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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Esther

Introduction to Esther

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Esther

King Ahasuerus sends away his wife, the queen (1:1–22)

Ahasuerus chooses Esther as the new queen (2:1–23)

Haman plots to destroy the Jews (3:1–15)

Mordecai asks Esther to help her people (4:1–17)

Esther pleads with the king for the Jews (5:1–7:10)

The result of Haman's plot to destroy the Jews (8:1–9:16)

The Feast of Purim (9:17–32)

Conclusion (10:1–3)

What is the Book of Esther about?

The Book of Esther tells how a young Jewish woman named Esther became the queen of Persia. As queen, she worked to save all the Jews in the Persian Empire from being destroyed.

This book ends by telling why the Jews celebrate the festival of Purim. The name "Purim" comes from the word "pur," which means "lots" or "dice." Haman, the enemy of Jews, threw dice to choose when to attack and destroy the Jews. The Jews celebrate Purim to remember how Yahweh rescued his people from being destroyed.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title of this book, which is "The Book of Esther" or just "Esther." Or they can choose a clearer title, such as "The Book About Esther."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the Persian Empire?

King Cyrus the Great conquered and ruled over many kingdoms. This was in the part of the world called Persia, which is now Iran. So people named his kingdom the Persian Empire. When Cyrus conquered Babylonia in 539 B.C., he then controlled the Jews whom the Babylonians had earlier taken into exile.

Why were there Jews in Babylonia when the Persians conquered it?

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians conquered and took into exile the people of Judah. These Jews and their descendants were still in Babylon when the Persians conquered it.

What was meant by "the laws of the Medes and Persians"?

The phrase "the laws of the Medes and Persians" is found in Esther 1:19 and Daniel 6:12. It referred to laws and decrees that could not be changed or removed once they were issued. In the book of Esther, the king made a decree that the people could attack the Jews. Later he regretted that decision but he was not able to change the decree.

The term "Medes" refers to a people group that had formed its own nation, but the Persians conquered them.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What different levels of language are in the Book of Esther?

In the Book of Esther, people talk to each other in many different situations. There is the polite and stately talk in the Persian court and the words of royal decrees. Friends and close relatives also talk to each other. There are even the words that one uses in speaking to oneself. Translators should use all the ways their own language has to express these different situations in a way that their readers will identify and understand.

Esther 1

Esther 1 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The king's divorce

The king's advisers were afraid that husbands would lose their authority when they heard the queen had refused to come to show her beauty to the king's guests, so the advisers told him to divorce her.

Esther 1:1

Now it happened (ULT)

In the Old Testament, this is a standard way of beginning a historical story. Many languages have similar story-opening formulas, and if your language has one, you can use it. But do not use it if it would suggest that the story is not real, only made up. Alternate translation: “this account happened” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

ULT

¹ Now it happened in the days of [Ahasuerus](#) (he was [Ahasuerus, the one who ruled](#) from India even as far as [Ethiopia, 127 provinces](#));

in the days of Ahasuerus (ULT)

The term **day** is used figuratively here to refer to a longer period of time. You could just say “during the reign of Ahasuerus,” as UST does. But as an alternative, you could say, “in the time of Ahasuerus” (See: [Idiom](#))

Ahasuerus (ULT)

This is a man’s name. It occurs many times in the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

he was Ahasuerus, the one who ruled from India even as far as Ethiopia, 127 provinces (ULT)

This is background information to help the reader identify Ahasuerus. (See: [Background Information](#))

he was Ahasuerus, the one who ruled (ULT)

Alternative translation: “This king named Ahasuerus ruled”

from India even as far as Ethiopia (ULT)

In case your audience might not know where these places are, you could say, “extending from India in the east to Ethiopia in the west.” (See: [Background Information](#))

127 provinces (ULT)

The number is given to show what a large empire this was. You could say that explicitly by saying, “Ahasuerus ruled a very large empire that had 127 provinces.” (See: [Background Information](#))

127 provinces (ULT)

Alternate translation: “one hundred twenty-seven provinces” (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [the one who ruled](#)

- Ethiopia
- provinces

Esther 1:2

as...sat...on the throne of his royalty (ULT)

Here, the action of **sitting** on a throne is used figuratively to mean ruling over a kingdom. You could just say “ruled,” as UST does. But as an alternative, you could say, “ruled his empire from his royal throne” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

² in those days, as [the king Ahasuerus](#) sat on [the throne of his royalty](#), which was in Susa [the citadel](#):

on the throne of his royalty (ULT)

Royalty is an abstract noun that refers to the royal authority that the king exercised. You can translate this idea with a verb by saying, “the throne he ruled from,” or use an adjective, “his royal throne.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

was in Susa (ULT)

This was the name of a royal city of the Persian kings. It occurs many times in the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the citadel (ULT)

This means a castle or palace where a king would live. But since the city of Susa itself is being called a **citadel** here, it’s likely that the term figuratively means royal city or capital city. The person telling this story is identifying Susa as the capital by calling it by the name of something closely associated with it, the royal palace within it. A good translation might be “the capital city of Persia.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [the throne of](#)
- [his royalty](#)
- [the citadel](#)

Esther 1:3

in year three of his reign (ULT)

This means that Ahasuerus had already ruled for two full years and that these events took place in the year that followed them.
Alternate translation: “during the third year that Ahasuerus ruled his empire” or “after he had ruled for two years” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

ULT

³ in year three of his reign, he made a feast for all his officials and his administrators, the army of Persia and Media, the noblemen, and the officials of the provinces before his face,

in year three of his reign (ULT)

Reign is an abstract noun that refers to the royal authority that the king exercised. You can translate it with a verb by saying, “during the third year that Ahasuerus ruled.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

he made a feast (ULT)

Alternative translation: “he hosted a feast”

the army of Persia and Media (ULT)

This likely refers to the leaders of the army. It is describing a part of the army by referring to the whole army.
Alternate translation: “the officers of the army” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

the noblemen (ULT)

This probably means something like “the wealthy landowners.”

before his face (ULT)

Face figuratively stands for the presence of a person, so this phrase means “in his presence.” The invitation was to come to the royal capital to attend a banquet where the king would be present in person. You could say, as UST does, that the king was present in person to host the feast. Or you could say as an alternative, “all of them came to Susa for the feast” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- of his reign
- a feast
- his officials
- the noblemen
- and the officials of
- and his administrators
- Persia
- and Media
- the provinces
- before his face

Esther 1:4

when he displayed the wealth of the glory of his kingdom (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun with an emphasized adjective. Alternate translation: "Ahasuerus ... wanted to demonstrate ... the great wealth of his kingdom" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

⁴ when he displayed the wealth of [the glory of his kingdom](#) and [the splendor of the beauty of his greatness](#) for many days, 180 days.

when he displayed (ULT)

He refers to the king. The implication is that he held this banquet to show all of his officials how wealthy and powerful he was. The invited officials would then go back to all the different parts of the empire and tell everyone this. Alternate translation: "Ahasuerus wanted to demonstrate to his guests" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the wealth of...the glory of his kingdom (ULT)

The words **wealth** and **glory** have similar meanings and they are used together to emphasize how great his kingdom was. Alternate translation: "the great wealth of his kingdom" (See: [Doublet](#))

when he displayed...and the splendor of the beauty of his greatness (ULT)

You can translate the abstract nouns **splendor**, **beauty**, and **greatness** as adjectives. Alternate translation: "Ahasuerus ... wanted to demonstrate ... that he was a very powerful king" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

the splendor of the beauty of his greatness (ULT)

The words **splendor** and **beauty** have similar meaning and emphasize how great he was. Alternate translation: "the splendor of his greatness" (See: [Doublet](#))

for many days, 180 days (ULT)

This was a very long time for a royal feast to last. The earlier part of the verse provides the reason for this. To make the connection explicit, you could add some explanatory words to the verse like this: "Ahasuerus entertained his guests fabulously because he wanted to demonstrate that his empire was extremely wealthy and that he was a very powerful king. He did so many things for them that the festivities lasted for six months." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

180 days (ULT)

Six months is about **180 days** or about half a year. You can use whatever expression will best express this time period in your language. (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the glory of](#)
- [his kingdom](#)
- [the splendor of](#)

Esther 1:5

And when those days were fulfilled (ULT)

This implies “at the end of that feast.” You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “after those 180 days were over” or “at the end of those six months” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the king made...a feast (ULT)

This was a second feast that the king hosted. He likely did this to thank the people who had worked so hard in hosting the first feast. You could say that explicitly. (See: [Numbers](#))

in Susa the citadel (ULT)

The expression in this case seems to refer specifically to the royal **citadel** from which the city got its name. This second feast would not have been for everyone in the entire city. It was specifically for the people who served the king in the citadel and who had worked so hard over the previous six months hosting the first feast. Alternate translation: “for every man who worked for him in the palace at Susa” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

who were found (ULT)

Here, **found** is an idiom that means could be found or were there. (See: [Idiom](#))

who were found (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “who worked for him in” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

from the greatest even to the least (ULT)

The person telling this story is referring to the staff of the palace by speaking of two extreme parts of it, the most important and the least important people who worked there, in order to include everyone in between. You could just explain this meaning, as UST does. Alternate translation: “from the most important official to the least important servant” (See: [Merism](#))

for seven days (ULT)

Alternate translation: “another feast that lasted seven days” The story does not suggest that this was an unusually long time by saying, “for many days.” But you could also say something like “a whole week” to show that this was a generous gesture of thanks on the part of the king.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [a feast](#)
- [the citadel](#)
- [in the courtyard of](#)
- [the palace of](#)

ULT

⁵ And when those days were fulfilled, [the king](#) made [a feast](#) for all the people who were found in Susa [the citadel](#), from the greatest even to the least, for seven days, [in the courtyard of](#) the garden of [the palace of the king](#).

Esther 1:6

Linens cotton and blue (ULT)

These **linens** were curtains that were hung in the courtyard. **Cotton** refers to the white color of some of them. So this means white and blue curtains. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Linens cotton and blue (ULT)

You can specify at the beginning of this verse that the location being described is the same as in the previous verse: "In the courtyard, white and blue curtains."

by cords of byssus and purple (ULT)

Byssus means "white linen" and it is used to describe the white color of some of these cords. So this means white and purple cords. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Couches of gold and silver (ULT)

You can specify that these couches were there for the guests to recline on while they ate. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the pavement of (ULT)

This word probably refers to a mosaic floor made of inlaid pieces of colorful precious stones. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

porphyry (ULT)

This is a kind of red and purple stone that contains pieces of crystal. You could call it "feldspar" or something descriptive like "red marble." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

and alabaster (ULT)

This is a white precious stone. You could identify it as "alabaster." Alternatively, while it is not exactly the same thing as marble, your readers would get the right idea if you called it "white marble." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

and precious stone (ULT)

This word probably refers to a black marble that was used to create borders around mosaics. You could call this "black marble," or you could just say that the floor contained "another precious stone." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and purple](#)
- [silver](#)
- [and silver](#)
- [and pillars of](#)

ULT

⁶ Linens cotton and blue were hanging by cords of byssus [and purple](#) on rings of [silver and pillars of](#) marble. Couches of [gold and silver](#) were on the pavement of porphyry and alabaster and pearl and precious stone.

- gold

Esther 1:7

And the serving was (ULT)

The abstract noun **serving** refers to how the drinks were served at the banquet. You can translate it with a verb by saying, "The attendants served wine." (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

with vessels differing from other vessels (ULT)

This could mean that "no two of them were alike." But you could also just say that the wine was served in "various kinds of golden cups."

and the wine of royalty was abundant according to the hand of the king (ULT)

This means that King Ahasuerus himself paid for all the wine that the guests drank at his seven-day feast in Susa, and the wine came from his personal supply. Alternate translation: "the king was very generous with the royal wine" or "the king showed a great willingness to give" or "the king provided all of it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and the wine of royalty was abundant according to the hand of the king (ULT)

This probably means special fine wine that only the king could acquire and afford. You can translate the abstract noun **royalty** with an adjective. Alternate translation: "royal wine" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

according to the hand of the king (ULT)

Here, **hand** refers figuratively to the king himself, viewed through his action of giving. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [gold](#)
- [and the wine of](#)
- [royalty](#)
- [the king](#)

ULT

⁷ And the serving was in vessels of [gold](#), with vessels differing from other vessels, [and the wine of royalty](#) was abundant according to the hand of [the king](#).

