



**Joel**

**translationNotes**

v8

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## translationNotes

### Introduction to Joel

#### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of the Book of Joel

1. Judgment and the day of Yahweh (1:1–2:11)
  - An army like locusts, like the coming Judgment (1:1–20)
  - The day of Yahweh (2:1–11)
2. Restoration and the mercy of Yahweh
  - The people should turn to Yahweh, for he will pity them (2:12–27)
  - The Spirit of Yahweh, wonders, and salvation (2:28–32)
3. Yahweh will judge the nations
  - Yahweh judges the nations (3:1–16)
  - Yahweh dwells in Zion (3:17–21)

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

The major theme of Joel is the “day of Yahweh”. This expression is found five times in Joel (1:15; 2:1, 11, 21; and 3:14); this phrase is also found in thirteen places in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Obadiah, Zephaniah, and Malachi. This “day” is the time when Yahweh will judge and punish his people, and also the other nations. The time will come when Yahweh will put an end to the rebellion and sin of his people and of all the nations.

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

“The Book of Joel” may also be called the “The Book about Joel” or “The Sayings of Joel.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### Who wrote the Book of Joel?

The prophecies in this book are messages given by Yahweh to Joel, son of Pethuel, who is otherwise unknown to us. It was traditionally thought that Joel lived in the time of the northern and southern kingdoms, perhaps during the reign of King Joash of Judah in the second part of the seventh century BC. However, most scholars today think that Joel probably lived in post-exilic times, after the Jews had returned to Judah from Babylonia.



## Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

### What is the meaning of the locust attacks in Joel 1 and 2, and of the drought in Joel 2?

It was common for farmers in the ancient Near East to experience massive locust attacks. Millions of these insects would come and eat all crops in their fields. Joel might be describing such attacks in the first two chapters. But because Joel uses military terms and images to describe these locust attacks, it is easy to think that his descriptions might instead be a picture of the enemy invaders who would come and destroy the land and its people.

In the same manner, the drought (severe lack of rain) that Joel describes might be a real drought, or it might be a picture of either enemy invaders or of Yahweh himself coming to punish his people and the other nations.

Translators should translate simply, presenting the scenes of locusts and drought as Joel describes them, and not worry about the various possible meanings.

### What kind of picture of the future does Joel present?

Joel presents a picture of the future that God will bring about. In this picture, God will defeat Israel's enemies, rebuild the city of Jerusalem, and rule as victorious king over the whole world. At the same time, God will give his Spirit to all his servants, who will receive messages from him in dreams and visions. (See: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [Spirit](#))

## Part 3: Important Translation Issues

### How should one translate the poetry of the Book of Joel?

All of the text in the Book of Joel is poetry, as is represented in the ULB. The UDB, however, presents the text as prose, because many translators will choose to use prose in their versions. Translators who wish to translate the book as poetry should read about poetry and parallelism. (See: [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#))

## Joel 01 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Joel is written in poetic form and with striking imagery. The ULB is written in poetic form but the UDB has been transferred to a prose form. If possible, use the poetic form to communicate the meaning of this book in order to stay closer to the original meaning of the text.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Locusts

This book starts very dramatically with the imagery of the locusts and the devastation they produce. There are five different kinds of locusts that appear to come and they progressively destroy the vegetation including the crops, vineyards and even the trees of the whole land of Israel.

It was common for farmers in the ancient Near East to experience large locust swarms that would come and eat all crops in their fields. Joel might be describing such attacks in this first chapter. Because Joel uses military terms and images to describe these locust attacks, his descriptions might represent enemy invaders who would come and destroy the land and its people. (See: [Metaphor](#)).

Translators should translate simply, presenting the scenes of locusts as Joel describes them, and not worry about the various possible meanings.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical Questions

The author also uses rhetorical questions that communicate surprise and alarm. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#)).

#### Links:

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

**Joel 1:1-3****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> I am Joel son of Pethuel. This is a message that Yahweh gave to me.

<sup>2</sup> You leaders of Israel, and everyone else who lives in this country, listen to this message!

Nothing like this has ever happened during the time that we have lived  
or during the time when our ancestors lived.

<sup>3</sup> Tell your children about it,  
and tell your children to tell it to their children,  
and tell your grandchildren to tell it to their children.

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> This is the word of Yahweh that came to Joel son of Pethuel.

<sup>2</sup> Hear this, you elders,  
and listen, all you inhabitants of the land.  
Has anything like this happened in your days  
or in the days of your ancestors?

<sup>3</sup> Tell your children about it,  
and let your children tell their children,  
and their children the next generation.

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

God speaks through Joel to the people of Israel using poetry. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**the word of Yahweh that came to Joel**

This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to Joel. AT: “the message Yahweh gave to Joel” or “the message Yahweh spoke to Joel” (See: [Idiom](#))

**Yahweh**

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

**Pethuel**

Joel's father (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

**Has anything like this happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors?**

Joel is preparing the elders to listen to what he has to say. This can be translated as a statement. AT: "Nothing like this has ever happened before either to you or to your ancestors" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**their children the next generation**

You may need to fill in the words that have been left out. AT: "let their children tell the generation after them" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

**translationWords**

- [word of God, words of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, scripture, scriptures](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Joel](#)
- [elder](#)
- [generation](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 1:4****UDB:**

<sup>4</sup> I am talking about the locusts that have eaten our crops.

The first swarm of locusts came and cut many of the leaves of the crops;  
then another swarm came and ate the rest of the leaves,  
then another swarm came hopping along,  
and finally another swarm came  
and they destroyed everything else.

**ULB:**

<sup>4</sup> What the swarming locust has left the great locust has eaten;  
what the great locust has left the grasshopper has eaten;  
and what the grasshopper has left the caterpillar has eaten.

**translationNotes****the swarming locust**

large groups of insects like grasshoppers that fly together and eat large areas of food crops (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

**swarming locust ... great locust ... grasshopper ... caterpillar**

These are, respectively, an adult locust that can fly, a locust too large to fly easily, a locust with wings too young to fly, and a newborn locust that has not yet developed wings. Use names that would be understood in your language.

**Links:**

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

**Joel 1:5-7****UDB:**

<sup>5</sup> You people who are drunk, wake up!

Wake up and wail loudly,  
because all the grapes are ruined,  
and so there will be no new wine!

<sup>6</sup> Huge swarms of locusts have entered our country.

They are like a powerful army  
that has very many soldiers;  
no one can count them.

The locusts have teeth that are as sharp as the teeth of lions!

<sup>7</sup> They have destroyed our grapevines and our fig trees  
by stripping off and eating all the bark,  
with the result that the branches are white and bare.

**ULB:**

<sup>5</sup> Wake up, you drunkards, and weep!

Wail, all you drinkers of wine,  
because the sweet wine has been cut off from you.

<sup>6</sup> For a nation has come up upon my land,  
strong and without number.

His teeth are the teeth of a lion,  
and he has the teeth of a lioness.

<sup>7</sup> He has made my vineyard into a terrifying place  
and has stripped my fig tree bare.

He has stripped its bark and thrown it away;  
the branches are bare white.

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

God warns the people of Israel about the coming locust army.

**you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you drinkers of wine**

If your language has only one word for “weep” and “wail,” you can combine the lines: “you people who love wine should cry out in sorrow” (See: [Parallelism](#))

**a nation**

The locust swarm is like an invading army. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**His teeth ... he has the teeth ... He has made ... He has stripped**

The locusts are like a nation which is like one person. You can refer to the nation as “it,” or to the locusts as “they,” or to the invader as one person.

**His teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he has the teeth of a lioness.**

These two lines share similar meanings. The reference to the locusts’ teeth being as sharp as lions’ teeth emphasize how fierce they are as they eat all of the crops of the land. (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

**my land ... my vineyard ... my fig tree**

Yahweh’s land, vineyard, and fig tree

**terrifying**

Those who see the land are very afraid because the invading nation has completely destroyed it.

**translationWords**

- [drunk, drunkard](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [lion](#)
- [vineyard](#)
- [fig](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 1:8-10****UDB:**

<sup>8</sup> Cry and wail as a young woman does  
when the young man to whom she was engaged has died.

<sup>9</sup> There is no more flour or wine for us to offer to be sacrifices at the temple,  
so the priests who serve Yahweh are mourning.

<sup>10</sup> The crops in the fields have been ruined;  
it is as though the ground itself had died.

The grain has been destroyed,  
there are no grapes to make wine,  
and there is no more olive oil.

**ULB:**

<sup>8</sup> Mourn like a virgin dressed in sackcloth for the death of her young husband.

<sup>9</sup> The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from Yahweh's house.

The priests, Yahweh's servants, mourn.

<sup>10</sup> The fields are ruined,  
the ground is mourning because the grain has been destroyed.

The new wine has dried up,  
the oil fails.

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

God continues speaking to the people of Israel.

**the ground is mourning**

Here the land is spoken of as if it were a person. These words could also be seen as a metonym for the people who are mourning or even as hyperbole, that the famine is so bad that even things that are not alive are mourning. AT: "the farmers are mourning" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#) and [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))



### **the grain has been destroyed**

This can be translated in active form. AT: “the locusts have destroyed all of the grain” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **translationWords**

- [virgin](#)
- [sackcloth](#)
- [priest, priests, priesthood](#)
- [grain](#)
- [drink offering](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [servant, slave, slavery](#)
- [oil](#)

### **Links:**

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

**Joel 1:11-12****UDB:**

<sup>11</sup> You farmers, grieve!

You who take care of grapevines, wail,  
because the grain has been destroyed;  
there is no wheat or barley growing.

<sup>12</sup> The grapevines and the fig trees have withered,  
and the pomegranate trees, palm trees, and apricot trees have also dried up.  
The people are no longer joyful.

**ULB:**

<sup>11</sup> Be ashamed, you farmers,  
and wail, you vine growers,  
for the wheat and the barley.  
For the harvest of the fields has perished.

<sup>12</sup> The vines have withered and the fig trees have dried up,  
the pomegranate trees, also the palm trees, and the apple trees—  
all the trees of the field have withered.  
For joy has withered away from the descendants of mankind.

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

God continues speaking to the people of Israel.

**barley**

a type of grass, like wheat, whose seeds can be used to make bread (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

**withered**

dried up and died

**fig ... pomegranate ... apple**

different types of fruit (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

**translationWords**

- shame, shameful, ashamed
- wheat
- harvest
- perish, perished, perishing, perishable
- vine
- fig
- palm
- joy, joyful

**Links:**

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

**Joel 1:13-14****UDB:**

<sup>13</sup> You priests, put on rough sack clothes and wail.

You who serve God by offering sacrifices on the altar,  
wear those sack clothes all night to show that you are mourning,  
because there is no flour or wine to be offered at the temple of your God.

<sup>14</sup> Set apart a day for when the people should go without food.

Tell the leaders and the other people to gather at the temple  
and to cry out to Yahweh there.

**ULB:**

<sup>13</sup> Put on sackcloth and mourn, you priests!

Wail, you servants of the altar.

Come, lie all night in sackcloth, you servants of my God.

For the grain offering and the drink offering have been withheld from the house of your God.

<sup>14</sup> Call for a holy fast,

and call a holy assembly.

Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land

to the house of Yahweh your God,

and cry to Yahweh.

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

God speaks to the priests in Israel

**the grain offering and the drink offering**

regular offerings in the temple

**the house of Yahweh your God**

the temple in Jerusalem

### translationWords

- sackcloth
- priest, priests, priesthood
- altar, altars
- Yahweh
- God
- holy, holiness
- fast
- assembly, assemble
- elder

### Links:

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

**Joel 1:15-17****UDB:**

<sup>15</sup> Terrible things are happening to us!

It will soon be the time when Yahweh, who is the Almighty God, will punish us, when he will cause us to experience more disasters.

<sup>16</sup> Our crops are already gone,  
and no one is rejoicing at all at the temple of our God.

<sup>17</sup> When we plant seeds, they do not grow;  
they dry up in the ground,  
so there are no crops to harvest.

Our barns are empty;  
there is no grain to store in them.

**ULB:**

<sup>15</sup> Alas for the day!

For the day of Yahweh is almost here.

With it will come destruction from the Almighty.

<sup>16</sup> Has not food been cut off from before our eyes,  
and joy and gladness from the house of our God?

<sup>17</sup> The seeds rot under their clods,  
the granaries are desolate,  
and the barns have been broken down,  
for the grain has withered.

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

This is what God is telling the priests to say.

**With it will come destruction from the Almighty**

The abstract noun “destruction” can be translated using the verb “destroy.” You may need to make explicit what it is the Almighty will destroy. AT: “On that day the Almighty will destroy his enemies” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**Has not food been cut off from before our eyes, and joy and gladness from the house of our God?**

It is certain that destruction will come from the Almighty because these things have already happened. This can be translated in active form. AT: “We know this is true because we have already seen the Almighty cut off our supply of food, and he has cut off joy and gladness from the house of our God.” (See: [Ellipsis](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

**from before our eyes**

“from us.” This refers to all of the nation of Israel. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

**joy and gladness from the house of our God**

You may need to fill in the ellipsis. AT: “joy and gladness have been cut off from the house of our God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

**joy and gladness**

These two words mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that there is no kind of joyful activity happening at the temple. (See: [Doublet](#))

**clods**

lumps of dirt

**translationWords**

- [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)
- [Almighty](#)
- [house of God, Yahweh’s house](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 1:18-20****UDB:**

<sup>18</sup> Our cattle groan, searching for a pasture with some grass to eat,  
and the sheep bleat because they are suffering.

<sup>19</sup> Yahweh, I cry out to you,  
because our pastures and our forests have dried up in the hot sunshine.

<sup>20</sup> It is as though even the wild animals cry out to you  
because all the streams have dried up.

The dryness is like a fire burning up the wilderness pastures.

**ULB:**

<sup>18</sup> How the animals groan!

The herds of cattle are suffering  
because they have no pasture.

Also, the flocks of sheep suffer.

<sup>19</sup> Yahweh, I cry to you.

For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,  
and flames have burned all the trees of the fields.

