)

Merism

This page answers the question: *What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8, ULB)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (Revelation 22:13, ULB)

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth ..., (Matthew 11:25 ULB)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples from the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULB)

This underlined phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

He will bless those who honor him, both young and old. (Psalm 115:13)

The underlined phrase is merism because it speaks of, old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
2. Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
 - **I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth ...** (Matthew 11:25 ULB)
 - I praise you, Father, Lord of everything ...
 - **From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised.** (Psalm 113:3 ULB)
 - In all places, people should praise Yahweh's name.
2. Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.
 - **I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth.** (Matthew 11:25 ULB)
 - I praise you, Father, Lord of everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth.
 - **He will bless those who honor him, both young and old.** (Psalm 115:13 ULB)
 - He will bless all those who honor him, regardless of whether they are young or old.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)
- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:62-63](#)

Metaphor

This page answers the question: *What is a metaphor and how can I translate a sentence that has one?*

Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one concept (the “image”) stands for another concept (the “topic”). That is, the topic is spoken of as if it were the image. For example, someone might say,

- The girl I love is a red rose.

Here the topic is “the girl I love,” and the image is “a red rose.” The girl is spoken of as if she were a red rose.

Anything in a language can serve as a metaphor. For example, verb forms can be used in unusual ways, as in,

- The Apostle Paul tells us that Christians will rise to life again.

In this case, the English present tense form “tells” is a metaphor for the past tense form “told,” because the Apostle Paul lived long ago.

Sometimes speakers use metaphors that are very common in their language. However, sometimes speakers use metaphors that are uncommon, and even some metaphors that are unique.

Speakers most often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

Kinds of Metaphors

There are several kinds of metaphors: “live” metaphors, “dead” metaphors, and patterned metaphors.

Live Metaphors

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept. People also easily recognize them as giving strength and unusual qualities to the message. For this reason, people pay attention to these metaphors. For example,

For you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.
(Malachi 4:2 ULB)

Here God speaks about his salvation as if it were the sun rising in order to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. He also speaks of the sun’s rays as if they were wings. Also, he speaks of these wings as if they were bringing medicine that would heal his people.

Here is another example: Jesus said, ‘Go and tell that fox...,’ where “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was referring to Herod either as a very evil, cunning person or as a king who was only pretending to be great.

Dead Metaphors

A dead metaphor is a metaphor that has been used so much in the language that its speakers no longer regard it as one concept standing for another. Examples in English are “table leg,” “family tree,” “leaf” meaning a page in a book, and “crane” meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads. English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples in Biblical Hebrew are probably “heal” meaning “repair,” and “sick” meaning “spiritually powerless because of sin.”

Patterned Pairs of Concepts acting as Metaphors

Many ways of metaphorical speaking depend on pairs of concepts, where one underlying concept frequently stands for a different underlying concept. For example, in English, the direction UP often stands for the concept of MORE. Because of this pair of underlying concepts, we can make sentences such as “The price of gasoline is going *up*,” “A *highly* intelligent man,” and also the opposite kind of idea: “The heat is going *down*,” and “The stock market *took a tumble*.”

Patterned pairs of concepts are constantly used for metaphorical purposes in the world’s languages, because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, people like to speak of abstract qualities, such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities, as if they were objects that could be seen or held, as if they were body parts, or as if they were events that could be watched as they happened.

When these metaphors are used in normal ways, it is rare that the speaker and audience regard them as figurative speech. Examples of metaphors in English that go unrecognized are:

- “Turn the heat *up*.” MORE is spoken of as UP.
- “Let us *go ahead* with our debate.” DOING WHAT WAS PLANNED is spoken of as WALKING or ADVANCING.
- “You *defend* your theory well.” ARGUMENT is spoken of as WAR.
- “A *flow* of words” WORDS are spoken of as LIQUIDS.

English speakers do not view them as unusual expressions, so it would be wrong to translate them into other languages in a way that would lead people to pay special attention to them as figurative speech.