Esther 1:8

And the drinking was according to the law (ULT)

The abstract noun **drinking** refers here not to the action of drinking, but to the guidelines for serving drinks that the king had established for the banquet. Alternate translation: "Ahasuerus had established this rule for all his household attendants who served the wine" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

⁸ And the drinking [was according to the law](#) "There is no compulsion," for thus [the king](#) had established for every [overseer of his house](#) to do according to the desire of man by man.

There is no compulsion (ULT)

This could mean one of two things: (1) No one would be stopped from drinking even if the attendants thought they had already had enough. Alternate translation: "there was to be no restriction on drinking" (2) There would be no requirement to drink. Alternate translation: "no one must be forced to drink" Either way, this was another sign of the generosity that the king showed as he hosted this banquet to thank the people who worked for him. Either he was: (1) allowing them to drink as much as they wanted to, or (2) not requiring them to eat and drink everything that was served at a banquet as guests of the king would usually be expected to do. You could say explicitly at the beginning of the verse that the king was giving his guests a special privilege. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

for thus the king had established for every overseer of his house to do according to the desire of man by man (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the king made the attendants who served the wine follow this rule" This explains why no one had to drink if they did not want to. If it would be clearer in your language, you can give this explanation (the reason) before the result that it accounts for, using a connecting word like "so." You could say, "The king had established for every overseer of his house to do according to the desire of man by man, so the drinking was according to the law, 'There is no compulsion.'" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

to do according to the desire of man by man (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the king wanted every guest to be able to drink as much as he wanted" or "all the guests could drink as little or as much as they wanted"

man by man (ULT)

This is an idiom that means "everyone." (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [was according to the law](#)
- [the king](#)
- [overseer of](#)
- [his house](#)

Esther 1:9

Also (ULT)

This introduces something else that was happening at the same time. You can indicate this by saying something like “during this time.” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

ULT

⁹ Also [Vashti the queen](#) made a feast of women [in the palace of royalty](#) that belonged to the king [Ahasuerus](#).

Vashti the queen (ULT)

You can explain that she was the wife of Ahasuerus by saying, “Queen Vashti, the king’s wife” or “his wife.” (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

Vashti the queen (ULT)

This is a woman’s name. It occurs several times in this chapter and the next one. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

a feast of women (ULT)

This could mean the women who served in the palace, the wives of the men who were officers and servants, or both. You could say, “a feast for the wives of the men who attended” or “for the women who worked in the palace.”

in the palace of royalty that belonged to the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the royal palace where King Ahasuerus lived”

in the palace of royalty (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **royalty** with the adjective royal. Alternate translation: “royal palace” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Vashti](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [a feast of](#)
- [in the palace of](#)
- [royalty](#)
- [belonged to the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)

Esther 1:10

On the seventh day (ULT)

Alternate translation: “after six days” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

when the heart of the king was pleased by the wine (ULT)

Here, **heart** figuratively means the action of thinking or feeling.

Alternate translation: “when King Ahasuerus was in a good mood from drinking wine” or “when the king was drunk with wine” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹⁰ On the seventh day, [when the heart of the king was pleased by the wine](#), he said to Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Karkas (the seven eunuchs who served before [the face of the king Ahasuerus](#)),

to Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Karkas (ULT)

These are names of seven men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the...eunuchs (ULT)

This term occurs a dozen times in the story. It describes male royal officials who served as guardians for the women who lived in the palace. They were both guardians of the door, to keep unwanted people out of the women’s quarters, and guardians of the women inside, to take care of them and look after their needs. (As we learn in 2:21, some of these officials also protected the king’s private quarters.) As we see here, and as will also be seen in 2:14 and 2:16, their duties included escorting women from place to place. The term likely indicates that, in keeping with the practices of the time, these men were castrated because their work brought them into such close contact with the king’s wives and concubines. If your language has a term for such an official and you think your readers would recognize it, you can use it. Otherwise, you can use a term that describes the role that these officials played in the royal court. Alternate translation: “guardians” or “officials” or “castrated servants” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

who served before the face of the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

This is background information to explain who these men were. Alternate translation: “who attended him personally” (See: [Background Information](#))

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the presence of a person. The phrase means that these seven men served King Ahasuerus personally. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [when...was pleased](#)
- [the heart of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [by the wine](#)
- [the face of](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)

Esther 1:11

to bring (ULT)

This is the beginning of the instructions that King Ahasuerus gave to the seven eunuchs he summoned in verse 10. You can make this explicit by saying, “He told them to bring.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the presence of a person. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus wanted Queen Vashti to come personally into his presence. (See: [Metonymy](#))

in a crown of royalty (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **royalty** with an adjective by saying, “wearing her royal crown.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

in a crown of royalty (ULT)

Ahasuerus likely wanted Vashti to wear her queen’s crown so that everyone would know that she was his wife. You could say that explicitly. (For the possible reasons why he wanted them to know this, see the next note.) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in order to show the people and the officials her beauty (ULT)

Everything Ahasuerus did at his banquets was to show how rich and powerful he was. He seems to have believed that having a very beautiful wife was one more thing that proved he was a great man. So he wanted everyone to see how beautiful Vashti was. You can put this second in the verse, after explaining that Vashti was a very beautiful woman, because it accounts for what happens afterwards, when the king sends his seven personal servants to bring her in to his banquet. (See: [Background Information](#))

the people and the officials (ULT)

This might mean “his guests, especially the officials.”

for she was pleasing of appearance (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you can place this first in the verse because it is the reason that explains everything else that happens afterward in the verse. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

for she was pleasing of appearance (ULT)

Alternate translation: “she was very beautiful” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Vashti](#)

ULT

11 to bring [Vashti the queen to the face of the king in a crown of royalty](#) in order to show the people [and the officials](#) her beauty, for she was [pleasing of appearance](#).

- the queen
- to the face of
- the king
- in a crown of
- royalty
- and the officials
- pleasing of

Esther 1:12

But the queen Vashti refused to come (ULT)

You can put the events in chronological order and say first that the eunuchs told Vashti what the king had commanded and then say that she refused to come. (See: [Order of Events](#))

But the queen Vashti refused to come (ULT)

If your language needs to give a reason why she refused, it is most likely because she did not want a group of drunken men staring at her lustfully. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

at the word of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: “at the king’s command” or “what the king wanted”

by the hand of the eunuchs (ULT)

Here, **hand** refers figuratively to the eunuchs themselves, viewed through their action of telling Vashti what the king had commanded. Alternation translation: “when those servants told Queen Vashti what the king wanted” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the eunuchs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:10](#). (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Then the king became very angry, and his rage burned within him (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used to emphasize the idea that they are expressing. You could combine them as UST does by saying, “The king became so angry that he could barely contain himself.” (See: [Parallelism](#))

and his rage burned within him (ULT)

Here the story uses a metaphor that pictures the king’s anger as **a fire that burned inside of him**. If your language has a different word picture that it uses to describe extreme anger, you can use that here. If not, you can translate plainly, “his anger continued to increase.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the queen](#)
- [Vashti](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Then...became...angry](#)
- [and his rage](#)

ULT

¹² But [the queen Vashti](#) refused to come at the word of [the king](#) that was by the hand of the eunuchs. Then [the king](#) became very angry, and his rage burned within him.

Esther 1:13

to the wise men (ULT)

This means the king's advisors. You could call them "his advisors" or "the royal advisors."

who were knowers of the times (ULT)

This means something like "who knew the right way to do things" or "who understood the culture."

for thus was the manner of the king (ULT)

This means that it was the king's habit to consult his advisors on important questions. This is background information that explains why the king called upon these men. (See: [Background Information](#))

for thus was the manner of the king (ULT)

You can place this first in the verse if it would be clearer in your language to put the reason before the result because it explains what happens next. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

before the face of (ULT)

Here, **face** refers figuratively to the presence of a person. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus would personally ask his wise men for advice in matters like these. Alternate translation: "to consult personally with" (See: [Metonymy](#))

those who were knowers of law and judgment (ULT)

This means that these advisors knew the law and knew how to make good decisions in light of it.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [to the wise men](#)
- [who were knowers of](#)
- [those who were knowers of](#)
- [the times](#)
- [before the face of](#)
- [law](#)
- [and judgment](#)

ULT

13 Then [the king](#) said [to the wise men](#), [who were knowers of the times](#) (for thus was the manner of [the king before the face of all those who were knowers of law and judgment](#),

Esther 1:14

and the ones near to him were (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the king's closest advisors"

Karshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Mersena, Memukan (ULT)

These are the names of seven men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

who were seers of the face of the king (ULT)

To see the face of is an idiom that means to be in the presence of a person. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus would regularly and personally consult with these seven advisors. (See: [Idiom](#))

the ones who sat first in the kingdom (ULT)

Here, **sitting** represents ruling or judging. The expression here means that these were the most powerful officials in the empire. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Tarshish](#)
- [officials of](#)
- [Persia](#)
- [and Media](#)
- [the face of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [in the kingdom](#)

ULT

14 and the ones near to him were Karshena, Shethar, Admatha, [Tarshish](#), Meres, Mersena, Memukan, seven [officials of Persia and Media](#) who were seers of [the face of the king](#), the ones who sat first [in the kingdom](#)):

Esther 1:15

According to law, what is to be done with the queen Vashti on account of this, that she did not perform the command of the king Ahasuerus by the hand of the eunuchs (ULT)

This verse presents the question that the king asked the wise men. It may be helpful to indicate this by saying something like “The king asked them.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁵ “According to law, what is to be done with the queen Vashti on account of this, that she did not perform the command of the king Ahasuerus by the hand of the eunuchs?”

According to law...on account of this, that (ULT)

Alternate translation: “What does the law say we should do ... because...?”

by the hand of the eunuchs (ULT)

To present the events in chronological order, you can begin with the information that these men brought the command. Alternate translation: “Queen Vashti did not do what I told my servants to command her to do” (See: [Order of Events](#))

by the hand of the eunuchs (ULT)

Here, **hand** figuratively represents the action of doing or giving. The phrase means that the eunuchs were the ones who told Queen Vashti what King Ahasuerus had commanded her. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the eunuchs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:10](#). (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [According to law](#)
- [with the queen](#)
- [Vashti](#)
- [the command of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [by the hand of](#)

Esther 1:16

And Memukan replied before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. The phrase means that Memukan was speaking in the presence of the king and of the other officials. Alternate translation: “then Memukan spoke so that both the king and the officials could hear” (See: [Metonymy](#))

all the peoples who are in all the provinces of the king (ULT)

This means all the different people groups that were living in the empire. You could say, “all the people groups in all the provinces that King Ahasuerus rules” or more generally, “every person who lives in the entire empire of King Ahasuerus.” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Memukan (ULT)

See how you translated this man’s name in [1:14](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Memukan speaks of **the king** in third person as a form of respect. If you want to portray him as speaking primarily to the king because he is answering the king’s question, you could have him say, “in all the provinces that you rule” or “every person who lives in your entire empire.” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [before the face of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [and the officials](#)
- [the officials](#)
- [Vashti](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [has...done wrong](#)
- [the peoples](#)
- [the provinces of](#)

ULT

¹⁶ And Memukan replied [before the face of the king and the officials](#), “Not toward [the king](#) alone has [Vashti the queen done wrong](#), but toward all [the officials](#) and toward all [the peoples](#) who are in all [the provinces of the king Ahasuerus](#).”