<sup>20</sup> Even the animals of the fields pant for you,  
for the water brooks have dried up,  
and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

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

God continues to tell the priests how they should pray for Israel.

**groan**

make a deep sound because of pain

**brooks**

small streams



**translationWords**

- [suffer, suffering](#)
- [flock, herd](#)
- [sheep, ram, ewe](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)

**Links:**

- [Introduction to Joel](#)
- [Joel 01 General Notes](#)
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## Joel 02 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter continues in the poetic form with striking imagery of armies and soldiers.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Locusts

This book starts very dramatically with the imagery of the locusts and the devastation they produce. There are five different kinds of locusts that appear to come and progressively destroy the vegetation including the crops, vineyards and even the trees of Israel.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

This chapter uses simile to a great extent as Joel tries to describe this army. (See: [Simile](#))

#### Metaphor

The drought, or severe lack of rain, Joel describes is probably a real drought. It might also be a picture of either enemy invaders or of Yahweh himself coming to punish his people and the other nations. Translators should translate simply, presenting the scenes of locusts and drought as Joel describes them, and not worry about the various possible meanings. (See: [Metaphor](#)).

#### Links:

- [Joel 02:01 Notes](#)

**Joel 2:1-2****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> Blow trumpets on Mount Zion,  
God's sacred hill in Jerusalem!

Tell the people of Judah that they should be afraid and tremble,  
because it will soon be the time for Yahweh to punish us further.

<sup>2</sup> That will be a very dark and gloomy day;  
there will be black clouds and it will be very dark.

A huge swarm of locusts has covered the mountains like a black cloud.  
Nothing like this has ever happened before,  
and nothing like this will ever happen again.

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion,  
and sound an alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble in fear,  
for the day of Yahweh is coming;  
indeed, it is near.

<sup>2</sup> It is a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness.  
Like the dawn that spreads on the mountains,  
a large and mighty army is approaching.  
There has never been an army like it,  
and there never will be again,  
even after many generations.

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

Joel continues poetry that began in the previous chapter. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**Blow the trumpet ... sound an alarm**

Joel is emphasizing the importance of calling Israel together in preparation for the destruction that is coming.

**day of darkness and gloom**

The words “darkness” and “gloom” share similar meanings and emphasize that the darkness will be very dark. Both words refer to a time of disaster or divine judgment. AT: “day that is full of darkness” or “day of terrible judgment” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Metonymy](#))

**gloom**

total or partial darkness

**day of clouds and thick darkness**

This phrase means the same thing as, and intensifies the idea of the previous phrase. Like that phrase, both “clouds” and “thick darkness” refer to divine judgment. AT: “day full of dark storm clouds” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Metonymy](#))

**Like the dawn that spreads on the mountains, a large and mighty army is approaching**

When direct sunlight shines on a mountain at dawn, it begins at the top and spreads to the bottom. When an army comes over a mountain range, it comes over the top and spreads out as it comes down. AT: “A large, mighty army comes over the mountains into the land. They spread over the land like the light from the rising sun” (See: [Simile](#))

**a large and mighty army**

The words “large” and “mighty” share similar meanings here and emphasize that the army will be very strong. The word “army” could possibly be 1) a metaphor for a swarm of locusts or 2) referring to a human army. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Doublet](#))

**translationWords**

- trumpet
- Zion, Mount Zion
- holy, holiness
- Yahweh
- darkness
- mighty, might
- generation

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:3****UDB:**

<sup>3</sup> It is as though they bring flames of fire  
from which no one can escape.

In front of them, the land was as beautiful as the garden of Eden,  
but behind them the land is like a desert,  
and nothing survives.

**ULB:**

<sup>3</sup> A fire is consuming everything in front of it,  
and behind it a flame is burning.  
The land is like the garden of Eden in front of it,  
but behind it there is a ruined wilderness.  
Indeed, nothing will escape from it.

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

Joel's description of the coming army continues.

**A fire is consuming everything in front of it**

A fire destroys everything as it moves, and the "army" (Joel 2:2), whether of humans or of locusts, destroys everything as it moves. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**behind it a flame is burning**

After a wall of flame goes through dry land and burns the driest and smallest fuel, there will still be flames as the larger and less dry fuel burns, (See: [Metaphor](#))

**land is like the garden of Eden**

The garden of Eden was a beautiful place, and the land was beautiful. (See: [Simile](#))

**translationWords**

- [Eden, garden of Eden](#)
- [ruin, ruins](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:4-5****UDB:**

<sup>4</sup> The locusts resemble horses,  
and they run like soldiers on horses.  
<sup>5</sup> Leaping over the mountaintops,  
they make a noise like rumbling chariots,  
like a mighty army that is preparing for a battle,  
or like the roar of a fire that burns up stubble in a field.

**ULB:**

<sup>4</sup> The army's appearance is like horses,  
and they run like horsemen.  
<sup>5</sup> They jump with a noise like that of chariots on the tops of the mountains,  
like the noise of fiery flames that devour the stubble,  
like a mighty army ready for battle.

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

The description continues with the noises of an army of horses.

**The army's appearance is like horses**

The head of a locust looks like a small horse head. The army is fast, and horses are fast. (See: [Simile](#))

**horses**

A large, strong, fast animal with four legs. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

**they run like horsemen**

Men riding horses move quickly, and the army moves quickly. (See: [Simile](#))

**jump**

A horse jumps or leaps as it runs quickly.



**a noise like that of chariots ... like the noise of fiery flames ... like a mighty army ready for battle**

These sounds would have been very frightening to Joel's readers. If your readers will not understand what these sound like, you might be able to use a more general phrase: "a noise that frightens everyone" (See: [Simile](#))

#### **translationWords**

- [chariot](#)
- [fire](#)
- [devour](#)

#### **Links:**

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

**Joel 2:6-7****UDB:**

<sup>6</sup> When people see them coming,  
they become very pale and frightened.

<sup>7</sup> The locusts climb over walls like soldiers do;  
they march along in columns  
and never turn aside from their lines.

**ULB:**

<sup>6</sup> At their presence people are in anguish  
and all their faces become pale.

<sup>7</sup> They run like mighty warriors;  
they climb the walls like soldiers;  
they march, every one in step,  
and do not break their ranks.

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

Joel continues to describe the locust army of Yahweh.

**They run like mighty warriors ... climb the walls like soldiers**

The army of locusts acts as real soldiers do. (See: [Personification](#) and [Simile](#))

**walls**

walls around the cities

**translationWords**

- [mighty, might](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:8-9****UDB:**

<sup>8</sup> They rush straight ahead  
without pushing each other.

Even though people throw spears and javelins at them,  
that will not cause them to stop.

<sup>9</sup> They swarm over the city walls and enter our houses;  
they enter through our windows as thieves do.

**ULB:**

<sup>8</sup> Neither does one thrust another aside;  
they march, each in his path;  
they break through the defenses  
and do not fall out of line.

<sup>9</sup> They rush on the city,  
they run on the wall,  
they climb in the houses,  
and they go through the windows like thieves.

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

The description of the locust army of Yahweh continues.

**they break through the defenses**

they overcome the soldiers defending the city.

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:10-11****UDB:**

<sup>10</sup> It is as though they cause the earth to shake and the sky to tremble.

The sun and the moon become dark,  
and the stars do not shine

because there are so many locusts in the sky.

<sup>11</sup> Yahweh leads this army of countless locusts,  
and they obey his commands.

This time when he is judging and punishing us is very terrible,  
with the result that it seems that no one can survive it.

**ULB:**

<sup>10</sup> The earth shakes in front of them,  
the heavens tremble,  
the sun and the moon are darkened,  
and the stars stop shining.

<sup>11</sup> Yahweh raises his voice in front of his army,  
for his warriors are very numerous;  
for they are strong, those who carry out his commands.  
For the day of Yahweh is great and very terrible.  
Who can survive it?

**translationNotes****The earth shakes in front of them, the heavens tremble**

Joel speaks of the earth and heavens as if they were people who are shaking with fear. This can be translated as either a hyperbole, that the army is so frightening that even things that are not alive are afraid, or as metonymy, that the earth and the heavens are metonyms for the beings who live there. AT: “Everyone on earth and in the heavens is very afraid” (See: [Personification](#) and [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

**the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars stop shining**

This exaggeration claims that there are so many locusts that people cannot see the sun, moon, or stars. (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

**Yahweh raises his voice**

“Yahweh speaks loudly” to give commands.

**great and very terrible**

In this phrase both descriptions mean basically the same thing. AT: “greatly terrible” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

**Who can survive it?**

This can be translated as a statement. AT: “No one will be strong enough to survive Yahweh’s judgment.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**translationWords**

- [earth, earthly](#)
- [heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [command, commands, commanded, commandment, commandments](#)
- [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:12-13****UDB:**

<sup>12</sup> But Yahweh says,

”In spite of these disasters that you have experienced,  
you can return to me with all your inner being.

Weep, and mourn, and fast to show that you are sorry that you have abandoned me.

<sup>13</sup> Do not tear only your clothes

to show that you are sorry;

more importantly, show in your inner being that you are sorry.”

Yahweh is merciful and kind;

he does not quickly become angry;

he faithfully loves people.

He does not quickly become angry;

instead, he greatly and faithfully loves you,

and he does not like to punish us.

**ULB:**

<sup>12</sup> “Yet even now,” says Yahweh,

”Return to me with all your heart.

Fast, weep, and mourn.”

<sup>13</sup> Tear your heart and not only your garments,

and return to Yahweh your God.

For he is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger and abundant in covenant faithfulness,

and he would like to turn from inflicting punishment.

**translationNotes****Return to me with all your heart**

The heart is a metonym for what the person thinks and loves. AT: “Turn away from your sins and be totally devoted to me” (See: [Metonymy](#)).

**Tear your heart and not only your garments**

The heart is a metonym for what the person thinks and loves. Tearing one's clothes is an outward act of shame or repentance. AT: "Change your way of thinking; do not just tear your garments" (See: [Metonymy](#))

**abundant in covenant faithfulness**

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." AT: "always faithful to his covenant" or "always loves faithfully" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**turn from**

stop

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)
- [heart, hearts](#)
- [fast](#)
- [God](#)
- [grace, gracious](#)
- [mercy, merciful](#)
- [angry, anger](#)
- [love, loves, loving, loved](#)
- [punish, punishment](#)

**Links:**

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



**Joel 2:14****UDB:**

<sup>14</sup> No one knows if he will change his mind about punishing you  
and instead act mercifully toward you.

If he does that, he will bless you

by giving you plenty of grain and wine

in order that you can offer some of those things for sacrifices to him.

**ULB:**

<sup>14</sup> Who knows? Will he perhaps turn and have compassion,  
and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering for Yahweh your God?

**translationNotes****Will he perhaps turn ... God?**

This can be translated as a statement. AT: “Perhaps Yahweh will turn from his anger ... God.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering**

“leave behind him a blessing—that is, a grain offering and a drink offering.” The blessing is that plenty of grain and grapes will ripen, and so the people will be able to offer grain and drink offerings.

**translationWords**

- [compassion, compassionate](#)
- [bless, blessed, blessing](#)
- [meal offering, grain offering](#)
- [drink offering](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:15-16****UDB:**

<sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpets on Mount Zion!

Gather the people together!

Set apart time to fast, to show that you are sorry for your sins.

<sup>16</sup> Perform the rituals to cause yourselves to be acceptable to Yahweh.

Come apart and join together as a group with a purpose—  
the old people and the children, even the babies,  
and summon brides and bridegrooms from their rooms.

**ULB:**

<sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion,

call for a holy fast,

and call a holy assembly.

<sup>16</sup> Gather the people,

call for the holy assembly.

Assemble the elders,

gather the children

and the nursing infants.

Let the bridegrooms come out of their rooms,

and the brides out of their bridal chambers.

**translationNotes****bridal chambers**

rooms, usually in the parents' houses, where brides would wait for their wedding ceremonies

**translationWords**

- trumpet
- Zion, Mount Zion
- holy, holiness
- fast

- [assembly, assemble](#)
- [elder](#)
- [bridegroom](#)
- [bride](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:17****UDB:**

<sup>17</sup> Tell the priests who serve Yahweh to cry between the altar and the entrance to the temple and to pray this:

”Yahweh, rescue us, your people;

do not allow people from other nations to despise us;

do not allow them to ridicule us and say,

‘Why has their God abandoned them?’”

**ULB:**

<sup>17</sup> Let the priests, the servants of Yahweh,

weep between the porch and the altar.

Let them say, ”Spare your people, Yahweh,

and do not make your inheritance into an object of scorn,

that the nations mock them.

Why should they say among the nations,

‘Where is their God?’”

**translationNotes****do not make your inheritance into an object of scorn**

“do not allow your inheritance to become people whom the other nations regard as worthless”

**your inheritance**

Here the people of Israel are spoken of as God’s inheritance. AT: “your special people” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**Why should they say among the nations, ‘Where is their God?’**

This can be translated as a statement. AT: “Other nations should not be able to say, ‘Their God does not help them.’” or “Other nations should not be able to say that the God of Israel has abandoned his people.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#)).

### translationWords

- priest, priests, priesthood
- servant, slave, slavery
- Yahweh
- altar, altars
- people group, peoples, the people, a people
- inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir
- shame, shameful, ashamed
- nation
- God

### Links:

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

## Joel 2:18-19

### UDB:

<sup>18</sup> But Yahweh showed that he was concerned about his people  
and that he would act mercifully toward them.

<sup>19</sup> When the people prayed,  
Yahweh answered and said,  
”I will give you plenty of grain and wine and olive oil,  
and you will be satisfied.  
I will no longer allow other nations to insult you.

### ULB:

<sup>18</sup> Then Yahweh was zealous for his land  
and had pity on his people.

<sup>19</sup> Yahweh answered his people,  
”Look, I will send you grain, new wine, and oil.  
You will be satisfied with them,  
and I will no longer make you a disgrace among the nations.