For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor in biblical languages, please see [Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns](#) and the pages it will direct you to.

Parts of a Metaphor

When talking about metaphors, it can be helpful to talk about their parts. A metaphor has three parts.

1. **Topic** - The thing someone speaks of is called the topic.

2. **Image** - The thing he calls it is the image.
3. **Points of Comparison** - The ways in which the author claims that the topic and image are similar in some manner are their points of comparison.

In the metaphor below, the speaker describes the woman he loves as a red rose. The woman (his “love”) is the **topic**, and “red rose” is the **image**. Beauty and delicacy are the points of comparison that the speaker sees as similarities between both the topic and image. Note, however, that a rose’s beauty is not identical to a woman’s beauty. Neither are the two kinds of delicacy the same. So these points of comparison are not built upon identical characteristics, but rather upon characteristics that are seen by the writer as similar in some way.

- My love is a red, red rose.

Often, as in the metaphor above, the speaker explicitly states the **topic** and the **image**, but he does not state the points of comparison. The speaker leaves it to the hearer to think of those points of comparison. Because the hearers must do that, the speaker’s message tends to be more powerful.

Also in the Bible, normally the **topic** and the **image** are stated clearly, but not the points of comparison. The writer hopes that the audience will understand the points of comparison that are implied.

Jesus said to them. “I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” (John 6:35 ULB)

In this metaphor, Jesus called himself the bread of life. The **topic** is “I,” and the **image** is “bread.” Bread is a food that people ate all the time. The point of comparison between bread and Jesus is that people needed bread every day for nourishment. In a similar way, people need Jesus every day in order to live spiritually.

Note that this metaphor is really several metaphors. The first metaphor is that bread is used to represent Jesus. The second metaphor, which is inside the first one, is that physical life represents the spiritual life, which consists of living with God forever. The third metaphor is that eating bread represents benefitting from Jesus, who enables us to live with God forever.

Purposes of Metaphor

- One purpose of metaphor is to teach people about something that they do not know (the **topic**) by showing that it is like something that they already do know (the **image**).
- Another purpose is to emphasize that something has a particular quality or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about one thing as they would feel about the other.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- People may not recognize that something is a metaphor. In other words, they may mistake a metaphor for a literal statement, and thus misunderstand it.

- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image, and so not be able to understand the metaphor.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know the points of comparison that the speaker is thinking of and wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.

Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of a metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning of a metaphor more clear to the target audience than you think it was to the original audience.

Examples from the Bible

Listen to this word, you cows of Bashan, (Amos 4:1 ULB)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria (the topic is “you”) with as if they were cows (the image). Amos does not say what points of comparison between these women and the cows he has in mind, but from the context it seems that he means that both the women and the cows are fat and interested only in eating.

Note, however, that Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows, for he speaks to them as human beings.

And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)

The example above has two related metaphors. The topics are “we” and “you,” and the images are “clay and ”potter.” The intended point of comparison between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish: the potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people Israel. The point of comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that both the clay and the people of Israel are made into something different from what they were before.

Jesus said to them, “Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, “It is because we took no bread.” (Matthew 16:6-7 ULB)

Jesus used a metaphor here, but his disciples did not realize it. When he said “yeast,” they thought he was talking about bread, but “yeast” was the image in his metaphor, and the topic was the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples (the original audience) did not understand what Jesus meant, it would not be good to state clearly here what Jesus meant.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the metaphor in the same way that the original readers probably understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language. (See Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns for lists of some of these patterned pairs of concepts.)
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
3. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.” See [Simile](#).
4. If the target audience would not know the image, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
5. If the target audience would not use that image for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
6. If the target audience would not know what the topic is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)
7. If the target audience will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and topic, then state them clearly.
8. If none of these strategies is satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If the metaphor is a common expression of a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language, express the main idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.
 - **Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, fell at his feet.** (Mark 5:22 ULB)
 - Then one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, immediately bowed down in front of him.
2. If the metaphor seems to be a “live” metaphor, you can translate it literally if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.
 - **It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,** (Mark 10:5 ULB)
 - It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law,