Esther 1:17

For (ULT)

This introduces the reason why Memukan says that Queen Vashti has done wrong against all the men in the kingdom and not only against King Ahasuerus. To show that, you can begin with “This is what will happen.” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the matter of the queen will go out to all the women (ULT)

To emphasize his point, Memukan exaggerates and says that every single woman in the empire will hear about Queen Vashti refusing to obey King Ahasuerus. You could say, as UST does, that “women all over the empire” will hear about what the queen did. Or you could preserve Memukan’s manner of speaking by saying, “every woman” will hear. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

in order to make their husbands despised in their eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** stand for seeing, and seeing figuratively means knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. The phrase means that the women will treat their husbands with disrespect and not obey them. Alternate translation: “women will despise their husbands” (See: [Metaphor](#))

when they say, ‘The king Ahasuerus said to bring Vashti the queen before his face, but she did not come (ULT)

The implication is that they will go on to say, “So if even the queen can disobey the king, why should I have to obey my husband?” If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

The king Ahasuerus said to bring Vashti the queen before his face, but she did not come (ULT)

The women will stop respecting their husbands after they hear about this. You can put this report about what Queen Vashti did first, before “women will stop respecting their husbands,” because it is the reason that explains that result. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the presence of a person. The phrase means the Queen Vashti refused to come into the presence of King Ahasuerus when he summoned her during the feast. See how you translated this in verse 11. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the queen](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [The king](#)

ULT

17 For the matter of [the queen](#) will go out to all the women in order to make their husbands despised in their eyes when they say, ‘[The king Ahasuerus](#) said to bring [Vashti the queen before his face](#), but she did not come.’

- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [Vashti](#)
- [before his face](#)

Esther 1:18

Now this day (ULT)

Alternate translation: “even today” or “even this very day”

the noblewomen of Persia and Media (ULT)

It becomes clear later in the verse that Memukan is speaking of the wives of the king’s officials, and you could communicate that here by saying, “the wives of the officials who govern Persia and Media.” But the term “noblewomen” indicates that they also had high status of their own, so you could also call them “the leading women of Persia and Media.”

ULT

18 Now this day, the noblewomen of [Persia and Media](#) who have heard the matter of [the queen](#) will speak to all [the officials of the king](#). And there will be [contempt and wrath](#) enough!

the matter of...the queen (ULT)

Alternate translation: “what the queen has done”

will speak (ULT)

This means that they will “talk back” or “disobey.” Alternate translation: “refuse to obey”

to all the officials of the king (ULT)

This means the husbands of the noblewomen. The implication may be, “They will disobey their husbands even though they are officials of the king.” You could say that explicitly, as UST does. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And there will be contempt and wrath enough (ULT)

This could mean either that they will treat their husbands with disrespect, and this will make their “husbands angry with them” or that “they will be angry with their husbands and treat them with contempt.”

And there will be...enough (ULT)

This could mean that the husbands will be as furious “as much as they can bear.” But you could also say, “That will be bad enough by itself, even if the news does not spread any farther.” If you think that is the meaning, you can say that explicitly, as UST does. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Persia](#)
- [and Media](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [the officials of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [contempt](#)
- [and wrath](#)

Esther 1:19

If it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom that means “if the king thinks this is a good idea” or “if this advice is pleasing to the king.” (See: [Idiom](#))

If it is good to the king (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: “If it pleases you” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

ULT

19 If it is good to the king, let a decree of royalty go out from before his face, and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media (which do not pass away) that Vashti shall never come before the face of the king Ahasuerus. And let the king give her royalty to her female neighbor, the woman who is better than she.

let a decree of royalty go out from before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. The phrase means that the decree will come from the king himself. Alternate translation: “you should personally issue a royal decree” or “you should write a decree yourself” (See: [Metonymy](#))

a decree of royalty (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **royalty** with the adjective “royal.” Alternate translation: “royal decree” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

from before his face (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: “personally” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

and let it be written (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who will do the action. Alternate translation: “you should write a decree yourself” or “command your scribes to write a decree” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

which do not pass away (ULT)

Alternate translation: “these laws never become invalid” or “can never be changed”

shall...come...before the face of the king (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: “never come into your presence again” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

shall...come...before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. The phrase means that Queen Vashti will never again come into the king’s presence. Alternate translation: “never again come before King Ahasuerus” (See: [Metonymy](#))

And let the king give her royalty to her female neighbor, the woman who is better than she (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. You can show the same meaning with a verb that addresses a singular “you” and indicates that Memukan is offering advice, not giving a command when he say, “choose another woman to be queen.” Alternate translation: “the king can give her position as queen to some other woman” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

And...her royalty (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **royalty** with an expression such as “her royal position” or “her position as queen.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

the woman who is better than she (ULT)

Memukan means that the next queen should be “better than” Vashti by obeying all of the king’s commands. You could say this explicitly, as UST does. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [it is good](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [a decree of](#)
- [royalty](#)
- [from before his face](#)
- [before the face of](#)
- [in the laws of](#)
- [Persia](#)
- [and Media](#)
- [Vashti](#)

Esther 1:20

And the decree of the king will be heard (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who will do the action. Alternate translation: “when everyone ... hears” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the decree of the king (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect.

You could express the same meaning in the second person: “When they hear what you have commanded.”

Alternate translation: “when they hear the king’s decree” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

that he will make for all his kingdom (ULT)

Even though the decree of Ahasuerus applied only to Vashti directly, implicitly it meant that all wives had to obey their husbands or else their husbands could banish and divorce them as well. You can say this explicitly at the end of the verse by saying, “because if any wife disobeys her husband, he can banish and divorce her, just as you did to Vashti.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

his kingdom (ULT)

Memukan speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: “for all your kingdom” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

though it is great (ULT)

Alternate translation: “even though your empire is very large”

the women will give honor to their husbands (ULT)

Alternate translation: “women will respect and obey their husbands”

from the greatest to the least (ULT)

This expression figuratively refers to all of the husbands in the empire. By naming both extremes, it includes everyone in between. You could just give the meaning, as UST does: “every husband in the empire.” Alternate translation: “this will be true for both the most important man and the least important man in the empire, and everyone in between” (See: [Merism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the decree of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [his kingdom](#)
- [honor](#)

ULT

²⁰ And [the decree of the king](#) will be heard that he will make for all [his kingdom](#), though it is great. Then all the women will give [honor](#) to their husbands, from the greatest to the least.”

Esther 1:21

And the word seemed good in the eyes of the king (ULT)

Like “if it is good to the king” in verse 19, this is an idiom that means the king thought this was a good idea or this advice pleased the king. (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²¹ And the word [seemed good](#) in the eyes of [the king and the officials](#). And [the king](#) acted according to the word of Memukan.

in the eyes of the king and the officials (ULT)

Here, **eyes** stand for for seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus and all the officials who heard Memukan’s advice thought that his suggestion was a good idea. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the king...And...acted according to the word of Memukan (ULT)

This means that King Ahasuerus wrote a law proclaiming what Memukan had suggested.

Memukan (ULT)

Translate his name as in [1:14](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And...seemed good](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [and the officials](#)

Esther 1:22

And he sent letters to all the provinces of the king (ULT)

He means King Ahasuerus. This is saying that the king sent letters to every province in his empire.

province by province (ULT)

This is an idiom that means “every province” or every single province. (See: [Idiom](#))

according to its own writing (ULT)

Alternate translation: “using its own alphabet” or “written in its own script”

people by people (ULT)

This is an idiom that means “every people group” or every single people group. (See: [Idiom](#))

according to its own tongue (ULT)

Here, **tongue** figuratively means the language spoken by a person or a group of people. Alternate translation: “in its own language” (See: [Metonymy](#))

all...that...man should be ruling in his house (ULT)

This meant that all men should have complete authority over their wives and their children.

according to the tongue of his people (ULT)

Here, **tongue** figuratively means the language spoken by a person or a group of people. (See: [Metonymy](#))

according to the tongue of his people (ULT)

The implication is that the husband ought to be able to give orders to his wife in his own native language and that she should understand and obey him, even if she had to learn his language to do so. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the provinces of](#)
- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the king](#)
- [people](#)
- [people by](#)
- [the...his people](#)

ULT

²² And he sent letters to all [the provinces of the king](#), to [province by province](#) according to its own writing, and to [people by people according to its own tongue](#): that every man should be [ruling in his house](#) and speaking [according to the tongue of his people](#).

- according to its own tongue
- according to...tongue of
- ruling
- in his house

Esther 2

Esther 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Esther becomes queen

Esther was humble and took the advice of the royal officials about how to dress for her time with the king. The king chose Esther to be the new queen.

Mordecai warns the king against a plot

Esther's cousin, Mordecai, discovered that two men planned to kill the king. He told Esther, who then told the king. She also gave Mordecai credit for telling her.

Esther 2:1

After these things (ULT)

This introduces a new event that happened some time later, but we do not know how much later. You can show this with a phrase like “After some time had passed.” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

when the rage of the king Ahasuerus subsided (ULT)

Alternate translation: “when King Ahasuerus was not angry any more” or “when King Ahasuerus became less angry”

he remembered Vashti (ULT)

This means that he started to think about Vashti. He probably thought about the things that he liked about her, meaning that he missed her.

what she had done, and what had been decided concerning her (ULT)

This refers to Vashti’s refusal to obey Ahasuerus, and to the decision he made in [1:21](#) that she could never come into his presence again. This could actually mean that when he thought about Vashti and what she had done, he regretted the decision that he had made about her. But there was nothing he could do to bring her back because the laws of the empire could not be changed. You could explain all or some of this in your translation, as in the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

what had been decided concerning her (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say that the king performed the action. Alternate translation: “what he had decided” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the rage of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [Vashti](#)

ULT

¹ After these things, when [the rage of the king Ahasuerus](#) subsided, he remembered [Vashti](#) and what she had done, and what had been decided concerning her.

Esther 2:2

the young men of the king who served him (ULT)

These were not the older, wiser royal advisors whom Ahasuerus consulted in [1:13](#), but younger men who stood nearby the king ready to help with any practical needs. You could call them his personal servants. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

² And the young men of [the king who served him](#) said, “[Let them seek for the king](#) young women [who are virgins and pleasing of](#) appearance.”