### translationNotes

#### his land

“the nation of Israel”

#### his people

“the people of Israel”

#### Look

“Pay attention to what I am about to say”

#### You will be satisfied with them

“You will have all you need of them”

**a disgrace**

“unworthy of respect”

**translationWords**

- [Yahweh](#)
- [zeal, zealous](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [oil](#)
- [nation](#)

**Links:**

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



**Joel 2:20****UDB:**

<sup>20</sup> Another army of locusts will come from the north to attack you,  
but I will force them to continue past Jerusalem  
into the desert.

Some will go into the Dead Sea in the east,  
and some will go into the Mediterranean Sea in the west.  
There they will all die, and their bodies will stink.”  
God will certainly do wonderful things.

**ULB:**

<sup>20</sup> I will remove the northern attackers far from you,  
and will drive them into a dry and abandoned land.  
The front of their army will go into the eastern sea,  
and the rear into the western sea.  
Its stench will rise,  
and its bad smell will rise.”  
Indeed, he has done great things.

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

God continues his promise to Israel.

**northern ... eastern ... western**

These directions are from the perspective of people living in the land of Israel.

**the eastern sea**

the Dead Sea

**the western sea**

the Mediterranean Sea

### he has done great things

That is, Yahweh has done great things. Another possible meaning is that the writer speaks of the invading army, “it has done very bad things.”

### translationWords

- [cast out, drive out, throw out](#)

### Links:

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

**Joel 2:21-23****UDB:**

<sup>21</sup> Yahweh will indeed do wonderful things!

So even the ground should rejoice!

<sup>22</sup> And the wild animals should not be afraid,  
because the meadows will soon become green again;  
the fig trees and other trees will be full of fruit,  
and the grapevines will be covered with grapes.

<sup>23</sup> You people of Jerusalem,  
rejoice about what Yahweh, your God, will do for you.  
He will send abundant rain at the right time—  
in the spring and in the autumn,  
as he did previously.

**ULB:**

<sup>21</sup> Do not fear, land, be glad and rejoice,  
for Yahweh will do great things.

<sup>22</sup> Do not fear, beasts of the field,  
for the pastures of the wilderness will sprout,  
the trees will bear their fruit,  
and the fig trees and the vines will yield their full harvest.

<sup>23</sup> Be glad, people of Zion,  
and rejoice in Yahweh your God.  
For he will give you the autumn rain in due course  
and bring down showers for you,  
the autumn rain and the spring rain as before.

**translationNotes****Do not fear, land**

Joel speaks to the people of the land as if he were speaking to the land itself. AT: “Do not be afraid, you people of the land” (See: [Apostrophe](#))

**Do not fear, beasts of the field**

Joel speaks to people who own livestock as if he were speaking to the animals themselves. AT: “Do not be afraid, you people who own livestock” (See: [Apostrophe](#))

**the pastures of the wilderness will sprout**

The pastures are a metonym for the plants that grow in the pastures. AT: “plants good for food will sprout in the pastures in the wilderness” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**he will ... bring down showers for you**

“he will ... cause much rain to fall so that you will live well”

**autumn rain and the spring rain**

the first rains of the rainy season in early December and the last rains in April and May

**translationWords**

- [fear, fears, afraid](#)
- [rejoice](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [desert, wilderness](#)
- [fig](#)
- [vine](#)
- [harvest](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [God](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 2:24-25****UDB:**

<sup>24</sup> The ground where you thresh the grain will be covered with grain,  
and your vats where you store the fresh grape juice and olive oil will overflow.

<sup>25</sup> Yahweh said, "I will repay you for everything that was destroyed by those great swarms of locusts,

that enormous army that I sent to attack you.

**ULB:**

<sup>24</sup> The threshing floors will be full of wheat,  
and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

<sup>25</sup> "I will restore to you the years of crops that the swarming locust has eaten  
—the great locust, the devouring locust, and the destroying locust—  
my mighty army that I sent among you.

**translationNotes****Connecting Statement:**

Yahweh begins a long speech to the Israelites.

**vats**

large containers for liquids

**the years of crops that the swarming locust has eaten**

"the crops that you took care of for years and that the swarming locusts have eaten"

**swarming locust ... the great locust, the devouring locust, and the destroying locust**

These are, respectively, an adult locust that can fly, a locust too large to fly easily, a locust with wings too young to fly, and a newborn locust that has not yet developed wings. Use names that would be understood in your language. See how you translated this in [Joel 1:4](#).

### translationWords

- [thresh, threshing](#)
- [wheat](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)
- [oil](#)
- [restore, restores, restored, restoration](#)

### Links:

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

**Joel 2:26-27****UDB:**

<sup>26</sup> You, my people, will eat until your stomachs are full.

Then you will praise me, Yahweh, your God,  
for the wonderful things that I have done for you.

And never again will I let others shame you.

<sup>27</sup> When that happens, you will know that I am always among you,

that I am Yahweh, your God,  
and that there is no other God.

Never again will I let others shame you.”

**ULB:**

<sup>26</sup> You will eat plentifully and be full,  
and praise the name of Yahweh your God,  
who has done wonders among you,  
and I will never again bring shame on my people.

<sup>27</sup> You will know that I am among Israel,  
and that I am Yahweh your God,  
and there is none else,  
and I will never bring shame on my people.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**praise the name of Yahweh**

The name is a metonym for the person, specifically his reputation. AT: “praise Yahweh” or “praise Yahweh because everyone knows he is good” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**the name of Yahweh ... who has done wonders**

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to show that he will certainly do as he has said. AT: “my name ... because I have done wonders” (See: [First, Second, or Third Person](#))

**translationWords**

- [praise](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)
- [miracle, miracles, wonder, wonders, sign, signs](#)
- [shame, shameful, ashamed](#)
- [people group, peoples, the people, a people](#)
- [Israel, Israelites](#)

**Links:**

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



**Joel 2:28-29****UDB:**

<sup>28</sup> "Some time later, I will give my Spirit to many people.

You sons and daughters will proclaim messages that come directly from me.

Your old men will have dreams that come from me,

and your young men will have visions that come from me.

<sup>29</sup> At that time, I will give my Spirit even to servants, both men and women.

**ULB:**

<sup>28</sup> It will come about afterward that

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,

and your sons and your daughters will prophesy.

Your old men will dream dreams,

your young men will see visions.

<sup>29</sup> Also on servants and female servants,

in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**It will come about afterward that I**

"This is what I will do after that: I"

**I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh**

Yahweh speaks of the Spirit as if he were speaking of water. AT" "I will give my Spirit generously to all flesh" (See: [Metaphor](#))

**all flesh**

Here "flesh" represents people. AT: "all people" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### translationWords

- Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit
- flesh
- prophet, prophets, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess
- dream
- vision
- servant, slave, slavery

### Links:

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

**Joel 2:30-31****UDB:**

<sup>30</sup> I will do unusual things on the earth and in the sky.

On the earth, there will be much blood shed,  
and there will be very large fires and smoke that resembles huge clouds.

<sup>31</sup> In the sky, the sun will become dark, and the moon will become as red as blood.

Those things will happen before that great and terrible day when I, Yahweh, come to judge all people.

**ULB:**

<sup>30</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth,  
blood, fire, and pillars of smoke.

<sup>31</sup> The sun will turn into darkness  
and the moon into blood,

before the great and terrible day of Yahweh comes.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**blood, fire, and pillars of smoke**

“blood” is symbolizing the death of people. AT: “death, fire and pillars of smoke” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**The sun will turn into darkness**

“The sun will no longer give light”

**the moon into blood**

Here the word “blood” refers to the color red. You can supply the verb for this phrase. AT: “the moon will turn red like blood” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Ellipsis](#))

### translationWords

- miracle, miracles, wonder, wonders, sign, signs
- heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly
- earth, earthly
- blood
- fire
- pillar, column
- darkness
- day of the Lord, day of Yahweh

### Links:

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

**Joel 2:32****UDB:**

<sup>32</sup> But at that time I will save everyone who worships me.

I promise that some people in Jerusalem will escape those disasters;  
those whom I have chosen will survive.”

**ULB:**

<sup>32</sup> It will be that everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved.

For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape,  
as Yahweh has said,  
and among the survivors,  
those whom Yahweh calls.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**It will be that everyone**

“This is what will happen: everyone”

**everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved**

The name is a metonym for the person. This can be translated in active form. AT: “Yahweh will save everyone who calls on his name” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

**on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem**

These refer to the same place. AT: “on Mount Zion in Jerusalem” (See: [Doublet](#))

**among the survivors, those whom Yahweh calls**

The missing phrase “there will be” can be added to the sentence. AT: “among the survivors there will be those whom Yahweh calls” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### **survivors**

people who live through a terrible event like a war or a disaster

### **translationWords**

- [call, calls, calling, called](#)
- [name, names, named](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [save, saves, saved, safe](#)
- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)

### **Links:**

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

## Joel 03 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

There is a change in focus in this chapter from the people of Israel to her enemies. The events of this chapters also contain many prophecies about the events of the end of this world. (See: [prophet](#), [prophets](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Israel

The mention of Israel in this chapter is probably a reference to the people of Judah and not the northern kingdom of Israel. It is also possible this is a reference to the people of Israel as a whole.

#### Links:

- [Joel 03:01 Notes](#)

**Joel 3:1-3****UDB:**

<sup>1</sup> Yahweh says this:

”At that time, I will bring back the people whom their enemies took away from Jerusalem and from other places in Judah.

<sup>2</sup> Then in the Valley of Jehoshaphat I will gather together the people of all the other nations;

I will judge and punish them

because they scattered my Israelite people

and forced them to go to other countries,

and because they divided up my land among themselves.

<sup>3</sup> They played games of chance to determine who would get each of my people.

Then they sold some of the Israelite boys and girls

to get money to pay for prostitutes and wine to drink.

**ULB:**

<sup>1</sup> Behold, in those days and at that time,

when I return the exiles of Judah and Jerusalem,

<sup>2</sup> I will gather all the nations,

and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

I will judge them there,

because of my people and my inheritance Israel,

whom they scattered among the nations,

and because they divided up my land.

<sup>3</sup> They cast lots for my people,

traded a boy for a prostitute,

and sold a girl for wine

so they could drink.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.



**Behold**

“Listen” or “Pay attention”

**in those days and at that time**

The phrase “at that time” means the same thing as and intensifies the phrase “in those days.” AT: “in those very days” or “at that very time” (See: [Doublet](#))

**when I return the exiles of Judah and Jerusalem**

“When I send the exiles back to Judah and Jerusalem”

**Valley of Jehoshaphat**

Jehoshaphat, whose name means “Yahweh judges,” was king of Judah before Joel lived. There is no known place with this name. It would be best to translate this as the name of a valley that people named after the man Jehoshaphat.

**my people and my inheritance Israel**

These two phrases emphasize how Yahweh views Israel as his own precious people. AT: “the people of Israel, who are my inheritance” (See: [Doublet](#))

**traded a boy for a prostitute, and sold a girl for wine so they could drink**

These are examples of the kinds of things they did and do not indicate what they did to two particular children. AT: “and did things like trading a boy for a prostitute and selling a girl for wine, so they could drink” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**translationWords**

- [exile, the Exile](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)
- [nation](#)
- [Jehoshaphat](#)
- [judge, judges, judgment, judgments](#)
- [inherit, inheritance, heritage, heir](#)
- [Israel, Israelites](#)
- [lots, casting lots](#)
- [prostitute, harlot, whore](#)
- [wine, wineskin, new wine](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:4-6****UDB:**

<sup>4</sup> You people of the cities of Tyre and Sidon, and you people of Philistia—you are angry at me, but you have no reason to be. If you are trying to get revenge on me, I will very quickly get revenge on you. <sup>5</sup> You took the silver and gold and other valuable things from my temple and put them into your own temples. <sup>6</sup> You dragged away the people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah, and you took them far away and sold them to Greek traders.

**ULB:**

<sup>4</sup> Now, why are you angry at me,  
 Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia?  
 Will you repay me?  
 Even if you do repay me,  
 I will immediately return your retribution on your own head.  
<sup>5</sup> For you took my silver and my gold,  
 and you brought my precious treasures into your temples.  
<sup>6</sup> You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks,  
 in order to remove them far from their territory.

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**why are you angry at me ... Philistia?**

Yahweh is encouraging the people of Judah, who can hear him, by scolding the people of Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia, who cannot hear him, as if they can. The names of the towns are metonyms for the people who live in the towns. These words can be translated as a statement. AT: “you have no right to be angry at me ... Philistia.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#)).

**Will you repay me?**

“Will you get revenge on me?” God uses this question to make the people think about what they are doing. AT: “You think you can get revenge on me, but you cannot.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#)).

**I will immediately return your retribution on your own head**

Here the word “head” refers to the person. Yahweh will make them suffer the pain they wanted him to suffer. AT: “I will cause you to suffer the retribution that you tried to put on me” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Idiom](#))

**retribution**

“revenge” or “payback”

**translationWords**

- [Tyre, Tyrians](#)
- [Sidon, Sidonians](#)
- [Philistia](#)
- [head](#)
- [silver](#)
- [gold](#)
- [temple](#)
- [Judah, kingdom of Judah](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)
- [Greek, Grecian](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:7-8****UDB:**

<sup>7</sup> But I will make it possible for my people to return from the places to which you sold them, and I will do to you what you did to them. <sup>8</sup> Then I will cause some of your sons and your daughters to be sold to the people of Judah! And they will be sold to the Sabea people group, who live far away. That will certainly happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

**ULB:**

<sup>7</sup> Look, I am about to stir them up, out of the place where you sold them,  
and will return payment on your own head.

<sup>8</sup> I will sell your sons and your daughters,  
by the hand of the people of Judah.  
They will sell them to the Sabeans,  
to a nation far off,  
for Yahweh has spoken.”

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**Look**

“Pay attention” or “Listen”

**out of the place where you sold them**

The people of Israel will leave the places where they were slaves and come back to the land of Israel. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**return payment**

“give back what you deserve”

**I will sell your sons and your daughters, by the hand of the people of Judah**

The hand can be a metonym for the power the hand exercises or a synecdoche for the person. AT: “I will have the people of Judah sell your sons and your daughters” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

### Sabeans

the people of the land of Sabea (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### translationWords

- [hand, right hand, to hand over](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [nation](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

### Links:

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

**Joel 3:9-10****UDB:**

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim to the people of all nations,

”Prepare for a war!