There is no change to this one - but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

1. If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.”
 - **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)
 - And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are like clay. You are like a potter; and we all are the work of your hand.
2. If the target audience would not know the **image**, see Translate Unknowns for ideas on how to translate that image.
 - **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)
 - Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against a pointed stick.
3. If the target audience would not use that **image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.
 - **And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand.** (Isaiah 64:8 ULB)
 - “And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the wood. You are our carver; and we all are the work of your hand.”
 - “And yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the string. You are the weaver; and we all are the work of your hand.”
4. If the target audience would not know what the **topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)
 - **Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)
 - Yahweh lives; He is my rock. May he be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.
5. If the target audience will not know the intended points of comparison between the image and the topic, then state them clearly.
 - **Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.** (Psalm 18:46 ULB)
 - Yahweh lives; may he be praised because he is the rock under which I can hide from my enemies. May the God of my salvation be exalted.
 - **Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.** (Acts 26:14 ULB)
 - Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? You fight against me and hurt yourself like an ox that kicks against its owner’s pointed stick.
6. If none of these strategies are satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

- **I will make you become fishers of men.** (Mark 1:17 ULB)
 - I will make you become people who gather men.
 - Now you gather fish. I will make you gather people.

To learn more about specific metaphors read:

- Biblical Imagery - Common Patterns

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:1-2
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- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:15-16
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 2:20
- Lamentations 3:1-4
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- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:12-15
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- Lamentations 3:16-18
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- Lamentations 3:37-39
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- Lamentations 3:48-50
- Lamentations 3:51-54
- Lamentations 3:51-54
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Lamentations 3:62-63
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 4:1-2
- Lamentations 4:1-2
- Lamentations 4:1-2
- Lamentations 4:1-2
- Lamentations 4:1-2

- Lamentations 4:7-8
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:11
- Lamentations 4:14-15
- Lamentations 4:14-15
- Lamentations 4:17-18
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- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 4:21-22
- Lamentations 4:21-22
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:5-7
- Lamentations 5:13-14
- Lamentations 5:17-18

Metonymy

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing or idea is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A **metonym** is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something it is associated with.

and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 ULB)

The blood represents Christ's death.

He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. (Luke 22:20 ULB)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

- to a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a physical object associated with it

Reason this is a translation issue

The Bible uses metonymy very often. Speakers of some languages are not used to metonymy and they may not recognize it when they read it in the Bible. If they do not recognize the metonymy, they will not understand the passage or, worse yet, they will get a wrong understanding of the passage. Whenever a metonym is used, people need to be able to understand what it represents.

Examples from the Bible

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David. (Luke 1:32 ULB)

A throne represents the authority of a king. "Throne" is a metonym for "kingly authority," "kingship" or "reign." This means that God would make him become the king that would follow King David.

Immediately his mouth was opened (Luke 1:64 ULB)

The mouth here represents the power to speak. This means that he was able to talk again.

... who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming? (Luke 3:7 ULB)

The word "wrath" or "anger" is a metonym for "punishment." God was extremely angry with the people, and as a result, he would punish them.

Translation Strategies

If people would easily understand the metonym, consider using it. Otherwise, here are some options.

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
2. Use only the name of the thing the metonym represents.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
 - **He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.** (Luke 22:20 ULB)
 - "He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "The wine in this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."
2. Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.
 - **The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David.** (Luke 1:32 ULB)
 - "The Lord God will give him the kingly authority of his father, David."
 - "The Lord God will make him king like his ancestor, King David."
 - **who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** (Luke 3:7 ULB)
 - "who warned you to flee from God's coming punishment?"