Let them seek for the king young women (ULT)

Implicit in this suggestion is the idea, “You should get a new wife for yourself.” You can say that explicitly at the beginning of the advice that the young men gave to the king. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Let them seek (ULT)

Them refers to the servants that the king would send to do this. If this is unclear, you can say “servants” or “your servants.” Be sure to express this in a form that shows that it is not a command but a respectful suggestion such as “You could send some men Alternate translation: “to look for” (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

for the king (ULT)

The young men speak to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternatively, you could have them say “for yourself” or “on your behalf” if that would be clear but also respectful in your language (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

and pleasing of appearance (ULT)

As in [1:11](#), this is an idiom that means very beautiful. (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [for the king](#)
- [who served him](#)
- [Let them seek](#)
- [who are virgins](#)
- [and pleasing of](#)

Esther 2:3

And let the king appoint (ULT)

The young men speak to the king in third person as a sign of respect. Alternatively, you could have them say “you could appoint” in a respectful way (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

and pleasing of appearance (ULT)

As in 1:11, this is an idiom that means very beautiful. (See: [Idiom](#))

Susa the citadel (ULT)

In this context, this expression probably means “to the palace here in Susa.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

the house of women (ULT)

This means the harem for virgins, the place where the young women would live and receive beauty treatments before they were taken to the king (see verses 13 and 14).

into the hand of Hegai (the eunuch of the king who is overseer of the women) (ULT)

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “let Hegai, the king’s official, who is in charge of the women, take care of them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the hand of Hegai (ULT)

Here, **hand** is a metaphor meaning power, control, or authority. As the overseer of the women, Hegai was responsible for the young women who lived in the harem for virgins. Alternate translation: “under the custody of Hegai” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the...Hegai (ULT)

This is a man’s name. It occurs several times in this chapter. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the eunuch of the king (ULT)

The servants spoke to the king in third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: “your eunuch” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

the eunuch of (ULT)

See how you translated this term in 1:10. Alternate translation: “the official of” or “the administrator of” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

³ And let the king appoint administrators in all the provinces of his kingdom. Then let them gather every young woman who is a virgin and pleasing of appearance to Susa the citadel, to the house of women into the hand of Hegai (the eunuch of the king who is overseer of the women). Then give their ointments.

who is overseer of the women (ULT)

Alternate translation: "who is in charge of the women who live there."

their ointments (ULT)

This term seems to refer to a specific substance that women would put on their face or other parts of their body to make themselves more beautiful. From verse 12, it appears to mean lotions that were used along with oils and perfumes. But here, this one aspect of a woman's beauty treatment seems to be used to refer to all of it, so you could call these "beauty treatments." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- And let...appoint
- the king
- the king
- hand of
- who is overseer of
- administrators
- provinces of
- the...his kingdom
- who is a virgin
- and pleasing of
- the citadel
- house of

Esther 2:4

And...the young woman who is pleasing in the eyes of the king (ULT)

The servants spoke to the king in third person as a sign of respect. You could express the same meaning in the second person by saying something such as “the young woman you like the best.” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

ULT

⁴ And let the young woman who is pleasing in the eyes of [the king](#) become queen instead of [Vashti](#).” And the word was pleasing in the eyes of [the king](#), so he did thus.

in the eyes of (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus could decide which young woman he liked the best and make her queen. (See: [Metaphor](#))

And the word was pleasing in the eyes of the king (ULT)

Here, **eyes** have the same figurative meaning. The phrase indicates that King Ahasuerus thought that this suggestion was a good idea. Alternate translation: “The king found their suggestion appealing” (See: [Metaphor](#))

so he did thus (ULT)

Alternate translation: “so he followed the suggestion”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Vashti](#)

Esther 2:5

A man, a Jew (ULT)

This introduces Mordecai as a new character in the story. Use your language's way of introducing a new character. This expression means a Jewish man. (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

in Susa the citadel (ULT)

Here the phrase likely indicates the city rather than the palace, that is, the capital city of Susa. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Mordecai (ULT)

This is a man's name. It occurs many times throughout the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish (ULT)

These are men's names. Jair, Shimei, and Kish are Mordecai's male ancestors. You could say, "Mordecai was the son of Jair, who was the son of Shimei, who was the son of Kish," or see the UST. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

a man, a Benjamite (ULT)

While this likely refers to Kish, it is necessarily also true of Mordecai, and you could put it second in the verse. That way Mordecai's nationality would come first, then his tribe, and then his family and clan. Alternate translation: "from the tribe of Benjamin"

Translation Words - ULT

- a Jew
- the citadel
- Mordecai
- son of
- son of
- son of (2)
- a Benjamite

ULT

⁵ A man, a Jew, was in Susa the citadel, and his name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish (a man, a Benjamite,

Esther 2:6

who had been exiled from Jerusalem with the exiles who had been exiled along with Jeconiah, the king of Judah, who Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled (ULT)

ULT

⁶ who had been exiled from Jerusalem with the exiles who had been exiled along with Jeconiah, the king of Judah, who Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled).

The story now tells about something that happened many years before. This is background information that explains how this Jewish family came to live in Susa. You can introduce this by saying something like, “Many years earlier.” (See: [Background Information](#))

who had been exiled from Jerusalem (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had taken Kish away from Jerusalem along with some other captives” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

who had been exiled from Jerusalem (ULT)

You can bring this information forward from later in the verse because it provides background information that helps identify Mordecai. (See: [Background Information](#))

who had been exiled from Jerusalem (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you could say where King Nebuchadnezzar brought the people that he took away from Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “had taken Kish away from Jerusalem ... and brought him to Babylon.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

along with (ULT)

This means that the two things happened at the same time. You can indicate this with a phrase like “at the same time that he took.” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

Jeconiah, the king of Judah (ULT)

In the historical passage where this event is described (2 Kings 24:8–17), this king is called Jehoiachin. That was another name by which he was known. You can call him Jehoiachin here in Esther if you think that would help your readers recognize him better. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

who Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled (ULT)

You can say where King Nebuchadnezzar brought this king when he took him away from Jerusalem. For example, you can say, “Nebuchadnezzar ... took King Jehoiachin of Judah away from Jerusalem and brought him to Babylon.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- had been exiled
- the exiles
- had been exiled
- had exiled
- from Jerusalem
- king of
- king of
- the...Judah
- Nebuchadnezzar
- the...Babylon

Esther 2:7

And he was (ULT)

The story now returns to talking about Mordecai. If it is helpful for your readers, you can specify his name, saying, "Now, Mordecai."

the daughter of his uncle (ULT)

If your language has a specific term for this relationship, you can use it. For example, you can say, "his cousin." Alternate translation: "his uncle's daughter"

Hadassah...she is Esther (ULT)

Here the story is indicating that this woman's Hebrew name was Hadassah and her Persian name was Esther. You could say that explicitly. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Esther (ULT)

This is a woman's name. It occurs many times throughout the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

there was not for her a father or a mother (ULT)

You could say simply that "she was an orphan," as UST does. Alternate translation: "both her father and mother had died"

Now the young woman was beautiful of form and pleasing of appearance... her (ULT)

These two phrases mean something similar. Separately, they could be saying that Esther was both sexually mature and very attractive. But taken together, they mean that, overall, she was very pleasant to look at. You could combine them, as UST does, and say that she was "exceptionally attractive" Alternate translation: "she had a lovely body and a beautiful face" (See: [Parallelism](#))

And at the death of her father and her mother, Mordecai had taken...for him as a daughter (ULT)

This is background information explaining the relationship between Mordecai and Esther. You can move it to right after the place where Esther is introduced by name because it describes what happened in the past, before Esther became a beautiful young woman. Alternate translation: "after her father and her mother had died, Mordecai had adopted her as his own daughter" (See: [Background Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Hadassah](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [a father](#)

ULT

⁷ And he was fostering [Hadassah](#) (she is [Esther](#)), the daughter of his uncle, because there was not for her [a father](#) or a mother. Now the young woman was beautiful of form [and pleasing of appearance](#). [And at the death of her father](#) and her mother, [Mordecai](#) had taken her for him as a daughter.

- her father
- and pleasing of
- And at the death of
- Mordecai

Esther 2:8

And it happened (ULT)

After providing this background information about Mordecai and Esther in verses 5–7, the story now tells what happened as a result of these facts, when the provincial officers described in verse 3 began sending young women to the harem. That is, the story tells what happened to Esther because her family was living in the Persian empire and she was very attractive. Use your language’s way of showing that the events are now moving forward after giving background information. Alternate translation: “and so this is what happened” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

ULT

⁸ And it happened that, when [the decree of the king and his law](#) were heard, and when many young women were gathered to Susa [the citadel](#) into the [hand of](#) Hegai, [Esther](#) was taken to [the palace of the king](#), into [the hand of](#) Hegai ([who was overseer of the women](#)).

when the decree of the king and his law were heard, and when many young women were gathered (ULT)

This indicates that two actions took place at the same time. You should indicate this with a phrase like “at the same time.” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

when the decree of the king and his law were heard, and when many young women were gathered (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. For example, you can say, “when the messengers proclaimed the king’s decree and the scribes published the king’s law.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the decree of the king (ULT)

This refers to King Ahasuerus banishing Queen Vashti from his presence.

and his law (ULT)

This refers to King Ahasuerus commanding that men would have complete authority over their wives.

when...were heard (ULT)

You could also say where they did this action. Alternate translation: “Messengers went throughout the empire and proclaimed” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and when many young women were gathered (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. See the UST. (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Susa the citadel (ULT)

Here again, this likely means “the capital city of Susa.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

into the hand of Hegai (ULT)

Here, **hand** is a metaphor meaning power, control, or authority. As the overseer of the women, Hegai was responsible for the women in the harem for virgins. You could say that the officers “put them under the custody of Hegai” or that “Hegai began to take care of them.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

And it happened...when...were heard...and when...were gathered...that...was taken (ULT)

This means that Esther was brought to the harem of King Ahaserus at the same time as other young women were also being brought to the harem. You can say, “they brought Esther at the same time” or “they also brought Esther.” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

that...was taken (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “they brought Esther” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

that...was taken (ULT)

You can explain why this happened. For example, you can say, “Because Esther was exceptionally attractive, the officers also brought her” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the palace of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the king’s palace”

into the hand of Hegai (who was overseer of the women (ULT)

As earlier in this verse, this means under the custody of Hegai or that Hegai also began to take care of her. (See: [Metaphor](#))

who was overseer of the women (ULT)

This means that Hegai took care of the young women who lived in the harem for virgins. If it would be clearer in your language, you could move this information to earlier in the verse when Hegai is first mentioned because it explains why the young women were brought to him. (See: [Background Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the decree of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and his law](#)
- [the citadel](#)
- [hand of](#)
- [the hand of](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the palace of](#)
- [who was overseer of](#)

Esther 2:9

And the young woman was pleasing in his eyes, and she lifted kindness before his face (ULT)

This means that Hegai found Esther attractive, and she obtained kindness from him or that Hegai was very impressed with Esther, and she won his favor. In other words, because he was so impressed with her, this made him want to do everything he could to help her. This is background information that explains why Hegai took the actions that are listed next.

ULT

⁹ And the young woman **was pleasing** in his eyes, and she lifted kindness **before his face**. And he quickly gave her ointments, gave her portions of food, and gave her seven young women chosen **from the house of the king**. And he transferred her and **her young women to the best of the house of women**.

And the young woman was pleasing in his eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. In this context, the phrase probably means that Hegai thought that Esther was either an attractive woman or a pleasant person, or both. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the young woman (ULT)

This means Esther. You should make sure that this is clear in your translation.

in his eyes (ULT)

Here, **his** refers to Hegai. You should make sure that this clear in your translation.

and she lifted kindness before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. To say that she “lifted kindness before his face” is a rare expression in Hebrew, and the exact meaning is uncertain. In this context, it could even suggest that Esther and Hegai became friends. Alternate translation: “she won his favor” (See: [Metonymy](#))

before his face (ULT)

Here, **his** refers to Hegai. You should make sure that this clear in your translation.

gave her ointments (ULT)

Alternate translation: “her beauty treatments,” as in 2:3. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

portions of food (ULT)

In context, this likely means that Hegai made sure that Esther was served good food that would keep her healthy.

gave her seven young women chosen from the house of the king (ULT)

This means that Hegai chose seven female servants from the king's palace and assigned them to take care of Esther.

portions of food...And he transferred her...her young women (ULT)

Her means Esther, and **her young women** means the female attendants Hegai assigned to her.

Translation Words - ULT

- And...was pleasing
- to the best of
- before his face
- from the house of
- the king
- her young women
- the house of

Esther 2:10

Esther had not declared her people or her ancestry (ULT)

This means that Esther had not told anyone this information about herself.

her people or her ancestry (ULT)

These two short phrases mean almost the same thing. They are used together to emphasize that Esther followed Mordecai's instructions exactly. You could combine them, as UST does, and say something like "what people group she was from." Alternate translation: "Esther did not tell anyone that she was a Jew, and she did not tell anyone who her relatives were" (See: [Doublet](#))

for Mordecai had laid a charge upon her (ULT)

This is background information that explains why Esther did not tell anyone about her family or nationality. So you can say this first in the verse if that is clearer in your language. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

had laid a charge upon her (ULT)

This means that Mordecai had gotten her to promise not to do it.

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [her people](#)
- [Mordecai](#)

ULT

¹⁰ [Esther](#) had not declared [her people](#) or her ancestry, for [Mordecai](#) had laid a charge upon her that she should not tell it.