Summon your soldiers;

tell them to stand in their battle positions.

<sup>10</sup> Take your plows and make swords from them;

take your pruning knives and make spears from them.

Even the weak people must also say they are strong soldiers.

**ULB:**

<sup>9</sup> Proclaim this among the nations,

”Prepare yourselves for war,

rouse the mighty men,

let them come near,

let all the men of battle come up.

<sup>10</sup> Beat your plowshares into swords

and your pruning knives into spears.

Let the weak say,

‘I am strong.’

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel. Here he begins an ironic call to the nations to prepare for a war in which Yahweh will completely destroy the nations. (See: [Irony](#))

**rouse the mighty men**

“make the mighty men ready for action”

**Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning knives into spears**

These two phrases share similar meanings. Both of them instruct the people to turn their farming tools into weapons. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**plowshares**

tools that are used to break up the soil in order to plant crops

**pruning knives**

knives that are used to cut off small branches

**translationWords**

- [proclaim, proclamation](#)
- [nation](#)
- [mighty, might](#)
- [sword](#)
- [spear](#)

**Links:**

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



**Joel 3:11****UDB:**

<sup>11</sup> All you people from the nations that are near Judah  
must come quickly and gather there.”

But Yahweh, when that happens, send your army of angels to attack them!

**ULB:**

<sup>11</sup> Hurry and come,  
all you nearby nations,  
gather yourselves together there.

‘Yahweh, bring down your mighty warriors.’

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

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**Hurry and come ... together there**

These words continue the ironic call to battle that begins in [Joel 3:9](#). (See: [Irony](#))

**gather yourselves together**

The purpose of the gathering is for battle. This can be stated explicitly. AT: “gather yourselves together for battle” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**Yahweh, bring down your mighty warriors**

Possible meanings are 1) Joel is telling the people of Judah that this is what they are to “proclaim among the nations” ([Joel 3:9](#)) or 2) Joel interrupts the words of Yahweh and prays a short prayer.

**translationWords**

- [mighty, might](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:12-13****UDB:**

<sup>12</sup> Yahweh says, "The people in the nations near Judah must get ready and come to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

There I will sit as a judge, and I will punish them.

<sup>13</sup> They are like crops that are ready to be harvested;

so strike them as a farmer swings his sickle to cut the grain.

They are like grapes that are piled high in the pits where they will be pressed;

because they are very wicked,

punish them severely now,

as a farmer tramples on the grapes until the pits overflow with juice."

**ULB:**

<sup>12</sup> Let the nations wake themselves up  
and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

For there will I sit to judge  
all the surrounding nations.

<sup>13</sup> Put in the sickle,  
for the harvest is ripe.

Come, crush the grapes,  
for the winepress is full.

The vats overflow,  
for their wickedness is enormous."

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

Yahweh finishes the speech he began in [Joel 2:25](#), promising good things for the people of Israel.

**Let the nations wake themselves ... all the surrounding nations**

The words "the nations" and "the surrounding nations" refer to the same nations, those that surround Judah. Yahweh will judge them in the Valley of Jehoshaphat for what they have done to Jerusalem.

**Valley of Jehoshaphat**

Jehoshaphat, whose name means “Yahweh judges,” was king of Judah before Joel lived. There is no known place with this name. It would be best to translate this as the name of a valley that people named after the man Jehoshaphat. See how you translated this in [Joel 3:2](#).

**Put in the sickle ... the winepress is full**

Possible meanings are that Yahweh speaks of completely destroying the nations as if 1) he were harvesting all the grapes and all the grain or 2) he were harvesting quickly, while the grain and grapes are ripe. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe**

Yahweh speaks of making war against the nations as if he were using a sharp tool to harvest a field of ripe crops. If your readers will not understand the word “sickle,” you may use the word for any sharp tool that your people use for harvesting. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**Put in the sickle**

“Swing the sickle to cut the grain.” This is a metaphor for a soldier using a sword to kill people, but it is best to use the word for a sharp tool used in harvesting. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**sickle**

a long curved knife that people use for cutting grain

**the harvest is ripe**

“the grain is ready to be harvested”

**Come, crush the grapes, for the winepress is full**

Yahweh speaks of the nations as if they were many grapes in a winepress, ready for people to crush them by stepping on them. AT: “Come, completely destroy the nations, for they are many, and they are helpless to resist you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**The vats overflow, for their wickedness is enormous**

Yahweh speaks of the nations’ wickedness as if it were the juice that flows from the winepress into storage containers, and more juice flows into the vats than they can contain. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**translationWords**

- nation
- Jehoshaphat
- judge, judges, judgment, judgments
- harvest
- grape
- winepress
- evil, wicked, wickedness

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:14-15****UDB:**

<sup>14</sup> There will be the noise of huge crowds of people in that Valley of Judgment.

It will soon be the time that Yahweh will punish them.

<sup>15</sup> At that time there will be no light from the sun or moon,  
and the stars will not shine.

**ULB:**

<sup>14</sup> There is a tumult, a tumult in the Valley of Judgment.

For the day of Yahweh is near in the Valley of Judgment.

<sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon become dark,  
the stars keep back their brightness.

**translationNotes****a tumult, a tumult**

A tumult is noise caused by a large crowd. This is repeated to show that it will be very noisy from all the people.

**Valley of Judgment ... Valley of Judgment**

This phrase is repeated to show that the judgment will certainly happen.

**Valley of Judgment**

There is no known place with this name. The abstract noun “judgment” can be translated using the verb “judge.” AT: “Valley Where Yahweh Judges” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**translationWords**

- [judge, judges, judgment, judgments](#)
- [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:16-17****UDB:**

<sup>16</sup> From Mount Zion in Jerusalem Yahweh will shout;  
 his voice will be like thunder,  
 and his voice will cause the sky and the earth to shake.

But Yahweh will protect his people;

he will be like a strong wall behind which the people of Israel will be protected.

<sup>17</sup> Yahweh says, "At that time, you Israelite people will know that I am Yahweh, your God.

I live on Zion, the hill I have set apart for myself.

Jerusalem will be a city very special to me,

and soldiers from other countries will never conquer it again.

**ULB:**

<sup>16</sup> Yahweh will roar from Zion,  
 and raise his voice from Jerusalem.

The heavens and earth will shake,

but Yahweh will be a shelter for his people,

and a fortress for the people of Israel.

<sup>17</sup> "So you will know that I am Yahweh your God

who lives in Zion, my holy mountain.

Then Jerusalem will be holy,

and no army will march through her again.

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

Yahweh begins speaking in verse 17.

**Yahweh will roar from Zion, and raise his voice from Jerusalem**

Both phrases mean Yahweh will shout with a loud, clear and powerful voice from Jerusalem. If your language only has one word for speaking very loudly, this can be used as one phrase. AT: "Yahweh will shout from Jerusalem" (See: [Parallelism](#))

**Yahweh will roar**

Possible meanings are 1) “Yahweh will roar like a lion” or 2) “Yahweh will roar like thunder.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**The heavens and earth will shake**

Joel speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were people who are shaking with fear. This can be translated as either a hyperbole, that Yahweh’s roar is so frightening that even things that are not alive are afraid, or as metonymy, that the heavens and earth are metonyms for the beings who live there. AT: “Everyone in the heavens and on the earth is very afraid” (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#) and [Metonymy](#))

**will shake**

This word is the past form of the word translated “tremble” in [Joel 2:10](#).

**Yahweh will be a shelter for his people, and a fortress for the people of Israel**

Both of these phrases mean Yahweh will protect his people. A fortress is a strong shelter used to protect people during war. AT: “Yahweh will be a strong fortress for his people, the people of Israel” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Parallelism](#))

**So you will know**

“When I do these things, you will know”

**translationWords**

- [Zion, Mount Zion](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)
- [heaven, sky, skies, heavens, heavenly](#)
- [people of God, my people](#)
- [Israel, Israelites](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God](#)
- [holy, holiness](#)

**Links:**

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



**Joel 3:18-19****UDB:**

<sup>18</sup> At that time, there will be vineyards covering the hills,  
and your cattle and goats on those hills will produce plenty of milk.  
The streams in Judah will never dry up,  
And a stream will flow from my temple into the Valley of Acacia northeast of the Dead Sea.  
<sup>19</sup> The armies of Egypt and Edom attacked the people of Judah  
and killed many people who had not done anything that was wrong.  
So now those countries will be ruined, with no one living there any longer.

**ULB:**

<sup>18</sup> It will come about on that day  
that the mountains will drip with sweet wine,  
the hills will flow with milk,  
all the brooks of Judah will flow with water,  
and a fountain will come from the house of Yahweh  
and water the Valley of Shittim.  
<sup>19</sup> Egypt will become an abandoned devastation,  
and Edom will become an abandoned wilderness,  
because of the violence done to the people of Judah,  
because they shed innocent blood in their land.

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

God continues to speak about the day of the Lord.

**It will come about on that day that the mountains**

“This is what will happen on that day: the mountains” Translate “It will come about” as in [Joel 2:28](#).

**the mountains will drip with sweet wine**

“sweet wine will drip from the mountains.” This is an exaggeration to show that the land is very fertile. AT: “On the mountains there will be vineyards that produce plenty of sweet wine” (See: [Hyperbole and Generalization](#))

**the hills will flow with milk**

“milk will flow from the hills.” The land being very fertile is spoken of as if the hills would flow with milk. AT: “on the hills your cattle and goats will produce plenty of milk” (See: [Metaphor](#))

**all the brooks of Judah will flow with water**

“water will flow through all the brooks of Judah”

**water the Valley of Shittim**

“will send water to the Valley of Shittim”

**Shittim**

the name of a place on the east side of the Jordan River. It means “Acacia Trees.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

**Egypt will become an abandoned devastation**

“Everyone will leave Egypt and no one will live there”

**Edom will become an abandoned wilderness**

“Everyone will leave Edom and it will look like no people have ever lived there”

**because of the violence done to the people of Judah**

“because of the violent things Egypt and Edom did to the people of Judah”

**because they shed innocent blood in their land**

The word “they” refers to “Edom” and “Egypt” and is a metonym for the people of Egypt and Edom. The words “innocent blood” are a metonym for innocent people whom they have killed. AT: “because the people of Egypt and the people of Edom killed innocent people in the land of the people of Judah” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**translationWords**

- wine, wineskin, new wine
- Judah
- Yahweh
- Egypt, Egyptian
- Edom, Edomite, Idumea
- desert, wilderness
- innocent
- blood

**Links:**

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

**Joel 3:20-21****UDB:**

<sup>20</sup> But there will always be people living in Jerusalem and in other places in Judea.

<sup>21</sup> I, Yahweh, live on Mount Zion in Jerusalem,  
and I will get revenge on the people of Egypt and Edom who killed many of my people.”

**ULB:**

<sup>20</sup> But Judah will be inhabited forever,  
and Jerusalem will be inhabited from generation to generation.

<sup>21</sup> I will avenge their blood that I have not yet avenged,  
for Yahweh lives in Zion.”

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

Yahweh continues to speak about the day of the Lord.

**Judah will be inhabited forever**

This can be stated in active form. AT: “people will live in Judah forever” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**Jerusalem will be inhabited from generation to generation**

This can be stated in active form. AT: “generation after generation, people will live in Jerusalem” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**I will avenge their blood that I have not yet avenged**

Blood is a metonym for death. AT: “I will punish the enemies who killed the people of Israel and still have not been punished” (See: [Metonymy](#))

**translationWords**

- forever
- generation
- avenge, revenge, vengeance
- blood
- Yahweh
- Zion, Mount Zion

**Links:**

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

## translationQuestions

### Joel 1

#### Whose word came to Joel?

The word of Yahweh came to Joel. [1:1]

#### To whom were the elder to tell the word of Yahweh?

They were to tell their children, and their children were to tell their children. [1:3]

#### What happened to what the great locusts have left?

The grasshopper has eaten what the great locusts have left. [1:4]

#### Why will drinkers of wine wail?

They will wail because the sweet wine has been cut off. [1:5]

#### Into what has the enemy made the vineyard?

He has made the vineyard into a terrifying place. [1:7]

#### For what reason does the virgin mourn?

The virgin mourns for the death of her young husband. [1:8]

#### What has happened to the grain?

The grain had been destroyed. [1:10]

#### What has been withheld from the house of God?

The grain offering and the drink offering have been withheld from the house of God. [1:13]

#### When will the day of Yahweh be here?

The day of Yahweh is almost here. [1:15]

**What has been broken down?**

The barns have been broken down. [1:17]

**Why are the herds of cattle suffering?**

The herds of cattle are suffering because they have no pasture. [1:18]

**To whom does Joel call?**

Joel calls to Yahweh. [1:19]

**For whom do the animals of the field pant?**

The animals of the field pant for Yahweh [1:20]

## Joel 2

### **Why should all the inhabitants of the land tremble in fear?**

They should tremble in fear, for the day of Yahweh is coming. [2:1]

### **When has there been an army like this one?**

There has never been an army like this one, and there never will be again. [2:2]

### **What is the land like behind the army?**

The land behind the army is a ruined wilderness. [2:3]

### **What does the army look like and act like?**

The army looks like horses and runs like horsemen. [2:4]

### **How does the army enter the city?**

They rush on the city, they run on the wall, they climb in houses, and they go through windows like thieves. [2:9]

### **Whose army is this?**

This is Yahweh's army. [2:11]

### **What two things should the people tear?**

They should tear their hearts and their garments. [2:13]

### **Why should the people return to Yahweh?**

He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in love, and he would like to turn from inflicting punishment. [2:13]

### **Why should the people blow a trumpet in Zion?**

They should blow a trumpet to consecrate a fast, and to call a sacred assembly. [2:15]



**What had Yahweh's people been among the nations?**

Yahweh's people had been a disgrace among the nations. [2:19]

**Why should the land not fear?**

The land should not fear for Yahweh has done great things. [2:21]

**Who sent the mighty army?**

Yahweh sent the mighty army. [2:25]