To learn about some common metonymies, see [Biblical Imagery - Common Metonymies](#).### Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 1:3](#)
- [Lamentations 1:3](#)
- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:7](#)
- [Lamentations 1:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 1:13-14](#)
- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 1:20](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 2:3-4](#)
- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 2:5-6](#)
- [Lamentations 2:7](#)
- [Lamentations 2:8-9](#)
- [Lamentations 2:11-12](#)
- [Lamentations 2:11-12](#)

- Lamentations 2:17
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 3:1-4
- Lamentations 3:1-4
- Lamentations 3:25-29
- Lamentations 3:30-33
- Lamentations 3:34-36
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Lamentations 3:51-54
- Lamentations 3:55-57
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- Lamentations 3:62-63
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 3:64-66
- Lamentations 4:3
- Lamentations 4:6
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- Lamentations 4:9-10
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- Lamentations 4:21-22
- Lamentations 5:5-7
- Lamentations 5:8-10
- Lamentations 5:8-10
- Lamentations 5:8-10
- Lamentations 5:15-16
- Lamentations 5:17-18
- Lamentations 5:19-22
- Lamentations 5:19-22

Nominal Adjectives

This page answers the question: *How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?*

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

... The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds ... (2 Samuel 12:2 ULB)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last ... (Job 15:29 ULB)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

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 ULB)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason this is a translation issue

- 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 ULB)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are the meek (Matthew 5:5 ULB)

“The meek” here are 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 ULB)
 - The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of righteous people.
- **Blessed are the meek ...** (Matthew 5:5 ULB)
 - Blessed are people who are meek ...

Uses:

- [Lamentations 2:21-22](#)
- [Lamentations 3:37-39](#)

Parallelism

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

Description

In **parallelism** two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. There are different kinds of parallelism. Some of them are the following:

1. The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is also called synonymous parallelism.
2. The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
3. The second completes what is said in the first.
4. The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

Synonymous parallelism (the kind in which the two phrases mean the same thing) in the poetry of the original languages has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and above the ordinary way of speaking.

Reason this is a translation issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it is confusing, rather than beautiful.

Note: We use the term “synonymous parallelism” for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term **Doublet** for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

Examples from the Bible

The second clause or phrase means the same as the first.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULB)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULB)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything.

The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.

The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
keeping watch over the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3 ULB)

The second line tells more specifically what Yahweh watches.

The second completes what is said in the first.

I lift up my voice to Yahweh,
and he answers me from his holy hill. (Psalm 3:4 ULB)

The second line tells what Yahweh does in response to what the person does in the first clause.

The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

For Yahweh approves of the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish. (Psalm 1:6 ULB)

This contrasts what happens to righteous people with what happens to wicked people.

A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1 ULB)

This contrasts what happens when someone gives a gentle answer with what happens when someone says something harsh.

Translation Strategies

For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases. For synonymous parallelism, it is good to translate both clauses if people in your language understand that the purpose of saying something twice is to strengthen a single idea. But if your language does not use parallelism in this way, then consider using one of the following translation strategies.

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
 - **Until now you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13, ULB) - Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.
 - “Until now you have deceived me with your lies.”

- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB) - The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”
 - “Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.”
 - **For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel.** (Micah 6:2 ULB) - This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:
 - “For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.”
2. If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
- **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
 - “Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.”
3. If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”
- **you have deceived me and told me lies.** (Judges 16:13 ULB)
 - “All you have done is lie to me.”
 - **Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes.** (Proverbs 5:21 ULB)
 - “Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.”

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 3:1-4
- Lamentations 4:1-2
- Lamentations 4:11
- Lamentations 4:12-13
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:11-12

Personification

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

Description

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

Such as wisdom:

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

Or sin:

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

People also do this because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things, such as wealth, as if they were like relationships between people.

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

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

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add words or phrases to make it clear.

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

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

- ... **sin crouches at the door** (Genesis 4:7 ULB) - This can be translated with the word “as.”
 - ... sin is crouching at the door, just as a wild animal does waiting to attack a person.