Esther 2:11

And always, day by day (ULT)

Alternate translation: "every single day" (See: [Idiom](#))

Mordecai was walking about (ULT)

Express this in the way your language describes an action that someone repeats over and over. For example, you can say, "Mordecai would walk around."

before the face of the courtyard of (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the front of a place. So you could say, "in front of the courtyard." (See: [Metonymy](#))

the house of women (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the harem for virgins"

in order to know the peace of Esther and what was being done with her (ULT)

This is background information that explains why Mordecai would walk around in front of the courtyard. It was so that he could ask people who were going into or coming out of the courtyard how Esther was doing. You can place this first in the verse because it explains the rest of what is said, if that would be clearer in your language. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the...peace of...Esther (ULT)

Alternate translation: "how Esther was doing" or "about Esther's well-being"

the...peace of...Esther and what was being done with her (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The story is using the repetition to emphasize how concerned Mordecai was for Esther. You could combine them and say, "how Esther was doing" or "if Esther was all right." (See: [Parallelism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [before the face of](#)
- [the courtyard of](#)
- [the house of](#)
- [peace of](#)
- [the...Esther](#)

ULT

11 And always, day by day, [Mordecai](#) was walking about [before the face of the courtyard of the house of](#) women in order to know the [peace of Esther](#) and what was being done with her.

Esther 2:12

Now when...came (ULT)

Verses 12 to 14 are background information about how the virgins who were gathered for the king became his concubines. These verses are not specifically about Esther, but about the women in general. Use your language's way of letting your readers know that this is background information by using a connecting word or a phrase such as, "This is how virgins became concubines for the king." (See: [Background Information](#))

young woman by young woman (ULT)

Alternate translation: "each one of the young women" (See: [Idiom](#))

when the turn came ... to go to the king Ahasuerus

Each of these young women was going to have sexual relations with the king and, as a result, legally become one of his concubines, that is, one of his secondary wives. As the story has already explained, he would then choose one of them to become his queen and primary wife. But the king would still provide for each of the concubines for the rest of her life; they would not be free to marry anyone else. This is something that the story's original audience would have understood implicitly. You can say it explicitly if your readers need this information to understand the story: "Each young woman in the harem, one at a time, was going to have sexual relations with King Ahasuerus and become one of his concubines" or "one of his secondary wives." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

according to the law of women (ULT)

Here, **law** probably does not mean a legal decree, but rather a standard regimen that had been developed. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

For thus the days of their beautification would be fulfilled (ULT)

This phrase indicates that the story is now going to provide background information on how these treatments were done. It means, "This is how these women would spend the time preparing to go to the king." (See: [Background Information](#))

six months by oil of myrrh (ULT)

This means that a woman's attendants would rub her body with olive oil mixed with myrrh every day for six months. You can explain this in more detail if your readers need this information to understand the story. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

by oil of myrrh (ULT)

This likely means "olive oil mixed with myrrh."

ULT

¹² Now when the turn came for young woman by young woman to go to the king Ahasuerus, it was after her 12 months, according to the law of women. For thus the days of their beautification would be fulfilled: six months by oil of myrrh, then six months by perfumes and by the ointments of women.

and by the ointments of women (ULT)

This means lotions designed for women. In 2:3 and 2:9, this one specific part of the program seems to be used figuratively to mean all of it, and so in those verses it can be translated “beauty treatments.” But it should be translated with a specific term or phrase here, such as “women’s lotions” or “feminine ointments” because it is named along with oils and perfumes as one component of the treatment. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [according to the law of](#)

Esther 2:13

Then at this (ULT)

Alternate translation: "after a woman's year of beauty treatments was completed"

the young woman would go to the king (ULT)

This means that the young woman would go and have sexual relations with the king and thereby become one of his concubines. If your readers need this information to understand the story, you could explain that here, if you did not do so in verse 12. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹³ Then at this, the young woman would go to [the king](#). Anything that she said would be given to her, to go with her from the house of women to [the house of the king](#).

Anything...that she said would be given to her (ULT)

Anything most likely refers to clothing and jewelry. This phrase probably means that a woman could take any of those that she wanted from the harem for virgins and wear them when she went to the king's palace. You could say that explicitly by saying, "A young woman could take whatever clothing and jewelry she wanted from the harem for virgins and wear them when she went to the king's palace." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Anything...that she said would be given to her (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "she could take whatever she wanted" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the house of

Alternate translation: "the king's rooms" or "the king's house" or "the king's palace"

the house of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the king's rooms" or "the king's house" or "the king's palace"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the house of](#)

Esther 2:14

she would go (ULT)

She would not walk over on her own. Rather, the king's servants would come and bring her to the king's private quarters, in the way that they were told to bring Vashti to the banquet in [1:11](#). You can say this explicitly if it would help your readers to understand the story. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and in the morning she would return (ULT)

It is implied that this is the following morning. This information can be made clear. Once again, she would not go on her own. Alternate translation: "the next morning the king's servants would bring her to" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the second house of women (ULT)

Alternate translations: "a different house for women" or "the harem for concubines" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

into the hand of Shaashgaz (the eunuch of the king who was overseer of the concubines (ULT)

Alternate translation: "where Shaashgaz, the king's servant in charge of the concubines, would take care of her"

into the hand of Shaashgaz (the eunuch of the king who was overseer of the concubines (ULT)

Here, **hand** is a metaphor meaning power, control, or authority. Just as Hegai was the overseer of the virgins, Shaashgaz was the overseer of the concubines, so he would be the one responsible for Esther while she was in the harem for concubines. Alternate translation: "under the custody of Shaashgaz" (See: [Metaphor](#))

the...Shaashgaz (ULT)

This is a man's name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the eunuch of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this term, **eunuch**, in [1:10](#). You could say "royal" rather than "of the king." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

who was overseer of the concubines (ULT)

This means that Shaashgaz was the official who *took care of the concubines* or who was responsible for the concubines.

ULT

14 In the evening she would go, and in the morning she would return to the second [house of](#) women, into the [hand of](#) Shaashgaz (the eunuch of [the king who was overseer of the concubines](#)). She would not go to [the king](#) again unless [the king had delighted](#) in her and she was called [by name](#).

the concubines (ULT)

As a **concubine**, the young woman was one of the king's secondary wives. She would live in this harem for the rest of her life. She was not free to return to her family or to marry anybody else. If it would help your readers to understand the story, you could explain all or part of this to your readers here, if you did not do so in 2:12 or 2:13. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

to...She would not go...the king again (ULT)

Alternate translation: "She would not go and see the king again." In verse 12, the Note mentioned that "go to the king" meant "have sexual relations with the king." But for this occurrence of the expression, it is appropriate to use a more general phrase such as "visit the king" because there could be other, more social reasons for a further visit. The woman would now be a secondary wife, and the king would only send for her if he decided that he enjoyed being with her.

had delighted in her (ULT)

This means that he "had enjoyed being with her" or that she "had pleased the king very much."

and she was called by name (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. For example, you can say, "and the king asked for her by name" or "and called for her by name." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [house of](#)
- [hand of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [who was overseer of](#)
- [the concubines](#)
- [had delighted](#)
- [by name](#)

Esther 2:15

Now when the turn of Esther...her...came...to go to the king (ULT)

The story resumes here after the background information that was provided in verses 12-14 about what the women in the harem did when they became concubines of the king. A contrast is being drawn. A young woman could take any clothing and jewelry she wanted from the harem. But Esther only asked for what Hegai recommended. So it would be good to introduce this episode with a word such as “but,” which draws a contrast. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

ULT

¹⁵ Now when the turn of [Esther](#) (the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of [Mordecai](#), who had taken [her](#) for him as a daughter) came to go to [the king](#), [she did not seek](#) anything except what Hegai (the eunuch of [the king who was overseer of the women](#)) said. And [Esther](#) was a lifter of [favor](#) in the eyes of everyone who saw her.

the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken...for him as a daughter (ULT)

This background information reminds the reader who Esther was by describing her relationship to Mordecai. You could make this a separate sentence and move it later in the verse to keep from breaking up the flow of the first sentence about what Esther did. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Abihail (ULT)

This man was Esther’s father and Mordecai’s uncle. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

she did not seek anything except what Hegai...said (ULT)

You can state this in a positive form by saying, “she asked only for.” Alternate translation: “she did not ask for anything else to wear except” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

what...Hegai...said (ULT)

Alternate translation: “what Hegai recommended” or “what Hegai suggested”

what...Hegai...said (ULT)

As the king’s personal servant, **Hegai** would have known what kind of clothing and jewelry Ahasuerus found attractive on a woman. By following his advice, Esther showed that she trusted Hegai. This is implicit information that you can make explicit if it would help the reader to understand the story. You might say, for example, “Hegai knew the king’s preferences because he was his personal servant. Esther had come to trust Hegai and so she followed his advice.” This could go at the end of the verse or in a footnote. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the eunuch of the king who was overseer of the women (ULT)

This is saying that Hegai was the royal official responsible for the women in the harem for virgins. This is background information that reminds the reader who Hegai was by describing his responsibilities. You could also move this to the end of the verse and put it in parentheses. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

the eunuch of the king (ULT)

See how you decided to translate the term **eunuch** in [1:10](#). You could say “royal” for “of the king.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

a lifter of favor in the eyes of everyone who saw her (ULT)

This is a rare expression in Hebrew, and the exact meaning is uncertain. In this context, the expression probably means that everyone who saw Esther dressed in the clothes she would wear for her visit to the king was very impressed with the way she looked. Alternate translation: “pleased all who saw her” (See: [Idiom](#))

in the eyes of (ULT)

Here, **eyes** is a metonym for seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. In this context, the phrase probably means that everyone who saw Esther thought that she was either an attractive woman or a pleasant person, or both. Alternate translation: “in the judgment of” (See: [Metaphor](#))

everyone who saw her (ULT)

This phrase can mean either **every man or every person who saw her**. Alternate translation: “every man who saw her” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther...her](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [she did...seek](#)
- [who was overseer of](#)
- [favor](#)

Esther 2:16

And Esther was taken (ULT)

You can say this with an active form by saying, for example, “The king’s servants brought Esther.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to the palace of his royalty (ULT)

You can use an adjective to translate the abstract noun **royalty**. For example, you can say, “in his royal palace” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

in the tenth month (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in month ten” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

which is the month of Tebeth (ULT)

Tebeth is the name of the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: “that is, the month of Tebeth” (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

the month of Tebeth (ULT)

The story is being recorded from the perspective of the Persian court. But for the benefit of its intended Jewish audience, the Hebrew name of the month is given.

the month of Tebeth (ULT)

You could convert the Hebrew days and months into approximate dates on the calendar that your culture uses. However, the Jews used a lunar calendar, so if you use a solar calendar, the dates will be different every year and the translation will not be quite accurate. So you may just want to provide the Hebrew days and months. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

in year seven of his reign (ULT)

Alternate translation: “during the seventh year of the reign of Ahasuerus as king of Persia” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [palace of](#)
- [the...his royalty](#)
- [of his reign](#)

ULT

16 And [Esther](#) was taken to [the king Ahasuerus](#), to the [palace of his royalty](#), in the tenth month (which is the month of Tebeth), in year seven [of his reign](#).