**Will Yahweh ever bring shame on his people again?**

No, he will never bring shame on his people again. [2:26]

**Will Yahweh ever bring shame on his people again?**

No, he will never bring shame on his people again. [2:27]

**What will happen when Yahweh pours out his Spirit?**

Their sons and your daughters will prophesy, their old men will dream dreams, and their young men will see visions. [2:28]

**What will happen when Yahweh pours out his Spirit?**

Their sons and your daughters will prophesy, their old men will dream dreams, and their young men will see visions. [2:29]

**What will Yahweh show in heavens and on the earth?**

Yahweh show wonders in heavens and on the earth. [2:30]

**Into what will the sun turn?**

The sun will turn into darkness. [2:31]

**Who will be saved at that time?**

Everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved. [2:32]

## Joel 3

### **Who will Yahweh bring to the Valley of Jehoshphat?**

Yahweh will bring the nations to the Valley of Jehoshphat. [3:2]

### **Who did the nations scatter?**

The nations scattered Yahweh's people. [3:2]

### **At whom are Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia angry?**

Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia are angry at Yahweh. [3:4]

### **What did Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia do with Yahweh's treasures?**

They brought his treasures into their temples. [3:5]

### **What did Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia do to the people of Judah and Jerusalem?**

They sold the people to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory. [3:6]

### **What will Yahweh do to the sons and daughters of Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia?**

Yahweh will sell their sons and daughters to the Sabeans by the hand of the people of Judah. [3:8]

### **Into what should the nations beat their plowshares?**

They should beat their plowshares into swords. [3:10]

### **What will Yahweh do to all surrounding nations?**

Yahweh will sit to judge all surrounding nations. [3:12]

### **What will happen to the sun, moon, and stars?**

The sun and the moon will become dark, and the stars will keep back their brightness. [3:14]

### **What two things will Yahweh be for his people?**

Yahweh be a shelter and a fortress for his people. [3:16]

**Who lives in Zion?**

Yahweh their God lives in Zion. [3:17]

**With what will the hills flow?**

The hills will flow with milk. [3:18]

**Who will be abandoned because of the violence they did to the people of Judah?**

Egypt and Edom will be abandoned. [3:19]

## translationWords

### Almighty

#### Facts:

The term “Almighty” literally means “all-powerful”; in the Bible, it always refers to God.

- The titles “the Almighty” or “the Almighty One” refer to God and reveal that he has complete power and authority over everything.
- This term is also used to describe God in the titles “Almighty God” and “God Almighty” and “Lord Almighty” and “Lord God Almighty.”

#### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “All-powerful” or “Completely Powerful One” or “God, who is completely powerful.”
- Ways to translate the phrase “Lord God Almighty” could include “God, the Powerful Ruler” or “Powerful Sovereign God” or “Mighty God who is Master over everything.”

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

(See also: [God](#), lord, power)

#### Bible References:

- Exodus 06:2-5
- Genesis 17:1-2
- Genesis 35:11-13
- Job 08:1-3
- Numbers 24:15-16
- [Revelation 01:7-8](#)
- Ruth 01:19-21

#### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7706, G3841

#### Uses:

- [Joel 1:15-17](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 1:13-14](#)
- [Joel 2:17](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:12-13](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:15-16



## 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:**

- Joel 3:20-21

## **bless, blessed, blessing**

### **Definition:**

To “bless” someone or something means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

- Blessing someone also means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.
- When people “bless” God or express a desire that God be blessed, this means they are praising him.
- The term “bless” is sometimes used for consecrating food before it is eaten, or for thanking and praising God for the food.

### **Translation Suggestions:**

- To “bless” could also be translated as “to provide abundantly for” or “to be very kind and favorable toward.”
- “God has brought great blessing to” could be translated as “God has given many good things to” or “God has provided abundantly for” or “God has caused many good things to happen to”.
- “He is blessed” could be translated as “he will greatly benefit” or “he will experience good things” or “God will cause him to flourish.”
- “Blessed is the person who” could be translated as “How good it is for the person who.”
- Expressions like “blessed be the Lord” could be translated as “May the Lord be praised” or “Praise the Lord” or “I praise the Lord.”
- In the context of blessing food, this could be translated as “thanked God for the food” or “praised God for giving them food” or “consecrated the food by praising God for it.”

(See also: [praise](#))

### **Bible References:**

- [1 Corinthians 10:14-17](#)
- [Acts 13:32-34](#)
- [Ephesians 01:3-4](#)
- [Genesis 14:19-20](#)
- [Isaiah 44:3-4](#)
- [James 01:22-25](#)
- [Luke 06:20-21](#)
- [Matthew 26:26](#)
- [Nehemiah 09:5-6](#)
- [Romans 04:9-10](#)

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **01:07** God saw that it was good and he **blessed** them.
- **01:15** God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He **blessed** them and told them, “Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.”
- **01:16** So God rested from all he had been doing. He **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **04:04** “I will make your name great. I will **bless** those who **bless** you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be **blessed** because of you.”
- **04:07** Melchizedek **blessed** Abram and said, “May God Most High who owns heaven and earth **bless** Abram.”
- **07:03** Isaac wanted to give his **blessing** to Esau.
- **08:05** Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H833, H835, H1288, H1289, H1293, G1757, G2127, G2128, G2129, G3106, G3107, G3108, G6050

**Uses:**

- **Joel 2:14**

## 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:**

- Joel 2:30-31
- Joel 3:18-19
- Joel 3:20-21

## bride

### Definition:

A bride is the woman in a wedding ceremony who is getting married to her husband, the bridegroom.

- The term “bride” is used as a metaphor for believers in Jesus, the Church.
- Jesus is metaphorically called the “bridegroom” for the Church. (See: [Metaphor](#))

(See also: [bridegroom](#), church)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 22:16-17
- Isaiah 62:5
- [Joel 02:15-16](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3618, G3565

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:15-16](#)

## bridegroom

### Definition:

In a marriage ceremony, the bridegroom is the man who will marry the bride.

- In the Jewish culture during Bible times, the ceremony was centered around the bridegroom coming to get his bride.
- In the Bible, Jesus is figuratively called the “Bridegroom” who will someday come for his “Bride,” the Church.
- Jesus compared his disciples to the friends of the bridegroom who celebrate while the bridegroom is with them, but who will be sad when he is gone.

(See also: [bride](#))

### Bible References:

- Isaiah 62:5
- [Joel 02:15-16](#)
- [John 03:29-30](#)
- [Luke 05:33-35](#)
- [Mark 02:18-19](#)
- [Mark 02:20-21](#)
- [Matthew 09:14-15](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2860, G3566

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:15-16](#)



## **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:**

- Joel 2:32

## cast out, drive out, throw out

### Definition:

To “cast out” or “drive out” someone or something means to force that person or thing to go away.

- The term “cast” means the same thing as “throw.” To cast a net means to throw the net into the water.
- In a figurative sense, “cast out” or “cast away” someone can mean to reject that person and send him away.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include, “force out” or “send away” or “get rid of.”
- To “cast out demons” could be translated as “cause the demons to leave” or “drive the evil spirits out” or “expel the demons” or “command the demon to come out.”

(See also: demon, demon-possessed, [lots](#))

### Bible References:

- [Acts 07:17-19](#)
- [Mark 03:13-16](#)
- [Mark 09:28-29](#)
- [Matthew 07:21-23](#)
- [Matthew 09:32-34](#)
- [Matthew 12:24-25](#)
- [Matthew 17:19-21](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1272, H1644, H1920, H3423, H7971, H7993, G1544

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:20](#)

## chariot

### Definition:

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

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

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

(See also: [Egypt](#), Rome)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 09:22
- 2 Chronicles 18:28-30
- [Acts 08:29-31](#)
- [Acts 08:36-38](#)
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Genesis 41:42-43

### Examples from the Bible stories:

\***12:10** So they followed the Israelites onto the path through the sea, but God caused the Egyptians to panic and caused their **chariots** to get stuck.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H668, H2021, H4817, H4818, H5699, H7393, H7395, H7396, H7398, G716, G4480

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:4-5](#)

## **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:**

- [Joel 2:10-11](#)

## **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:**

- Joel 2:14

## 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:**

- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:30-31

## day of the Lord, day of Yahweh

### Description:

The Old Testament term “day of Yahweh” is used to refer to a specific time(s) when God would punish people for their sin.

- The New Testament term “day of the Lord” usually refers to the day or time when the Lord Jesus will come back to judge people at the end of time.
- This final, future time of judgment and resurrection is also sometimes referred to as the “last day.” This time will begin when the Lord Jesus comes back to judge sinners and will permanently establish his rule.
- The word “day” in these phrases may sometimes refer to a literal day or it may refer to a “time” or “occasion” that is longer than a day.
- Sometimes the punishment is referred to as a “pouring out of God’s wrath” upon those who do not believe.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “day of Yahweh” could include “time of Yahweh” or “time when Yahweh will punish his enemies” or “time of Yahweh’s wrath.”
- Other ways to translate “day of the Lord” could include “time of the Lord’s judgment” or “time when the Lord Jesus will return to judge people.”

(See also: day, judgment day, Lord, resurrection, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 05:3-5](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 05:1-3](#)
- [2 Peter 03:10](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 02:1-2](#)
- [Acts 02:20-21](#)
- [Philippians 01:9-11](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3068, H3117, G2250, G2962

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:15-17](#)
- [Joel 2:10-11](#)

- Joel 2:30-31
- Joel 3:14-15

## 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:

- [Joel 1:18-20](#)
- [Joel 2:3](#)
- [Joel 2:21-23](#)
- [Joel 3:18-19](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:4-5](#)

## dream

### Definition:

A dream is something that people see or experience in their minds while they are sleeping.

- Dreams often seem like they are really happening, but they are not.
- Sometimes God causes people to dream about something so they can learn from it. He may also speak directly to people in their dreams.
- In the Bible, God gave special dreams to certain people to give them a message, often about something that would happen in the future.
- A dream is different from a vision. Dreams happen while a person is asleep, but visions usually happen when a person is awake.

(See also: [vision](#))

### Bible References:

- [Acts 02:16-17](#)
- Daniel 01:17-18
- Daniel 02:1-2
- Genesis 37:5-6
- Genesis 40:4-5
- [Matthew 02:13-15](#)
- [Matthew 02:19-21](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

**\*08:02** Joseph's brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had **dreamed** that he would be their ruler. **\*08:06** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two **dreams** that disturbed him greatly. None of his advisors could tell him the meaning of the **dreams**. **\*08:07** God had given Joseph the ability to interpret **dreams**, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison. Joseph interpreted the **dreams** for him and said, "God is going to send seven years of plentiful harvests followed by seven years of famine." **\*16:11** So that night, Gideon went down to the camp and heard a Midianite soldier telling his friend about something he had **dreamed**. The man's friend said, "This **dream** means that Gideon's army will defeat the Midianite army!" **\*23:01** He (Joseph) did not want to shame her (Mary), so he planned to quietly divorce her. Before he could do that, an angel came and spoke to him in a **dream**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1957, H2472, H2492, H2493, G1797, G1798, G3677

**Uses:**

- Joel 2:28-29

## drink offering

### Definition:

A drink offering was a sacrifice to God that involved pouring wine on an altar. It was often offered together with a burnt offering and a grain offering.

- Paul refers to his life as being poured out like a drink offering. This means that he was totally dedicated to serving God and telling people about Jesus, even though he knew he would suffer and probably be killed because of that.
- Jesus' death on the cross was the ultimate drink offering, as his blood was poured out on the cross for our sins.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Another way to translate this term could be “offering of grape wine.”
- When Paul says he is being “poured out like an offering” this could also be translated as “I am completely committed to teaching God’s message to people, just like an offering of wine is poured out completely on the altar.”

(See also: burnt offering, grain offering)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 25:28-30
- Ezekiel 45:16-17
- Genesis 35:14-15
- Jeremiah 07:16-18
- Numbers 05:15

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5257, H5261, H5262

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)
- [Joel 2:14](#)



## 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:

- [Joel 1:5-7](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:10-11](#)

- [Joel 2:30-31](#)

## Eden, garden of Eden

### Facts:

In ancient times, Eden was a region that had a garden where God placed the first man and woman to live.

- The garden where Adam and Eve lived was only part of Eden.
- The exact location of the region of Eden is not certain, but the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers were flowing through it.
- The word “Eden” comes from a Hebrew word meaning “to take great delight in.”

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

(See also: Adam, Euphrates River, Eve)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 28:11-13
- Genesis 02:7-8
- Genesis 02:9-10
- Genesis 02:15-17
- Genesis 04:16-17
- [Joel 02:3](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5729, H5731

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:3](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 3:18-19](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 3:18-19

## 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:

- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:15-16



## 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:

- **Joel 3:12-13**

## 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:

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

## fast

### Definition:

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

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

(See also: Jewish leaders)

### Bible References:

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

### Examples from the Bible stories:

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

### Word Data:

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

**Uses:**

- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:12-13
- Joel 2:15-16

## 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:**

- [Joel 2:21-23](#)

**fig****Definition:**

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

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

**Bible References:**

- [Habakkuk 03:17](#)
- [James 03:11-12](#)
- [Luke 13:6-7](#)
- [Mark 11:13-14](#)
- [Matthew 07:15-17](#)
- [Matthew 21:18-19](#)

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1061, H1690, H6291, H8384, G3653, G4808, G4810

**Uses:**

- [Joel 1:5-7](#)
- [Joel 1:11-12](#)
- [Joel 2:21-23](#)



## 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:

- [Joel 2:4-5](#)
- [Joel 2:30-31](#)

## 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:**

- [Joel 2:28-29](#)

## flock, herd

### Definition:

In the Bible, “flock” refers to a group of sheep or goats and “herd” refers to a group of cattle, oxen, or pigs.

- Different languages may have different ways of naming groups of animals or birds.
- For example, in English the term “herd” can also be used for sheep or goats, but in the Bible text it is not used this way.
- The term “flock” in English is also used for a group of birds, but it can not be used for pigs, oxen, or cattle.
- Consider what terms are used in your language to refer to different groups of animals.
- For verses that refer to “flocks and herds” it may be better to add “of sheep” or “of cattle” for example, if the language does not have different words to refer to different kinds of animal groups.