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

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

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

- Introduction to Lamentations
- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:3
- Lamentations 1:3
- Lamentations 1:3
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:4-5
- Lamentations 1:6
- Lamentations 1:6
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 1:10
- Lamentations 1:11-12
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- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:13-14
- Lamentations 1:15
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:16-17
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:10
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:15-16
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 3:16-18
- Lamentations 3:48-50
- Lamentations 4:3
- Lamentations 4:6
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:21-22
- Lamentations 4:21-22

Poetry

This page answers the question: *What is poetry and how do I translate it into my language?*

Description

Poetry is one of the ways that people use the words and sounds of their language to make their speech and writing more beautiful and to express strong emotion. Through poetry, people can communicate deeper emotion than they can through simple non-poetic forms. Poetry gives more weight and elegance to statements of truth, such as proverbs, and is also easier to remember than ordinary speech.

Some things commonly found in poetry

- Many figures of speech such as **Apostrophe**.
- Parallel lines (see **Parallelism** and Parallelism with the Same Meaning)
- Repetition of some or all of a line
 - **Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his angel armies. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.** (Psalm 148:2-3 ULB)
- Lines of similar length.
 - **Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude.** (1 Corinthians 13:4 ULB)
- The same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines
 - "Twinkle, twinkle little star. How I wonder what you are." (from an English rhyme)
- The same sound repeated many times
 - "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater" (from an English rhyme)
- Old words and expressions
- Dramatic imagery
- Different use of grammar - including:
 - incomplete sentences
 - lack of connective words

Some places to look for poetry in your language

1. Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
2. Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors
3. Prayers, blessings, and curses
4. Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons this is a translation issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language you may need to write it without the poetry.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples from the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching, and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely poetry.

for you saw my affliction;
you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7 ULB)

This example of Parallelism with the Same Meaning has two lines that mean the same thing.

Yahweh, judge the nations;
vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High.

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (see [Parallelism](#))

Keep your servant also from arrogant sins;
let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13 ULB)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (see [Personification](#))

Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
Oh, give thanks to the God of gods, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
(Psalm 136:1-3 ULB)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

1. Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
2. Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
3. Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

**Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked,
or stand in the pathway with sinners,
or sit in the assembly of mockers.
But his delight is in the law of Yahweh,
and on his law he meditates day and night.** (Psalm 1:1,2 ULB)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1,2.

1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry. (The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

”Happy is the person not encouraged to sin
Disrespect for God he will not begin
To those who laugh at God, he is no kin.
God is his constant delight
He does what God says is right
He thinks of it all day and night

2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

- This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people, or stop along the road to speak with sinners, or join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.

3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

- The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or with those who do not respect God. They love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 2:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 3:1-4](#)
- [Lamentations 4:1-2](#)
- [Lamentations 5:1-4](#)

Rhetorical Question

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all, but if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?" (Acts 23:4 ULB)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking about his way of insulting God's high priest. Rather they used their question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. Some of the purposes of these rhetorical questions are to express attitudes or feelings, to rebuke people, to teach something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, and to introduce something they want to talk about.

Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are more limited or different than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

Examples from the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him, who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11 ULB)

Job used the question above to show deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULB)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULB)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden... (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was going to compare the kingdom of God to something.

Translation Strategies

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, is the one who asked it bothered that he did not get an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you know what the purpose of the rhetorical question is. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

1. Add the answer after the question.
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the answer after the question.
 - **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
 - Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Of course not! Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!
 - **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
 - Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? None of you would do that!
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
 - **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed...** (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)
 - This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed..."
 - **Is this how you insult God's high priest?** (Acts 23:4 ULB)
 - You should not insult God's high priest!
 - **Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?** (Job 3:11 ULB)
 - I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!
 - **And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** (Luke 1:43 ULB)
 - How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
 - **Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?** (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)
 - You still rule the kingdom of Israel, do you not?
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