Esther 2:17

And the king loved Esther more than all the women and she lifted favor and kindness before his face more than all the virgins (ULT)

These two phrases mean almost the same thing. The information is given twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize that Ahasuerus was completely convinced that Esther was the one he should make his queen. “More than all the virgins” basically duplicates the meaning of “more than all the women,” so, if this duplication would be confusing in your language, you don’t need to include both phrases, or you could say, “more than all of them” for the second phrase. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

¹⁷ And [the king loved Esther](#) more than all the women and she lifted [favor](#) and kindness [before his face](#) more than all [the virgins](#). And he set [a crown of royalty](#) on her head, [and he made her queen](#) instead of [Vashti](#).

more than all the women (ULT)

This means all the other women who had been brought to the king and who became his concubines. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and she lifted favor and kindness before his face (ULT)

This is a rare expression in Hebrew, and the exact meaning is uncertain. See how you translated similar phrases in [2:9](#) and [2:15](#). Review the explanation there if that would be helpful. In this context, it probably means that King Ahasuerus was very impressed with both Esther’s appearance and her personality. (See: [Idiom](#))

and she lifted favor and kindness before his face (ULT)

Favor and **kindness** mean similar things and are probably used together here to strengthen a single idea. Alternate translation: “he was very pleased with her” (See: [Doublet](#))

before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. (See: [Metonymy](#))

And he set a crown of royalty on her head (ULT)

Ahasuerus did this to show that he was making Esther his queen. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

a crown of royalty (ULT)

To translate the abstract noun **royalty**, you can use an adjective such as a “royal” crown. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [And...loved](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [favor](#)
- [before his face](#)

- the virgins
- a crown of
- royalty
- and he made her queen
- Vashti

Esther 2:18

And the king made a great feast (ULT)

The king did this to celebrate Esther becoming the queen. You can say this explicitly. For example, you can say, "Then, to celebrate her becoming the queen, the king hosted a great feast." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the feast of...Esther (ULT)

You could indicate to your readers this is the name that Ahasuerus gave to the feast, for example, "He called it 'Esther's Feast.'" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

And he made a holiday for the provinces (ULT)

This was probably a "tax holiday," that is, a temporary elimination of taxes. For a time, the provinces did not have to send in the usual taxes to the king. You could say something like "he proclaimed a temporary reprieve from taxes for all the provinces of his empire." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

according to the hand of the king (ULT)

Here, **hand** figuratively represents the action of doing or giving. The phrase means that King Ahasuerus personally gave lavish gifts to the guests at this feast. You could say something like "with royal generosity" or "with great willingness to give" or "with generosity that only a king can give." (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [a...feast](#)
- [the feast of](#)
- [his officials](#)
- [and his servants](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [for the provinces](#)
- [according to the hand of](#)

ULT

18 And [the king](#) made a great [feast](#) for all [his officials and his servants](#), [the feast of Esther](#). And he made a holiday for the provinces, and he gave gifts according to the hand of the king.

Esther 2:19

Now when virgins were being gathered a second time (ULT)

Since this happened some time after Esther's Feast, you can show this by using a connecting phrase such as "some time later." (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

ULT

¹⁹ Now when [virgins](#) were being gathered a second time, [Mordecai](#) was [then sitting at the gate of the king](#).

Now when virgins were being gathered a second time (ULT)

The most likely explanation for this is that Ahasuerus decided he would like to have more concubines. You can say this explicitly if it will help the readers to understand the story. He probably believed that having a large number of concubines was another thing that would show he was a great king. To do so, you could add: "because Ahasuerus decided that he would like to have more concubines." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Now when virgins were being gathered a second time (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. For example, you can say, "at the time when the king's officers were gathering virgins for a second time." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Now when virgins were being gathered a second time, Mordecai...then (ULT)

This indicates that the information about Mordecai explains what he was doing at this same time. You can use a phrase such as "during this time" to indicate this. (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

Mordecai was then sitting at the gate of the king (ULT)

Possible meanings are: (1) **Sitting at the king's gate** is an idiom meaning that Mordecai worked for the king in some capacity and was stationed at the gate. (See: [Idiom](#)) (2) Mordecai sat there so he could hear about how Esther was doing from the many people who passed through the gate.

at the gate of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the gate to the king's house" or "the gate to the king's palace"

Translation Words - ULT

- [virgins](#)
- [Mordecai...then](#)
- [at the gate of](#)
- [the king](#)

Esther 2:20

her ancestry (that is, her people) (ULT)

These two short phrases mean almost the same thing. They are used together to emphasize that Esther followed Mordecai's instructions exactly. You could combine them, as UST does. Alternate translation: "who her relatives were or that she was a Jew" (See: [Doublet](#))

according to the charge that Mordecai had laid upon her (ULT)

Alternate translation: "just as Mordecai had instructed her" or "as Mordecai had made her promise" or "because Mordecai had warned her not to tell anyone"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [her people](#)
- [the charge...had laid](#)
- [the command of](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [Mordecai](#)

ULT

²⁰ [Esther](#) had not yet declared her ancestry (that is, [her people](#)), according to [the charge](#) that [Mordecai had laid](#) upon her. And [Esther](#) continued to do [the command of Mordecai](#) according to how she was with him in her fostering.

Esther 2:21

In those days (ULT)

This resumes the story after the background information that is provided in verse 20. Indicate this in the way that your language resumes a story after giving background information, such as with a connecting phrase like “during that time.” (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#))

when Mordecai was sitting at the gate of the king (ULT)

It is implicit in the story that Mordecai heard the two men talking who are named right afterwards. You can say this explicitly if it helps the readers to understand this part of the story. To do so, add: “he heard two men talking.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

was sitting at the gate of the king (ULT)

As in verse 19, this is likely an idiom that means that Mordecai worked for the king in some capacity and was stationed at the gate where officials met to make important decisions. (See: [Idiom](#))

Bigthan and Teresh (ULT)

These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

two eunuchs of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:10](#). For the phrase **of the king**, you can say “royal.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

who were guardians of the doorway (ULT)

In this case the men were not guardians of one of the harems but guardians of the king’s private rooms. You could say, “they guarded the doorway to the king’s private rooms” or “they protected the doorway to the king’s private quarters.”

and they sought (ULT)

Here, **seeking** figuratively means actively trying to do something. Alternate translation: “they were plotting” or “they wanted to find a way” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to stretch out a hand (ULT)

Here the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to cause someone physical harm with the intention of killing him. You could say, “they were planning to assassinate him.” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

21 In those days, *when Mordecai* was sitting *at the gate of the king*, Bigthan and Teresh (two eunuchs of *the king who were guardians of the doorway*) became angry; and they sought to stretch out *a hand against the king Ahasuerus*.

Translation Words - ULT

- when Mordecai
- at the gate of
- the king
- the king
- against the king
- who were guardians of
- the doorway
- and they sought
- a hand
- Ahasuerus

Esther 2:22

And the matter was made known to Mordecai (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, for example by saying, "Mordecai found out what they were planning." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²² And the matter [was made known to Mordecai](#), and he declared it [to Esther the queen](#). And [Esther spoke to the king](#) in the [name of Mordecai](#).

and he declared it to Esther the queen (ULT)

This means that he told Queen Esther about it somehow.

in the name of Mordecai (ULT)

This expression means that Esther passed the information along to King Ahasuerus on Mordecai's behalf or that she told the king the information had come from Mordecai. (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And...was made known](#)
- [to Mordecai](#)
- [the...Mordecai](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [to the king](#)
- [in...name of](#)

Esther 2:23

And the matter was sought out and was found out, and the two of them were hanged on a pole (ULT)

This verse tells what happened next after Esther gave the information to the king. You can use a word such as “then” to indicate this. (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

ULT

²³ And the matter **was sought out** and was found out, and the two of them **were hanged** on a pole. And it was written in the book of the events of days **before the face of the king**.

And the matter was sought out and was found out (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. For example, you can say, “Then the king’s servants investigated Mordecai’s report and found out that it was true.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

and the two of them were hanged on a pole (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the king ordered his servants to impale those two men on wooden poles” or “the king ordered his servants to hang those two men on a gallows” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

a pole (ULT)

This seems to refer specifically to a pole or wooden structure that would be used to suspend a person above the ground and that could be used as a means of killing him or to display his body after he was dead. This might mean: (1) by hanging him from it with a rope tied around his neck, or (2) by impaling him on it, that is, by sticking a sharp point on one end of a pole through his body. Alternate translation: “wooden structure” or “wooden pole” or “gallows” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

And it was written (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. You can say, for example, “The king’s scribes recorded an account of this.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in the book of the events of days (ULT)

This is an idiom that describes a regular record of the events in a king’s reign. You could call this “the royal chronicles.” Alternate translation: “the daily record book” (See: [Idiom](#))

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** refers figuratively to the presence of a person. The phrase means that the scribes wrote this account while King Ahasuerus was personally present. You could say that they did this in the king’s presence. Alternate translation: “the king watched a scribe write this down” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And...was sought out](#)
- [and...were hanged](#)

- before the face of
- the king

Esther 3

Esther 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Haman plots against the Jews

Mordecai was told to prostrate himself before Haman. This would be considered to be worship. But for a Jew, it was wrong to worship someone other than Yahweh. Because of this, he refused to do it. This made Haman angry, so he decided to kill all the Jews in the Persian Empire. Haman was a descendant of Agag, a king of the Amalekite people. The Amalekites became the enemies of the Jews during the exodus (Exodus 17:8-16). Moses told the people that they would need to destroy them (Deuteronomy 25:17-19), and later God commanded Saul to destroy them (1 Samuel 15:2-3). Samuel killed King Agag (1 Samuel 15:33), but the Amalekites were never completely destroyed (1 Samuel 30:17). Both Mordecai and Haman were probably very aware that their people were enemies.

Esther 3:1

After these things (ULT)

This introduces a new event in the story. Use a connecting phrase that introduces a new event in your language. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

After these things (ULT)

This event happened some time after Esther became queen, and you can show this by using a connecting phrase such as “some time later.” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

Haman (ULT)

This is a man’s name. It occurs many times in the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite (ULT)

These are the names of Haman’s father and Haman’s people group. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

made...great...Ahasuerus...Haman (ULT)

This means that Ahasuerus **promoted** Haman. It’s implied in the story that Haman was already one of Ahasuerus’s officials, but that he was now being promoted to a higher position. You could say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And he lifted him up and placed his seat of authority from over all the officials (ULT)

These two phrases mean the same thing. They are used together to emphasize that the king was making Haman very powerful. You could combine them and say something like, “the king gave Haman a very high position that was over all of his other officials.” (See: [Doublet](#))

And he lifted him up (ULT)

Here, **lifting** is a metaphor meaning to advance or promote a person to a higher, more important position than they held previously. Alternate translation: “he gave him a more important position” (See: [Metaphor](#))

his seat of authority (ULT)

Here, **seat of authority** means Haman’s position or status in the Persian government. (See: [Idiom](#))

his seat of authority (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun “authority” by using a concrete noun for this whole phrase. For example, you can say, “his position.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

¹ After these things, **the king Ahasuerus** made Haman, the **son of Hammedatha**, the Agagite, great. And he lifted him up and placed his seat of authority from over all **the officials** who were with him.

from over all the officials who were with him (ULT)

Him in this phrase may refer to the king. You could say that “the king promoted him above his other officials” or “gave him more authority than all of his other officials” or that “Haman became more important than all of his other officials.”

Translation Words - ULT

- the king
- Ahasuerus
- son of
- the officials

Esther 3:2

And all the servants of the king who were at the gate of the king (ULT)

Here, the **gate of the king**, probably the entrance to the citadel, may figuratively represent the citadel itself, the place where these people served the king. The citadel, in turn, would represent everyone who served the king. So you could say just “all the king’s other servants.” However, this may also be a reference to the specific group of officials who were stationed at the gate, the way Mordecai was. Alternate translation: “the royal officials who were stationed at the palace gate” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

² And all [the servants of the king](#) who were [at the gate of the king](#) were [bowing down and prostrating themselves](#) to Haman, for thus [the king had commanded](#) concerning him. [But Mordecai](#) would neither [bow down](#) nor [would he prostrate himself](#).