(See also: goat, ox, pig, [sheep](#), )

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:28-29
- 2 Chronicles 17:10-11
- Deuteronomy 14:22-23
- [Luke 02:8-9](#)
- [Matthew 08:30-32](#)
- [Matthew 26:30-32](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H951, H1241, H2835, H4029, H4735, H4830, H5349, H5739, H6251, H6629, H7399, H7462, G34, G4167, G4168

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:18-20](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 3:20-21

## 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:

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

- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 3:20-21



## 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:**

- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:12-13
- Joel 2:14
- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:21-23
- Joel 2:26-27
- Joel 3:16-17

## 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:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)

## grace, gracious

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

### Bible References:

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

### Word Data:

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

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:12-13](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 3:12-13](#)

## Greek, Grecian

### Facts:

The term “Greek” refers to the language spoken in the country of Greece, it is also a person from the country of Greece. Greek was also spoken throughout the Roman Empire. The term “Grecian” means “Greek-speaking.”

- Since most non-Jewish people in the Roman Empire spoke Greek, Gentiles are often referred to as “Greeks” in the New Testament, especially when contrasted with Jews.
- The phrase “Grecian Jews” referred to Jews who spoke Greek in contrast to the “Hebraic Jews” who spoke only Hebrew, or perhaps Aramaic.
- Other ways to translate “Grecian” could include, “Greek-speaking” or “culturally Greek” or “Greek.”
- When referring to non-Jews, “Greek” could be translated as “Gentile.”

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

(See also: Aram, Gentile, Greece, Hebrew, Rome)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 06:1](#)
- [Acts 09:28-30](#)
- [Acts 11:19-21](#)
- [Acts 14:1-2](#)
- [Colossians 03:9-11](#)
- [Galatians 02:3-5](#)
- [John 07:35-36](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3125, G1672, G1673, G1674, G1675, G1676

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)



## **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, **ble**ss, 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:**

- [Joel 3:7-8](#)

## harvest

### Definition:

The term “harvest” refers to the gathering in of ripe fruits or vegetables from the plants on which they were growing.

- The harvest time normally happens at the end of a growing season.
- The Israelites held a “Festival of Harvest” or “Festival of Ingathering” to celebrate the reaping of the food crops. God commanded them to offer the first fruits of these crops as a sacrifice to him.
- In a figurative sense, the word “harvest” can refer to people coming to believe in Jesus or can describe a person’s spiritual growth.
- The idea of a harvest of spiritual crops fits with the figurative image of fruits being a picture of godly character qualities.

### Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the word that is commonly used in the language to refer to the harvesting of crops.
- The event of harvesting could be translated as, “time of gathering in” or “crop gathering time” or “fruit picking time.”
- The verb “to harvest” could be translated as, “to gather in” or “to pick up” or “to collect.”

(See also: firstfruits, festival)

### Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 09:9-11](#)
- [2 Samuel 21:7-9](#)
- [Galatians 06:9-10](#)
- [Isaiah 17:10-11](#)
- [James 05:7-8](#)
- [Leviticus 19:9-10](#)
- [Matthew 09:37-38](#)
- [Ruth 01:22](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2758, H7105, G2326, G6013

**Uses:**

- Joel 1:11-12
- Joel 2:21-23
- Joel 3:12-13

## 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:**

- Joel 3:4-6

## 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:**

- Joel 2:12-13



## 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:**

- Joel 2:10-11
- Joel 2:30-31
- Joel 3:16-17

## Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

### Facts:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: [holy](#), [spirit](#), [God](#), [Lord](#), [God the Father](#), [Son of God](#), [gift](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:9-10
- [1 Thessalonians 04:7-8](#)
- [Acts 08:14-17](#)
- [Galatians 05:25-26](#)
- Genesis 01:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4-5
- [Matthew 12:31-32](#)
- [Matthew 28:18-19](#)
- Psalms 051:10-11

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **01:01** But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.
- **24:08** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **26:01** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.

- **26:03** Jesus read, "God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed."
- **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."
- **43:03** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **43:08** "And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are now seeing and hearing."
- **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. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."
- **45:01** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G40, G4151

**Uses:**

- [Introduction to Joel](#)
- [Joel 2:28-29](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:15-16
- Joel 3:16-17

## 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:

- [Joel 1:15-17](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 2:17
- Joel 3:1-3

## innocent

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: guilt)

### Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 04:3-4](#)
- [1 Samuel 19:4-5](#)
- [Acts 20:25-27](#)
- [Exodus 23:6-9](#)
- [Jeremiah 22:17-19](#)
- [Job 09:21-24](#)
- [Romans 16:17-18](#)

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **08:06** After two years, Joseph was still in prison, even though he was **innocent**.
- **40:04** One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, "Do you have no fear of God? We are guilty, but this man is **innocent**."
- **40:08** When the soldier guarding Jesus saw everything that happened, he said, "Certainly, this man was **innocent**. He was the Son of God." \*

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2136, H2600, H2643, H5352, H5355, H5356, G121

**Uses:**

- **Joel 3:18-19**

## 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:**

- Joel 2:26-27
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:16-17

## Jehoshaphat

### Facts:

Jehoshaphat was the name of at least two men in the Old Testament.

- The best known man by this name was King Jehoshaphat who was the fourth king to rule over the kingdom of Judah.
- He restored peace between Judah and Israel and destroyed the altars of false gods.
- Another Jehoshaphat was a “recorder” for David and Solomon. His job included writing documents for the king to sign and recording the history of the important events that happened in the kingdom.

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

(See also: [altar](#), David, false god, [Israel](#), [Judah](#), [priest](#), Solomon)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 03:10-12
- 1 Kings 04:15-17
- 2 Chronicles 17:1-2
- 2 Kings 01:17-18
- 2 Samuel 08:15-18
- [Matthew 01:7-8](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:1-3](#)
- [Joel 3:12-13](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 2:32
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:4-6
- Joel 3:16-17



## Joel

### Facts:

Joel was a prophet who probably lived during the reign of King Joash of Judah. There were also several other men in the Old Testament named Joel.

- The book of Joel is one of twelve short prophetic books in the last section of the Old Testament.
- The only personal information we have about the prophet Joel is that his father's name was Pethuel.
- In his sermon at Pentecost, the apostle Peter quoted from the book of Joel.
- 

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

(See also: Joash, [Judah](#), Pentecost)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 06:33-35
- 1 Samuel 08:1-3
- [Acts 02:16-17](#)
- Ezra 10:41-44
- [Joel 01:1-3](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

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

## 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:**

- **Joel 1:11-12**

## 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:

- [Joel 3:1-3](#)
- [Joel 3:7-8](#)
- [Joel 3:18-19](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 3:4-6

## **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:**

- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:14-15



## 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:

- [Joel 1:5-7](#)

## lots, casting lots

### Definition:

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

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

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

### Bible References:

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

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

### Uses:

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

## love, loves, loving, loved

### Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn't benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
2. Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
3. When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
4. In the ULB, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.
5. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.
6. This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
7. The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.
8. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.
9. In the figurative expression “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated,” the term “loved” refers to God's choosing of Jacob to be in a covenant relationship with him. This could also be translated as “chosen.” Although Esau was also blessed by God, he wasn't given the privilege of being in the covenant. The term “hated” is used figuratively here to mean “rejected” or “not chosen.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULB refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God's love can include giving up one's own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means, “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”
- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.

- Many languages must express “love” as an action. So for example, they might translate “love is patient, love is kind” as, “when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him.”

(See also: covenant, death, sacrifice, **save**, sin)

### Bible References:

- **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**
- **1 John 03:1-3**
- **1 Thessalonians 04:9-12**
- **Galatians 05:22-24**
- Genesis 29:15-18
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 02:1-3
- **John 03:16-18**
- **Matthew 10:37-39**
- Nehemiah 09:32-34
- **Philippians 01:9-11**
- Song of Solomon 01:1-4

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:02** The law expert replied that God’s law says, “**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself.”
- **33:08** “The thorny ground is a person who hears God’s word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God.”
- **36:05** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I **love**.”
- **39:10** “Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me.”
- **47:01** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:01** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:03** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:04** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:07** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:09** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H157, H158, H159, H160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G25, G26, G5360, G5361, G5362, G5363, G5365, G5367, G5368, G5369, G5377, G5381, G5382, G5383, G5388

**Uses:**

- [Joel 2:12-13](#)

## meal offering, grain offering

### Definition:

A “meal offering” or “grain offering” was a sacrifice to God in the form of grain or bread made out of grain flour.

- The term “meal” refers to grain that has been ground up into flour.
- The flour was mixed with water or oil to make a flat bread. Sometimes oil was spread on top of the bread.
- This kind of offering was usually offered together with a burnt offering.

(See also: burnt offering, [grain](#), sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 44:30-31
- [Joel 02:14](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:14](#)

## mercy, merciful

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

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

### Bible References:

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

### Examples from the Bible stories:

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

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

**Word Data:**

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

**Uses:**

- **Joel 2:12-13**



## 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:**

- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:6-7
- Joel 3:9-10
- Joel 3:11

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

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

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

### Bible References:

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

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

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **16:08** Gideon asked God for two **signs** so he could be sure that God would use him to save Israel.
- **19:14** God did many **miracles** through Elisha.
- **37:10** Many of the Jews believed in Jesus because of this **miracle**.
- **43:06** "Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty **signs** and **wonders** by the power of God, as you have seen and already know."
- **49:02** Jesus did many **miracles** that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

**Word Data:**

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

**Uses:**

- [Joel 2:26-27](#)
- [Joel 2:30-31](#)

## 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:**

- [Joel 2:32](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:18-19
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:7-8
- Joel 3:9-10
- Joel 3:12-13



## oil

### Definition:

Oil is a thick, clear liquid that can be taken from certain plants. In Bible times, oil usually came from olives.

- Olive oil was used for cooking, anointing, sacrifice, lamps, and medicine.
- In ancient times, olive oil was highly prized, and the possession of oil was considered a measurement of wealth.
- Make sure the translation of this term refers to the kind of oil that can be used in cooking, not motor oil. Some languages have different words for these different kinds of oil.

(See also: olive, sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 01:21-22
- Exodus 29:1-2
- Leviticus 05:11
- Leviticus 08:1-3
- [Mark 06:12-13](#)
- [Matthew 25:7-9](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)
- [Joel 2:18-19](#)
- [Joel 2:24-25](#)

## palm

### Definition:

The term “palm” refers to a type of tall tree with long, flexible, leafy branches extending from the top in a fan-like pattern.

- The palm tree in the Bible usually refers to a type of palm tree that produces a fruit called a “date.” The leaves have a feather-like pattern.
- Palm trees typically grow in places that have a hot, humid climate. Their leaves stay green all year long.
- As Jesus was entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, the people laid palm branches on the ground in front of him.
- Palm branches signified peace and the celebration of a victory.

(See also: donkey, [Jerusalem](#), peace)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 06:29-30
- Ezekiel 40:14-16
- [John 12:12-13](#)
- Numbers 33:8-10

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:11-12](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:18-19
- Joel 2:26-27

## people of God, my people

### Definition:

The term “people of God” refers to people whom God has called out from the world to have a special relationship with him.

- When God says “my people” he is talking about the people whom he has chosen and who have a relationship with him.
- God’s people are chosen by him and are set apart from the world to live in a way that is pleasing to him. He also calls them his children.
- In the Old Testament, “people of God” refers to the nation of Israel which was chosen by God and set apart from among the other nations of the world to serve and obey him.
- In the New Testament, “people of God” especially refers to all those who believe in Jesus and are called the Church. This includes both Jews and Gentiles.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people of God” could be translated as “God’s people” or “the people who worship God” or “people who serve God” or “people who belong to God.”
- When God says “my people” other ways to translate it could include “the people I have chosen” or “the people who worship me” or “the people who belong to me.”
- Similarly, “your people” could be translated as “the people who belong to you” or “the people you chose to belong to you.”
- Also “his people” could be translated as “the people who belong to him” or “the people God chose to belong to himself.”

(See also: [Israel](#), [people group](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:1-3
- [Acts 07:33-34](#)
- [Acts 07:51-53](#)
- [Acts 10:36-38](#)
- Daniel 09:24-25
- Isaiah 02:5-6
- Jeremiah 06:20-22
- [Joel 03:16-17](#)
- [Micah 06:3-5](#)
- [Revelation 13:7-8](#)

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H430, H5971, G2316, G2992

**Uses:**

- [Joel 3:16-17](#)

## **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:**

- [Joel 1:11-12](#)

## Philistia

### Definition:

Philistia is the name of a large region in the land of Canaan, located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

- The region was located along the very fertile coastal plain reaching from Joppa in the north to Gaza in the south. It was about 64 km long and 16 km wide.
- Philistia was occupied by the “Philistines,” a powerful people group who were frequent enemies of the Israelites.

(See also: Philistines, Gaza, Joppa)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:9-10
- [Joel 03:4-6](#)
- Psalms 060:8-9

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)



## **pillar, column**

### **Definition:**

The term “pillar” usually refers to a large vertical structure that is used to hold up a roof or other part of a building. Another word for “pillar” is “column.”

- In Bible times, pillars used as support in buildings were normally carved from a single piece of stone.
- When Samson in the Old Testament was captured by the Philistines, he destroyed their pagan temple by pushing the supporting pillars and causing the temple to collapse.
- The word “pillar” sometimes refers to a large stone or boulder that is set up as a memorial to mark a grave or to mark the place where an important event happened.
- It can also refer to an idol that was made to worship a false god. It is another name for a “carved image” and could be translated as “statue.”
- The term “pillar” is used to refer to something that is shaped like a pillar, such as the “pillar of fire” that led the Israelites at night through the desert or the “pillar of salt” that Lot’s wife became after she looked back at the city.
- As a structure supporting a building, the term “pillar” or “column” could be translated as “upright stone support beam” or “supporting stone structure.”
- Other uses of “pillar” could be translated as “statue” or “pile” or “mound” or “monument” or “tall mass,” depending on the context.