- **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
 - If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, would you give him a stone?
- **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
 - What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:15-16
- Lamentations 2:20
- Lamentations 2:20
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Lamentations 5:19-22

Simile

This page answers the question: *What is a simile?*

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

Description

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Purposes of Simile

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

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

Examples from the Bible

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.
 - **See, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves** (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.
 - See, I send you out among wicked people and you will be in danger from them as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves.
 - **For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword.** (Hebrews 4:12 ULB)
 - For the word of God is living and active and more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword
2. If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible.
 - **See, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves,** (Matthew 10:16 ULB) - If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.

- See, I send you out as chickens in the midst of wild dogs,
 - **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a mother closely watches over her infants, but you refused!
 - **If you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard,** (Matthew 17:20)
 - If you have faith even as small as a tiny seed,
3. Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.
- **See, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves,** (Matthew 10:16 ULB)
 - See, I send you out and people will want to harm you.
 - **How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you did not agree!** (Matthew 23:37 ULB)
 - How often I wanted to protect you, but you refused!

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:1-2
- Lamentations 1:6
- Lamentations 1:8-9
- Lamentations 2:3-4
- Lamentations 2:5-6
- Lamentations 2:11-12
- Lamentations 2:13-14
- Lamentations 2:21-22
- Lamentations 3:5-8
- Lamentations 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:44-47
- Lamentations 4:3
- Lamentations 4:7-8
- Lamentations 4:19-20
- Lamentations 5:1-4
- Lamentations 5:8-10

Symbolic Action

This page answers the question: *What is a symbolic action and how do I translate it?*

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.

Translators need to understand what people in the Bible meant when they used symbolic actions. If an action does not mean the same thing in their own culture, they need to figure out how to translate what the action meant.

Examples from the Bible

Jairus fell down at Jesus’ feet. (Luke 8:41 ULB)

Meaning of symbolic action: He did this to show great respect to Jesus.

Look, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to his home, and have a meal with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 ULB)

Meaning of symbolic action: When people 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 ULB)
 - Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet in order to show that he greatly respected him.
 - **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20 ULB)
 - Look, I stand at the door and knock on it, asking you to let me in.
2. Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.
 - **Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet.** (Luke 8:41)
 - Jairus showed Jesus great respect.
 - **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20)
 - Look, I stand at the door and ask you to let me in.
3. Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning.
 - **Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet.** (Luke 8:41 ULB) - Since Jairus actually did this, we would not substitute an action from our own culture.
 - **Look, I stand at the door and knock.** (Revelation 3:20 ULB) - Jesus was not standing at a real door. Rather he was speaking about wanting to have a relationship with people. So in cultures where it is polite to clear one's throat when wanting to be let into a house, you could use that.
 - Look, I stand at the door and clear my throat.

Uses:

- [Lamentations 1:16-17](#)
- [Lamentations 2:10](#)
- [Lamentations 2:10](#)
- [Lamentations 2:10](#)
- [Lamentations 2:15-16](#)
- [Lamentations 2:15-16](#)
- [Lamentations 2:18-19](#)

Synecdoche

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

Description

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

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

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

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

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

Reasons this is a translation issue

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

Example from the Bible

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

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person, because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments.

Translation Strategies

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

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.
 - **”My soul exalts the Lord.”** (Luke 1:46 ULB)
 - ”I exalt the Lord.”
 - **...the Pharisees said to him** (Mark 2:24 ULB)

- ...a representative of the Pharisees said to him ...
- **... I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished ...** (Ecclesiastes 2:11 ULB)
 - I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

Uses:

- Lamentations 1:10
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Lamentations 1:18-19
- Lamentations 1:20
- Lamentations 1:21-22
- Lamentations 2:7
- Lamentations 2:8-9
- Lamentations 2:18-19
- Lamentations 4:9-10
- Lamentations 4:11
- Lamentations 5:15-16