And all the servants of the king...were bowing down and prostrating themselves to Haman (ULT)

The servants were required to do this as a way of honoring him whenever Haman walked by. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly, as in the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

were bowing down and prostrating themselves (ULT)

This means that the other officials humbled themselves and lay flat on the ground before Haman. These actions represented recognition and respect for the very high position that the king had given him in the Persian government. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

were bowing down and prostrating themselves (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that the officials knew how important it was to obey the king’s command and honor Haman in this way. You could combine them as UST does and say something like “bow down all the way to the ground.” Alternate translation: “bowing and lying down on the ground” (See: [Doublet](#))

and prostrating themselves (ULT)

This means bowing down all the way to the ground.

for thus...had commanded concerning him (ULT)

If that would be clearer in your language, you can put this information first in the verse because it explains the reason why all the other officials were bowing to Haman. See the UST. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

for thus...had commanded concerning him (ULT)

The king did this as a sign of Haman’s new position. You can state this here or in a separate sentence, as in the UST. Alternate translation: “the king had commanded them to do this in order to show that he had given Haman such a high position” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

But Mordecai would neither bow down nor would he prostrate himself (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how serious an offense this was against the king's command and how much determination it took for Mordecai to remain standing. You could combine these phrases as UST does and say, "But Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman." Alternate translation: "Mordecai did not bow down or lie on the ground" (See: [Parallelism](#))

But Mordecai would neither bow down nor would he prostrate himself (ULT)

It appears that as a Jew, Mordecai considered it wrong to worship anyone other than Yahweh, and that he believed he would be worshipping Haman if he bowed down low to the ground to honor him. So, on religious grounds, Mordecai refused to bow down. You can say this explicitly if it would make your translation clearer. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- the servants of
- the king
- the king
- the king
- at the gate of
- were bowing down
- would...bow down
- and prostrating themselves
- would he prostrate himself
- had commanded
- But Mordecai

Esther 3:3

the servants of the king who were at the gate of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this expression at the beginning of [3:2](#).

And...said...to Mordecai (ULT)

They spoke to Mordecai because they saw that he did not bow down. You can say this explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. You can say, for example, "The other officials saw that, and they asked Mordecai." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Why are you trespassing the command of the king (ULT)

Alternative translation: "why are you disobeying the king's command" or "why are you not obeying what the king commanded"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the servants of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [at the gate of](#)
- [to Mordecai](#)
- [are...trespassing](#)
- [the command of](#)

ULT

³ And [the servants of the king](#) who were [at the gate of the king](#) said to Mordecai, "Why are you [trespassing the command of the king](#)?"

Esther 3:4

when they spoke to him (ULT)

This means that they spoke to him about not bowing down. Specifically, they warned him that he would be severely punished if he kept disobeying the king and not honoring his highest official. You can say that explicitly if it would be clearer in your language. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

day after day (ULT)

This expression means “every day.” (See: [Idiom](#))

And it happened...when they spoke to him...that...he did not listen to them (ULT)

Here, **he did not listen** means he did not heed their warning or he did not do what they said. Mordecai heard them, but he did not do what they advised him to do. This means that even though the other officials questioned him and probably warned him, he still refused to bow down. (See: [Idiom](#))

So they told Haman to see if the words of Mordecai would stand (ULT)

In this context, **standing** figuratively means to survive a challenge, and **words** means the reasons that Mordecai gave for his actions. This phrase means that the other officials told Haman about it to see if he would tolerate it. (See: [Idiom](#))

for he had told them that he was a Jew (ULT)

This is the answer that Mordecai gave the other officials when they asked him why he refused to bow down to Haman. If that would be clearer in your language, you can put it first in the verse because it explains everything that happens afterwards. Alternate translation: “Mordecai told them that he was a Jew, and that Jews would bow down only to God” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

for he had told them that he was a Jew (ULT)

Mordecai’s explanation would have included the fact that Jews would only worship Yahweh. You could say that explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [was a Jew](#)

ULT

⁴ And it happened that, when they spoke to him day after day, he did not listen to them. So they told Haman to see if the words of [Mordecai](#) would stand, for he had told them that he [was a Jew](#). ^[1]

Esther 3:5

And Haman saw (ULT)

Here, **seeing** figuratively means knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. This phrase means that Haman learned about this. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Mordecai would neither bow down nor prostrate himself to him (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how serious an offense this was. You could combine them as UST does and say, "Mordecai was refusing to bow down to him." Alternate translation: "Mordecai would not bow down or lie on the ground" (See: [Parallelism](#))

And Haman was filled with rage (ULT)

Here, **Haman's rage** is spoken of as something that could fill him up. You could say that he was furious or extremely angry. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [bow down](#)
- [nor prostrate himself](#)
- [rage](#)

ULT

⁵ And Haman saw that [Mordecai](#) would neither [bow down nor prostrate himself](#) to him. And Haman was filled with [rage](#).

Esther 3:6

And it was despised in his eyes (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "Haman considered that it was not enough" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

And it was despised in his eyes (ULT)

Haman probably decided to go to such extremes because he was so angry. You could say that explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And it was despised (ULT)

Despise in this context means not to hate but to think little of or think something is too small. This expression means that Haman decided it would not be enough just to kill Mordecai alone.

in his eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** stand for "seeing," and in this case "seeing" figuratively means judgment. This phrase means in Haman's judgment. Alternate translation: "as he saw it" (See: [Metaphor](#))

to stretch out a hand against Mordecai alone (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he rejected the idea of killing only Mordecai" or "he decided to kill more than just Mordecai" or "he decided that it would not be enough to get rid of only Mordecai"

to stretch out a hand (ULT)

As in [2:21](#), the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to cause someone physical harm with the intention of killing them. (See: [Idiom](#))

for they had told him the people of Mordecai (ULT)

They means the other royal officials. **Him** refers to Haman. **The people of Mordecai** means the Jews. Mordecai had told these officials that he would not bow down to Haman because Jews worshiped only God. So this means that the other officials had told Haman that Mordecai was not bowing down to him because he was a Jew.

And Haman sought to annihilate (ULT)

Here, **seeking** figuratively means trying to do something. In this context, it means that Haman decided that he would try to kill all the Jews. (See: [Metaphor](#))

of...were in all the kingdom...Ahasuerus (ULT)

This means in the entire empire that King Ahasuerus ruled.

ULT

⁶ And it was despised in his eyes to stretch out a hand against Mordecai alone, for they had told him the people of Mordecai. And Haman sought to annihilate all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were in all the kingdom of Ahasuerus.

the Jews...the people...Mordecai...of (ULT)

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. The repetition emphasizes how great the threat was to their existence. You could combine them as UST does and say something like “all of the Jews.” Alternate translation: “Mordecai’s people, the Jews” (See: [Doublet](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- a hand
- against Mordecai
- Mordecai
- the...Mordecai
- the...Ahasuerus
- the people of
- people...of
- And...sought
- to annihilate
- the Jews
- of...kingdom

Esther 3:7

In the first month (ULT)

Alternate translation: "In month one" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

which is the month of Nisan (ULT)

Nisan is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

the month of Nisan (ULT)

As in [2:16](#), you could convert the Hebrew month into an approximate time on the calendar that your culture uses. However, the Jews used a lunar calendar, so if you use a solar calendar, the dates will be different every year and the translation will not be quite accurate. So you may just want to give the Hebrew month. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

in year 12 of the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Alternate translations: "during the twelfth year of the reign of Ahasuerus as king of Persia" or "when King Ahasuerus had reigned for about twelve years" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

a Pur (which is "the lot") was cast (ULT)

The storyteller is giving both the Persian and the Hebrew name because this is the story behind the Festival of Purim, which takes its name from "Pur." So this is not repetition for emphasis. You can put in the Persian name and the word for "lot" in your own language to show that the storyteller is doing this. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the lot (ULT)

A **lot** was an object with different markings on various sides that was used, most likely by dropping it on the ground, to select a specific time for doing something. The belief was that God or the gods would control which way the object fell, thus guiding the selection process and granting favor to the action if it were done on the date chosen. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

a Pur...was cast (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. You can say, for example, "Haman had his servants cast a Pur." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

a Pur...was cast (ULT)

If that would be clearer in your language, you can put this information first because it explains the rest of what happens in this verse. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁷ In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in year 12 of the king Ahasuerus, a Pur (which is "the lot") was cast before the face of Haman from day to day and from month to month: the twelfth, which is the month of Adar.

before the face of Haman (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. In this context, the phrase means that Haman was physically present when the lot was cast. Alternate translation: “as Haman watched” (See: [Metonymy](#))

from day to day and from month to month (ULT)

This expression means that the lot was cast to select a particular day of the month and a particular month of the year.

from day to day and from month to month (ULT)

Haman was casting the lot to determine the best day and the best month to kill the Jews. You can say that explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “to determine the best day and the best month to kill the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the twelfth, which is the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. This name occurs several times in the story. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

the twelfth, which is the month of Adar (ULT)

See how you decided in [2:16](#) and the first part of this verse to represent the dates that are given in the Hebrew calendar in the book of Esther. Be consistent.

the twelfth, which is the month of Adar (ULT)

This means that the lot indicated the twelfth month of that year as the time for Haman to carry out his plan. You can say that explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. (The day that was chosen is reported in verse 13.) Alternate Translation: “the lot indicated the twelfth month, the month of Adar, as the best month to kill the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the twelfth (ULT)

Alternative translation: “month twelve” or “the twelfth month” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [of the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [the lot](#)
- [before the face of](#)

Esther 3:8

And Haman said to the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

The implication is that Haman then went to see the king so that he could speak with him. You could say that explicitly. Do not give your readers the impression that the king was present with Haman while he was casting the lot. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

He has one people (ULT)

He refers to the king, and **one people** refers to the Jews as a people group. So this means there is a people group or a group of people. (See: [Numbers](#))

scattered and dispersed (ULT)

These two words mean almost the same thing. Haman uses the repetition to emphasize that the Jews are everywhere throughout the empire and so their influence, which he says is bad, will affect everyone. You could combine these words as UST does. (See: [Doublet](#))

among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom (ULT)

Haman is saying that the Jews are mixed in with all the other peoples, and they live in every province.

And their laws are different from every people, and the laws of the king they do not obey (ULT)

Haman is saying that the Jews have their own set of laws, and he is accusing them of not obeying the king's laws as a result.

the laws of the king (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You could have him say, "your laws." Or you could indicate this respect another way by having Haman begin by saying, "Your Majesty." (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

And there is no profit to the king to leave them untouched (ULT)

Haman is saying, "It is not good for you to allow them to live in your empire." This can also be stated without the negative. Alternate translation: "the king should remove them" or "you should remove them"

And...to the king (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You could express the same meaning in the second person by saying, "not good for you." (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

ULT

⁸ And Haman said **to the king Ahasuerus**, "He has one **people** scattered and dispersed among **the peoples** in all **the provinces of your kingdom**. And their laws are different from every **people**, and **the laws of the king** they do not **obey**. And there is no profit to the king to leave them untouched.

Translation Words - ULT

- to the king
- the king
- Ahasuerus
- do...obey
- people
- the peoples
- people
- the provinces of
- your kingdom
- And their laws
- the laws of

Esther 3:9

If it is good to the king (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

If it is good to the king (ULT)

See how you decided to translate this idiom in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “if it seems like a good idea to you, O king” or “if the king thinks this is a good idea” or “if this advice is pleasing to the king” (See: [Idiom](#))

let it be written (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who would do the action. For example, “the king could write a decree” or “you could write a decree.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to destroy them (ULT)

This means that the decree would say that all the Jews should be killed.