(See also: foundation, idol, image)

### **Bible References:**

- 2 Kings 18:4-5
- Exodus 13:19-22
- Exodus 33:7-9
- Genesis 31:45-47
- Proverbs 09:1-2

### **Word Data:**

- Strong’s:

### **Uses:**

- [Joel 2:30-31](#)

## praise

### Definition:

To praise someone is to express admiration and honor for that person.

- People praise God because of how great he is and because of all the amazing things he has done as the Creator and Savior of the world.
- Praise for God often includes being thankful for what he has done.
- Music and singing is often used as a way to praise God.
- Praising God is part of what it means to worship him.
- The term “to praise” could also be translated as “to speak well of” or “to highly honor with words” or “to say good things about.”
- The noun “praise” could be translated as “spoken honor” or “speech that honors” or “speaking good things about.”

(See also: worship)

### Bible References:

- [2 Corinthians 01:3-4](#)
- [Acts 02:46-47](#)
- [Acts 13:48-49](#)
- [Daniel 03:28](#)
- [Ephesians 01:3-4](#)
- [Genesis 49:8](#)
- [James 03:9-10](#)
- [John 05:41-42](#)
- [Luke 01:46-47](#)
- [Luke 01:64-66](#)
- [Luke 19:37-38](#)
- [Matthew 11:25-27](#)
- [Matthew 15:29-31](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

**\*12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to **praise** God because he saved them from the Egyptian army. **\*17:08** When David heard these words, he immediately thanked and **praised** God because he had promised David this great honor and many blessings. **\*22:07** Zechariah said, “**Praise** God, because he has remembered his people! **\*43:13** They (disciples) enjoyed **praising** God together and they shared everything they had with each other. **\*47:08** They put Paul and Silas in the most secure part of the prison and even locked up their feet. Yet in the middle of the night, they were singing songs of **praise** to God.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's:

**Uses:**

- Joel 2:26-27

## **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:

- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 2:17

## 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:

- [Joel 3:9-10](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:28-29](#)
- [Joel 03 General Notes](#)



## **prostitute, harlot, whore**

### **Definition:**

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

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

(See also: adultery, false god, sexual immorality, idol)

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 34:30-31
- Genesis 38:21-23
- [Luke 15:28-30](#)
- [Matthew 21:31-32](#)

### **Word Data:**

- Strong's:

### **Uses:**

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

## **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:**

- Joel 2:12-13

## 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:

- [Joel 2:21-23](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:24-25](#)

## ruin, ruins

### Definition:

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

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

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 12:7-8
- 2 Kings 19:25-26
- [Acts 15:15-18](#)
- Isaiah 23:13-14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:3](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)
- [Joel 1:13-14](#)

## 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:**

- **Joel 2:32**

## **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:**

- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:28-29

## shame, shameful, ashamed

### Definition:

The term “shame” refers to a painful feeling of being disgraced a person has because of something dishonorable or improper that he or someone else has done.

- Something that is “shameful” is “improper” or “dishonorable.”
- The term “ashamed” describes how a person feels when he has done something shameful.
- The phrase “put to shame” means to defeat people or expose their sin so that they feel ashamed of themselves.
- The prophet Isaiah said that those who make and worship idols will be put to shame.
- God can bring shame to a person who does not repent by exposing that person’s sin and causing him to be humiliated.

(See also: false god, humble, humiliate, Isaiah, repent, sin, worship)

### Bible References:

- [1 Peter 03:15-17](#)
- [2 Kings 02:17-18](#)
- [2 Samuel 13:13-14](#)
- [Luke 20:11-12](#)
- [Mark 08:38](#)
- [Mark 12:4-5](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:11-12](#)
- [Joel 2:17](#)
- [Joel 2:26-27](#)

## 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:

**Uses:**

- Joel 1:18-20

## Sidon, Sidonians

### Facts:

Sidon was the oldest son of Canaan. There is also a Canaanite city called Sidon, probably named after Canaan's son.

- The city of Sidon was located northwest of Israel on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is part of the present-day country of Lebanon.
- The “Sidonians” were a Phoenician people group who lived in ancient Sidon and the region surrounding it.
- In the Bible, Sidon is closely associated with the city of Tyre, and both cities were known for their wealth and for immoral behavior of their people.

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

(See also: Canaan, Noah, Phoenicia, the sea, [Tyre](#))

### Bible References:

- [Acts 12:20-21](#)
- [Acts 27:3-6](#)
- Genesis 10:15-18
- Genesis 10:19-20
- [Mark 03:7-8](#)
- [Matthew 11:20-22](#)
- [Matthew 15:21-23](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)



## spear

### Definition:

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

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

(See also: prey, Rome, [sword](#), warrior)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 13:19-21
- 2 Samuel 21:18-19
- Nehemiah 04:12-14
- Psalm 035:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:9-10](#)

## suffer, suffering

### Definition:

The terms “suffer” and “suffering” refer to experiencing something very unpleasant, such as illness, pain, or other hardships.

- When people are persecuted or when they are sick, they suffer.
- Sometimes people suffer because of wrong things they have done; other times they suffer because of sin and disease in the world.
- Suffering can be physical, such as feeling pain or sickness. It can also be emotional, such as feeling fear, sadness, or loneliness.
- The phrase “suffer me” means “bear with me” or “hear me out” or “listen patiently.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “suffer” can be translated as “feel pain” or “endure difficulty” or “experience hardships” or “go through difficult and painful experiences.”
- Depending on the context, “suffering” could be translated as “extremely difficult circumstances” or “severe hardships” or “experiencing hardship” or “time of painful experiences.”
- The phrase “suffer thirst” could be translated as “experience thirst” or “suffer with thirst.”
- To “suffer violence” could also be translated as “undergo violence” or “be harmed by violent acts.”

### Bible References:

- [1 Thessalonians 02:14-16](#)
- [2 Thessalonians 01:3-5](#)
- [2 Timothy 01:8-11](#)
- [Acts 07:11-13](#)
- [Isaiah 53:10-11](#)
- [Jeremiah 06:6-8](#)
- [Matthew 16:21-23](#)
- [Psalms 022:24-25](#)
- [Revelation 01:9-11](#)
- [Romans 05:3-5](#)

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **09:13** God said, “I have seen the **suffering** of my people.”
- **38:12** Jesus prayed three times, “My Father, if it is possible, please let me not have to drink this cup of **suffering**.”

- **42:03** He (Jesus) reminded them that the prophets said the Messiah would **suffer** and be killed, but would rise again on the third day.
- **42:07** He (Jesus) said, "It was written long ago that the Messiah would **suffer**, die, and rise from the dead on the third day."
- **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."
- **46:04** God said, "I have chosen him (Saul) to declare my name to the unsaved. I will show him how much he must **suffer** for my sake."
- **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: H943, H1741, H1934, H4342, H4531, H4912, H5142, H5254, H5375, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6041, H6064, H6090, H6770, H6869, H6887, H7661, G91, G941, G971, G2210, G2346, G2347, G3804, G3958, G4310, G4778, G4841, G5004, G5723

**Uses:**

- **Joel 1:18-20**

## 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:**

- Joel 3:9-10

## 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:**

- Joel 3:4-6

## thresh, threshing

### Definition:

The terms “thresh” and “threshing” refer to the first part of the process of separating wheat grain from the rest of the wheat plant.

- Threshing the wheat plant loosens the grain from the straw and the chaff. Afterwards the grain is “winnowed” to completely separate the grain from all unwanted materials, leaving only the part the grain that can be eaten.
- In Bible times, a “threshing floor” was a large flat rock or an area of packed-down dirt, giving a hard, level surface to crush the grain stalks and remove the grain.
- A “threshing cart” or “threshing wheel” was sometimes used to crush the grain and help separate it from the straw and chaff.
- A “threshing sledge” or “threshing board” was also used for separating grain. It was made of wooden boards that had sharp metal spikes on the end.

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

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 03:1-3
- 2 Kings 13:6-7
- 2 Samuel 24:15-16
- Daniel 02:34-35
- [Luke 03:17](#)
- [Matthew 03:10-12](#)
- Ruth 03:1-2

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:24-25](#)



## trumpet

### Definition:

The term “trumpet” refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

- A trumpet was commonly made from either metal, seashell, or an animal horn.
- Trumpets were most commonly blown to call people to come together for battle, and for Israel’s public assemblies.
- The book of Revelation describes a scene in the end times in which angels blow their trumpets to signal the outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth.

(See also: angel, [assembly](#), [earth](#), horn, [Israel](#), wrath)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:7-8
- 2 Kings 09:11-13
- Exodus 19:12-13
- [Hebrews 12:18-21](#)
- [Matthew 06:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 24:30-31](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:1-2](#)
- [Joel 2:15-16](#)

## Tyre, Tyrians

### Facts:

Tyre was an ancient Canaanite city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is now part of the modern-day country of Lebanon. Its people were called “Tyrians.”

- Part of the city was located on an island in the sea, about one kilometer from the mainland.
- Because of its location and its valuable natural resources, such as cedar trees, Tyre had a prosperous trading industry and was very wealthy.
- King Hiram of Tyre sent wood from cedar trees and skilled laborers to help build a palace for King David.
- Years later, Hiram also sent King Solomon wood and skilled laborers to help build the temple. Solomon paid him with large amounts of wheat and olive oil.
- Tyre was often associated with the nearby ancient city of Sidon. These were the most important cities of the region of Canaan called Phoenicia.

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

(See also: Canaan, cedar, [Israel](#), the sea, Phoenicia, [Sidon](#))

### Bible References:

- [Acts 12:20-21](#)
- [Mark 03:7-8](#)
- [Matthew 11:20-22](#)
- [Matthew 15:21-23](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 3:4-6](#)

## **vine**

### **Definition:**

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

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

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

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 40:9-11
- Genesis 49:11-12
- [John 15:1-2](#)
- [Luke 22:17-18](#)
- [Mark 12:1-3](#)
- [Matthew 21:35-37](#)

### **Word Data:**

- Strong's:

### **Uses:**

- [Joel 1:11-12](#)
- [Joel 2:21-23](#)

## **vineyard**

### **Definition:**

A vineyard is a large garden area where grapevines are grown and grapes are cultivated.

- A vineyard often has a wall around it to protect the fruit from thieves and animals.
- God compared the people of Israel to a vineyard that did not bear good fruit. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- Vineyard could be also translated as “grapevine garden” or “grape plantation.”

(See also: [grape](#), [Israel](#), [vine](#))

### **Bible References:**

- Genesis 09:20-21
- [Luke 13:6-7](#)
- [Luke 20:15-16](#)
- [Matthew 20:1-2](#)
- [Matthew 21:40-41](#)

### **Word Data:**

- Strong's:

### **Uses:**

- [Joel 1:5-7](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 2:28-29](#)

## wheat

### Definition:

Wheat is a type of grain that people grow for food. When the Bible mentions “grain” or “seeds,” it is often talking about wheat grain or seeds.

- The wheat seeds or grains grow at the top of the wheat plant.
- After harvesting the wheat, the grain is separated from the stalk of the plant by threshing it. The stalk of the wheat plant is also called “straw” and is often placed on the ground for animals to sleep on.
- After threshing, the chaff surrounding the grain seed is separated from the grain by winnowing and is thrown away.
- People grind the wheat grain into flour, and use this for making bread.

(See also: barley, chaff, [grain](#), seed, [thresh](#), winnow)

### Bible References:

- [Acts 27:36-38](#)
- Exodus 34:21-22
- [John 12:23-24](#)
- [Luke 03:17](#)
- [Matthew 03:10-12](#)
- [Matthew 13:24-26](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong's:

### Uses:

- [Joel 1:11-12](#)
- [Joel 2:24-25](#)

## 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:

- [Joel 1:5-7](#)



- Joel 2:18-19
- Joel 2:24-25
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:18-19

## 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:

- [Joel 3:12-13](#)

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

### **Definition:**

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

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

### **Translation Suggestions:**

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

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

### **Bible References:**

- [1 Kings 13:1-3](#)
- [2 Timothy 03:16-17](#)
- [Acts 06:2-4](#)
- [Acts 12:24-25](#)

- Genesis 15:1-3
- James 02:8-9
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- John 05:39-40
- Luke 08:11-13
- Romans 01:1-3

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

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

#### **Word Data:**

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

#### **Uses:**

- Joel 1:1-3

## Yahweh

### Facts:

The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name that he revealed when he spoke to Moses at the burning bush.

- The name “Yahweh” comes from the word that means, “to be” or “to exist.”
- Possible meanings of “Yahweh” include, “he is” or “I am” or “the one who causes to be.”
- This name reveals that God has always lived and will continue to live forever. It also means that he is always present.
- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term “LORD” or “the LORD” to represent “Yahweh.” This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh’s name and started saying “Lord” every time the term “Yahweh” appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write “LORD” with all capital letters to show respect for God’s personal name and to distinguish it from “Lord” which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULB and UDB texts always translates this term as, “Yahweh,” as it literally occurs in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” does not ever occur in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even in quotes from the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.
- By adding the pronoun “I” or “me,” the ULB indicates to the reader that God is the speaker.

### Translation Suggestions:

- “Yahweh” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “I am” or “living one” or “the one who is” or “he who is alive.”
- This term could also be written in a way that is similar to how “Yahweh” is spelled.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term “Yahweh” and instead use the traditional rendering, “LORD.” An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title “Lord.” Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish “LORD” as a name (Yahweh) from “Lord” as a title.
- It is best if possible to keep the name Yahweh where it literally occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places, to make the text more natural and clear.
- Introduce the quote with something like, “This is what Yahweh says.”

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

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

**Bible References:**

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

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **09:14** God said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **13:04** Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- **13:05** "Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God."
- **16:01** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant."

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

**Uses:**

- Joel 1:1-3

- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 1:13-14
- Joel 1:18-20
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:10-11
- Joel 2:12-13
- Joel 2:14
- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:18-19
- Joel 2:21-23
- Joel 2:26-27
- Joel 2:32
- Joel 3:7-8
- Joel 3:11
- Joel 3:16-17
- Joel 3:18-19
- Joel 3:20-21

## zeal, zealous

### Definition:

The terms “zeal” and “zealous” refer to being strongly devoted to supporting a person or idea.

- Zeal includes having strong desire and actions that promote a good cause. It is often used to describe someone who faithfully obeys God and teaches others to do that too.
- Being zealous includes putting intense effort into doing something and continuing to persevere in that effort.
- The “zeal of the Lord” or the “zeal of Yahweh” refers to God’s strong, persistent actions to bless his people or to see justice done.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “be zealous” could also be translated by, “be strongly diligent” or “make an intense effort.”
- The term “zeal” could also be translated as “energetic devotion” or “eager determination” or “righteous enthusiasm.”
- The phrase, “zeal for your house” could be translated, “strongly honoring your temple” or “fervent desire to take care of your house.”

### Bible References:

- [1 Corinthians 12:30-31](#)
- [1 Kings 19:9-10](#)
- [Acts 22:3-5](#)
- [Galatians 04:17-18](#)
- [Isaiah 63:15-16](#)
- [John 02:17-19](#)
- [Philippians 03:6-7](#)
- [Romans 10:1-3](#)

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7065, H7068, G2205, G2206, G2207, G6041

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:18-19](#)



## 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:

- [Joel 2:1-2](#)
- [Joel 2:15-16](#)
- [Joel 2:21-23](#)
- [Joel 2:32](#)
- [Joel 3:16-17](#)
- [Joel 3:20-21](#)

## 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:**

- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 2:12-13
- Joel 3:14-15

## 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:**

- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 2:32
- Joel 3:20-21
- Joel 3:20-21

## 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:**

- Joel 2:21-23
- Joel 2:21-23

## 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:

- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:7-8
- Joel 3:11

## Doublet

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

### Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or very short phrases that mean the same thing or very close to the same thing and that are used together. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Often they are used to emphasize or intensify the idea expressed by the two words.

### Reason this is a translation issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. In either case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

### Examples from the Bible

King David was old and advanced in years. (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)

The underlined words mean the same thing. Together they mean that he was “very old.”

... he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself ... (1 Kings 2:32 ULB)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words (Daniel 2:9 ULB)

This means that they had prepared “many false things to say.”

... as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:19 ULB)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any blemish—not even one.

### Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using one. If not, consider these strategies.

1. Translate only one of the words.
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

**Translation Strategies Applied**

1. Translate only one of the words.
  - **You have decided to prepare false and deceptive words** (Daniel 2:9 ULB)
    - "You have decided to prepare false things to say."
2. If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."
  - **King David was old and advanced in years.** (1 Kings 1:1 ULB)
    - "King David was very old."
3. If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.
  - **... a lamb without blemish and without spot...** (1 Peter 1:19 ULB) - English can emphasize this with "any" and "at all."
    - " ... a lamb without any blemish at all ..."

**Uses:**

- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:32
- Joel 3:1-3
- Joel 3:1-3

## 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:**

- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 2:30-31
- Joel 2:32

## First, Second, or Third Person

This page answers the question: *What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?*

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker referred to himself or to the person he was speaking to with a phrase other than “I” or “you.”

### Description

- **First person** - This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- **Second person** - This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- **Third person** - This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

### Reason this is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker used the third person to refer to himself or to the people he was speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

### Examples from the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULB)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,  
“... Do you have an arm like God’s? Can you thunder with a voice like him? (Job 40:6, 9 ULB)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “him.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look what I have done, taking it upon myself to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes! (Genesis 18:27 ULB)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULB)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

### Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

1. Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
2. Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
  - **But David said to Saul, ”Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep.”** (1 Samuel 17:34)
    - But David said to Saul, ”I, your servant, used to keep my father’s sheep.”
2. Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.
  - **Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, ”... Do you have an arm like God’s? Can you thunder with a voice like him?** (Job 40:6, 9 ULB)
    - Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, ”... Do you have an arm like mine? Can you thunder with a voice like me?”
  - **So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.** (Matthew 18:35 ULB)
    - So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart.

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:26-27](#)

## Hendiadys

This page answers the question: *What is hendiadys and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

### Description

When a speaker expresses a single idea by using two words that are connected with “and,” it is called “hendiadys.” In hendiadys, the two words work together. Usually one of the words is the primary idea and the other word further describes the primary one.

... his own kingdom and glory. (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)

Though “kingdom” and “glory” are both nouns, “glory” actually tells what kind of kingdom it is: it is a **kingdom of glory** or a **glorious kingdom**.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- Often hendiadys contains an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Many languages do not use hendiadys, so people may not understand how the two words work together; one word describing the other.

### Examples from the Bible

... for I will give you words and wisdom ... (Luke 21:15 ULB)

“Words” and “wisdom” are nouns, but in this figure of speech “wisdom” describes “words.”

... if you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19 ULB)

“Willing” and “obedient” are adjectives, but “willing” describes “obedient.”

### Translation Strategies

If the hendiadys would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

1. Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
2. Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
3. Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.
4. Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word describes the other.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
  - **for I will give you words and wisdom** (Luke 21:15 ULB)
    - for I will give you wise words
  - **that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to his own kingdom and glory.** (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)
    - that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to his own glorious kingdom.
2. Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
  - **for I will give you words and wisdom.** (Luke 21:15 ULB)
    - for I will give you words of wisdom.
  - **that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to his own kingdom and glory.** (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ULB)
    - that you should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to his own kingdom of glory.
3. Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.
  - **if you are willing and obedient** (Isaiah 1:19 ULB)
    - if you are willingly obedient
4. Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word describes the other.
  - **if you are, willing and obedient** (Isaiah 1:19 ULB) - The adjective “obedient” can be substituted with the verb “obey.”
    - if you obey willingly

### Uses:

- [Joel 2:10-11](#)

## How to Translate Names

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

### Description

The Bible has names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

### Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to. But sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULB)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name “Melchizedek” means “king of righteousness,” and also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2 ULB)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title, because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

### Examples from the Bible

You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites (Joshua 24:11 ULB)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

she said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beerlahairoi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

She named him Moses and said, “Because I drew him from the water.” (Exodus 2:11 ULB)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his death (Acts 8:1 ULB)

It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULB)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

### Translation Strategies

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
5. Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

- **You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites** (Joshua 24:11 ULB)
    - You went over the Jordan River and came to the city of Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the tribe of the Amorites
  - **Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you."** (Luke 13:31 ULB)
    - Shortly after, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because King Herod wants to kill you."
2. If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
- **She named him Moses and said, "Because I drew him from the water."** (Exodus 2:11 ULB)
    - She named him Moses, which sounds like 'drawn out,' and said, "Because I drew him from the water."
3. Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
- **... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi;** (Genesis 16:13-14 ULB)
    - ... she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore the well was called Well of the Living One who sees me;
4. If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called "Saul" before Acts 13 and "Paul" after Acts 13. You could translate his name as "Paul" all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.
- **... a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
    - ... a young man named Paul<sup>1</sup> The footnote would look like:
      - ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>Most versions say Saul here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called Paul.
  - **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
    - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
5. Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write "Saul" where the source text has "Saul" and "Paul" where the source text has "Paul."
- **a young man named Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULB)
    - a young man named Saul The footnote would look like:



- ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.
- **But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;** (Acts 13:9)
  - But Saul, who is also called Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit;
- **It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue** (Acts 14:1 ULB)
  - It came about in Iconium that Paul<sup>1</sup> and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue The footnote would look like:
    - ◇ <sup>[1]</sup>This is the man that was called Saul before Acts 13.

**Uses:**

- Introduction to Joel
- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 3:7-8
- Joel 3:18-19

## 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:**

- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 2:10-11
- Joel 2:10-11
- Joel 3:16-17
- Joel 3:18-19

## 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:

- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 3:4-6

## 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:**

- Joel 3:9-10
- Joel 3:11

## 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:**

- Joel 01 General Notes
- Joel 1:5-7
- Joel 1:5-7
- Joel 1:8-10
- Joel 02 General Notes
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:3
- Joel 2:3
- Joel 2:17
- Joel 2:28-29
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:12-13
- Joel 3:16-17
- Joel 3:16-17
- Joel 3:18-19

## 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:

- [Joel 1:8-10](#)
- [Joel 2:1-2](#)
- [Joel 2:1-2](#)
- [Joel 2:12-13](#)
- [Joel 2:12-13](#)
- [Joel 2:21-23](#)
- [Joel 2:26-27](#)
- [Joel 2:30-31](#)
- [Joel 2:30-31](#)
- [Joel 2:32](#)
- [Joel 3:7-8](#)
- [Joel 3:16-17](#)
- [Joel 3:18-19](#)
- [Joel 3:20-21](#)

## 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:

- Introduction to Joel
- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 1:5-7
- Joel 1:5-7
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 3:9-10
- Joel 3:16-17
- Joel 3:16-17

## 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:

- Joel 2:6-7
- Joel 2:10-11



## 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:

- [Introduction to Joel](#)

## Rhetorical Question

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

### Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all, but if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?" (Acts 23:4 ULB)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking about his way of insulting God's high priest. Rather they used this question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. Some of the purposes of these rhetorical questions are to express attitudes or feelings, to rebuke people, to teach something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, and to introduce something they want to talk about.

### Reasons this is a translation issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are more limited or different than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

### Examples from the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him, who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11 ULB)

Job used the question above to show deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULB)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULB)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden... (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was going to compare the kingdom of God to something.

### **Translation Strategies**

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, is the one who asked it bothered that he did not get an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you know what the purpose of the rhetorical question is. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

1. Add the answer after the question.
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1. Add the answer after the question.
  - **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
    - Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Of course not! Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!
  - **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
    - Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? None of you would do that!
2. Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
  - **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed...** (Luke 13:18-19 ULB)
    - This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed..."
  - **Is this how you insult God's high priest?** (Acts 23:4 ULB)
    - You should not insult God's high priest!
  - **Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?** (Job 3:11 ULB)
    - I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!
  - **And why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** (Luke 1:43 ULB)
    - How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!
3. Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
  - **Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?** (1 Kings 21:7 ULB)
    - You still rule the kingdom of Israel, do you not?
4. Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

- **Or what man among you is there who, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?** (Matthew 7:9 ULB)
  - If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, would you give him a stone?
- **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!** (Jeremiah 2:32 ULB)
  - What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

**Uses:**

- Joel 01 General Notes
- Joel 1:1-3
- Joel 2:10-11
- Joel 2:14
- Joel 2:17
- Joel 3:4-6
- Joel 3:4-6

## 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:**

- Joel 02 General Notes
- Joel 2:1-2
- Joel 2:3
- Joel 2:4-5
- Joel 2:4-5
- Joel 2:4-5
- Joel 2:6-7

## 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:**

- Joel 1:15-17
- Joel 2:28-29
- Joel 3:4-6
- Joel 3:7-8

## Translate Unknowns

This page answers the question: *How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?*

How do I translate words like lion, fig tree, mountain, priest, or temple when people in my culture have never seen these things and we do not have a word for them?

### Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The translationWords pages and the translationNotes will help you understand what they are. After you understand them, you will need to find ways to refer to those things so that people who read your translation will understand what they are.

We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish (Matthew 14:17 ULB)

Bread is a particular food made by mixing finely crushed grains with oil, and then cooking the mixture so that it is dry. (Grains are the seeds of a kind of grass.) In some cultures people do not have bread or know what it is.

### Reason this is a translation issue

- Readers may not know some of the things that are in the Bible because those things are not part of their own culture.
- Readers may have difficulty understanding a text if they do not know some of the things that are mentioned in it.

### Translation Principles

- Use words that are already part of your language if possible.
- Keep expressions short if possible.
- Represent God's commands and historical facts accurately.

### Examples from the Bible

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for jackals (Jeremiah 9:11 ULB)

Jackals are wild animals like dogs that live in only a few parts of the world. So they are not known in many places.

Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are truly ravenous wolves. (Matthew 7:15 ULB)

If wolves do not live where the translation will be read, the readers may not understand that they are fierce, wild animals like dogs that attack and eat sheep.

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with myrrh. But he refused to drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULB)

People may not know what myrrh is and that it was used as a medicine.

to him who made great lights (Psalm 136:7 ULB)

Some languages have terms for things that give light, like the sun and fire, but they have no general term for lights.

your sins ... will be white like snow (Isaiah 1:18 ULB)

People in many parts of the world have not seen snow, but they may have seen it in pictures.

### Translation Strategies

Here are ways you might translate a term that is not known in your language:

1. Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.
2. Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.
3. Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.
4. Use a word that is more general in meaning.
5. Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.

- **Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are truly ravenous wolves.** (Matthew 7:15 ULB)
  - Beware of false prophets, those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are truly hungry and dangerous animals.

“Ravenous wolves” is part of a metaphor here, so the reader needs to know that they are very dangerous to sheep in order to understand this metaphor. (If sheep are also unknown, then you will need to also use one of the translation strategies to translate sheep, or change the metaphor to something else, using a translation strategy for metaphors. See [Translating Metaphors](#).)

- **We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB)
  - We have here only five loaves of baked grain seeds and two fish

2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.

- **your sins ... will be white like snow** (Isaiah 1:18 ULB) This verse is not about snow. It uses snow in a figure of speech to help people understand how white something will be.

- your sins ... will be white like milk
- your sins ... will be white like the moon

3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.

- **Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with myrrh. But he refused to drink it.** (Mark 15:23 ULB) - People may understand better what myrrh is if it is used with the general word “medicine.”
  - Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with a medicine called myrrh. But he refused to drink it.
- **We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB) - People may understand better what bread is if it is used with a phrase that tells what it is made of (seeds) and how it is prepared (crushed and baked).
  - We have here only five loaves of baked crushed seed bread and two fish

4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.

- **I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for jackals** (Jeremiah 9:11 ULB)
  - I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for wild dogs
- **We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish** (Matthew 14:17 ULB)
  - We have here only five loaves of baked food and two fish

5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

- **to him who made great lights** (Psalm 136:7 ULB)
  - to him who made the sun and the moon

#### Uses:

- Joel 1:4
- Joel 1:11-12
- Joel 1:11-12
- Joel 2:4-5