I will weigh out...into the hands of the doers of the work (ULT)

This could mean either of two possibilities: (1) Haman could mean that the king’s men will be able to collect a huge amount of money from the plunder that they would get from the Jews. Referring to the weight would be a way of saying, “I guarantee that it will be at least that much.” This reasoning agrees with [3:13](#), where the king’s letter specifies that those who kill the Jews can take their plunder. Alternate translation: “we will get so much plunder that the officers you send will be able to bring back” (Also see [UST](#)) (2) “**Weigh out into the hands**” could be an idiom that means Haman himself will pay the officers who will put the plan into effect. Haman will not do this personally, but it means that he will take responsibility for paying them from his own resources. Alternate translation: “From my own resources I will pay ... to the men who do the work” (See: [Idiom](#))

and...10,000 talents of silver (ULT)

This would be worth over \$300 million at current prices in 2020. But since prices vary over time, if you expressed the value in modern measurements, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate. Instead you could express the amount using the ancient measurement, the talent, and explain in a note that a talent was equivalent to about 30 kilograms. Alternatively, you could specify the weight of the silver in the text, as [UST](#) does in metric tons. (See: [Biblical Money](#))

and...10,000 talents of silver (ULT)

The **talent** was the largest unit of money and **10,000** was the largest number in the counting system of the time. It is possible that Haman used these terms to represent a very large, but not precise, amount. Alternate translation: “a huge amount of silver” or “enormous amounts of silver” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

⁹ If **it is good** to **the king**, let it be written **to destroy them**, and I will weigh out 10,000 talents of **silver** into **the hands of** the doers of the work, to bring into the treasuries of **the king**.”

the doers of the work (ULT)

This could mean: (1) those who work for the king in general (administrators) or (2) more specifically the officers whom Ahasuerus would send around the empire to organize the killing of the Jews.

the treasuries of the king (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. You could also have him speak of “your royal treasuries.” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- it is good
- the king
- the king
- to destroy them
- silver
- the hands of

Esther 3:10

And the king removed his signet ring from on his hand, and he gave it to Haman (ULT)

The implication is that Ahasuerus thought that Haman's suggestion was a good idea and he agreed to it. You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king agreed that this was a good idea, so" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁰ And [the king](#) removed his signet ring from on [his hand](#), and he gave it to Haman, the [son of Hammedatha](#), the Agagite, [the adversary of the Jews](#).

And the king removed his signet ring from on his hand, and he gave it to Haman (ULT)

Giving the ring to Haman showed that Haman could act on the king's own authority. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king gave Haman the power to act on his authority to carry out the plan. To show that, he gave Haman the ring he wore that had his official seal on it" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

his signet ring (ULT)

This was a special ring that could be used to imprint the king's official seal on a law or decree. This ring had the king's name or mark on it. When he put a wax seal on important papers, he would press the mark onto the seal. If a paper had this mark on its seal, people would know that what was written on the paper was written with the king's authority and had to be obeyed. You could describe this as "the ring he wore that had his official seal on it." (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite (ULT)

This information about Haman's identity is repeated to stress that the king giving him the signet ring was an official legal act that transferred power to him. (In the same way, legal documents today often use a person's full name and other identifying information.) If you repeat this information in your own translation, your readers should see this significance.

the adversary of the Jews (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Haman. It means that he had become "the enemy of the Jews." (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [his hand](#)
- [son of](#)
- [the adversary of](#)
- [the Jews](#)

Esther 3:11

The silver is given to you (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. This could mean one of the following things: (1) "You can keep the money from plundering the Jews for yourself." (2) "I give you permission to take the money from the Jews and to give it to the men just as you have said." (3) "You do not need to pay for the expenses of the plan yourself." (4) This

statement by the king may also be a formal and cultural way of expressing gratitude for the promised money without actually releasing Haman from paying the money into the treasury. (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 And [the king](#) said to Haman, "[The silver](#) is given to you, and the people, to do with them [as is good](#) in your eyes."

and the people, to do with them as is good in your eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. The king is telling Haman that **he can do whatever he wants to the Jews**. Alternate translation: "you can do to the Jews as you see fit" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [The silver](#)
- [as is good](#)

Esther 3:12

And the scribes of the king were called (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. You can also say who did the action. It was most likely Haman, since the king had given him authority to act on his behalf. So you could say, "Haman called in the royal scribes." Alternate translation: "the king summoned his scribes" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in the first month, on day 13 of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on the thirteenth day of the first month" You can add "of that same year" to show that Haman did this right after Ahasuerus agreed to his plan. (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

in the first month, on day 13 of it (ULT)

You can put this information first because it places the event within the timeline of the story.

and it was written according to all that Haman commanded (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. You can also say who did the action. Alternate translation: "and Haman dictated a letter to them" or "they wrote a decree containing all that Haman had commanded" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the satraps of the king (ULT)

This seems to mean the officials of the king who served in the palace in the capital city, since they are distinguished from the provincial governors and the leaders of the people groups. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

province by province (ULT)

This expression means every province. See how you translated this in 1:22. (See: [Idiom](#))

the officials of people by people (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the leaders of each people group"

people by people (ULT)

This expression means every people group. See how you translated this in 1:22. (See: [Idiom](#))

province by province according to its writing (ULT)

See how you translated this in 1:22. Alternate translation: "to each province using its own alphabet" or "written in its own script" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹² And [the scribes of the king](#) were called in the first month, on day 13 of it, and it was written according to all that Haman [commanded](#): to the satraps of [the king](#), and to [the governors](#) who were over [province by province](#), and to [the officials of people by people](#), [province by province](#) according to its writing, and [people by people according to its tongue](#). In the name of the king [Ahasuerus](#) it was written, and it was sealed with the signet ring of [the king](#).

province by province according to its writing (ULT)

The implication is that the scribes translated the letter and sent it to each province using its own alphabet. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and people by people according to its tongue (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in [1:22](#). Alternate translation: “and to each people group in its own language” (See: [Idiom](#))

according to its tongue (ULT)

Here, **tongue** is a metonym meaning the language spoken by a person or a group of people. Alternate translation: “according to its language” (See: [Metonymy](#))

In the name of the king Ahasuerus it was written (ULT)

There are two This could mean: (1) Here, **name** could mean the authority of the king. This would be saying that Haman’s letter had the same authority as it would have had if the king had sent it himself. Alternate translation: “Haman sent the letter under the king’s own authority” (2) However, this could also mean that Haman actually had the scribes sign the king’s name to the letter. Alternate translation: “they signed the king’s name at the end of the letters” (See: [Metaphor](#))

it was written, and it was sealed with the signet ring of the king (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “to show that he was sending the letter under the king’s own authority, Haman sealed each copy of the letter with the ring that had the king’s official seal on it,” or “the scribes signed the king’s name at the end of the letters. Then they sealed the letters with wax, and stamped the wax by using the king’s ring” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the scribes of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [according to its tongue](#)
- [In the name of](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [and it was sealed](#)
- [commanded](#)
- [the governors](#)
- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the officials of](#)
- [people](#)
- [by people](#)
- [and people](#)
- [by people](#)

Esther 3:13

And letters were sent (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. For example, you can say, “couriers delivered the letters.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

by the hand of runners (ULT)

Here, **hand** could mean two different things: (1) It could literally mean “hand,” meaning that the couriers carried the letters in their hands. Alternate translation: “couriers hand-delivered the documents” (2) “Hand” could also be a metaphor for power, control, or authority, meaning that couriers were the ones who delivered the letters to all the provinces throughout the empire. Alternate translation: “couriers gave the documents directly” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹³ And letters were sent by the **hand of runners** to all of **the provinces of the king, to annihilate, to slaughter, and to destroy all the Jews** from young even to old, children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth of month 12 (which is the month of Adar), and to plunder their spoils.

to all of the provinces of the king (ULT)

Haman did not send the letters to the provinces (the geographical territories) themselves. Rather, he sent them to the officials in every province in the empire. The story is using the word “province” to refer figuratively to these officials by something associated with them, the territories they ruled. Your translation should make clear that the letters were sent to people, not places. (See: [Metonymy](#))

to annihilate, to slaughter, and to destroy (ULT)

These words mean the same thing. They are used together to emphasize the completeness of the destruction that is envisioned. You could combine them as UST does and say something like “completely destroy.” (A “doublet” can use more than two words. See: [Doublet](#))

from young even to old (ULT)

This is a figure of speech that figuratively describes all of something by naming two extreme parts of it in order to include everything in between. You could express its meaning as UST does and say something like “every single one of them.” Alternate translation: “including young people and old people” (See: [Merism](#))

children and women (ULT)

Alternate translation: “including the children and the women”

in one day (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on a single day” (See: [Numbers](#))

on the thirteenth (ULT)

Implicitly, this means “the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of that same year.” If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

on the thirteenth (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on day thirteen" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of month 12 (ULT)

Alternate translation: "of month twelve" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

which is the month of Adar (ULT)

This is the name of the twelfth month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you decided in 2:16 and 3:7 to express dates that the story gives according to the Hebrew calendar. (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

and to plunder their spoils (ULT)

This means that the letters also said that those who killed the Jews could take everything that belonged to them.

Translation Words - ULT

- [by...hand of](#)
- [the provinces of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [to annihilate](#)
- [and to destroy](#)
- [to slaughter](#)
- [the Jews](#)

Esther 3:14

the writing, to be given as a law in every province by province (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. For example, you can say, “The officials in every province presented a copy of the letter as the law.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹⁴ A copy of the writing, to be given as a law in every [province by province](#), was uncovered for all [the peoples](#) to be ready for this day.

in every province by province (ULT)

This expression means each and every province. See how you translated the term “province” in 1:1. (See: [Idiom](#))

the writing...was uncovered for all the peoples (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the letter told the officials to post copies where everyone could see them” or “the king commanded the officials to display copies of these letters where all the people could see them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to be ready for this day (ULT)

Alternate translations: “so that people would be ready to do on that day what the king had written in the letter” or “so that they would get ready to do what the letter said to do when the day came”

Translation Words - ULT

- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the peoples](#)

Esther 3:15

The runners went out, hurrying by decree of the king (ULT)

This means that the king had commanded the couriers to deliver the letters as quickly as possible.

The runners went out, hurrying by decree of the king (ULT)

You can state explicitly where the couriers brought the letters. Alternate translation: “as the king had commanded, couriers rushed the letters to every province in the empire” or “then, according to what the king commanded, men riding horses took these letters quickly to every province in the empire” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and the law was given (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. For example, you can say, “People read the letter out loud” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in Susa the citadel (ULT)

Here this likely means in the “capital city of Susa.” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

sat down to drink (ULT)

(1) This could mean that Ahasuerus and Haman had more than just a drink together. This could be a figure of speech in which a part of something is used to mean the whole thing. They may have celebrated with an entire banquet that is being described here by reference to one part of it, the drinks. Alternate translation: “had a celebration feast together” (2) Another possibility is that this is describing a toast that Ahasuerus and Haman shared to celebrate their plan. “Sat down” would simply be describing how the men would have reclined at a table to drink. Alternate translation: “had a celebration toast” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

was in confusion (ULT)

The implication is that the people in Susa were very upset about what was going to happen and they did not know what to do about it. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

but the city of (ULT)

The author wants us to see the contrast between the king and Haman sitting down to relax and drink and the people in the city agitated and in an uproar over what the king and Haman had proclaimed. Use a connecting word or other way that your language uses to show a contrast. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

ULT

¹⁵ The runners went out, hurrying by decree of the king, and the law was given in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was in confusion.

3:4 ^[1]

but the city of Susa (ULT)

This does not mean the city itself, but the people who live there. This is a figure of speech in which something is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. So this means “everyone who lived in Susa” or the people in Susa (See: [Metonymy](#))

was in confusion (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **confusion** with a verbal phrase such as “was very confused.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- by decree of
- the king
- And the king
- and the law
- the citadel

Esther 4

Esther 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Mordecai warns Esther to act

Mordecai tells Esther she must beg the king for the Jews' lives even if she risks her own death.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

There is implicit information that translators may not understand. The sentence, "Who knows whether you have come to this royal position for such a time as this?" means "maybe God made you the queen so you could save the Jews." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Esther 4:1

Now when Mordecai knew about (ULT)

Here the story re-introduces Mordecai as the main character in focus. Alternate translation: “when Mordecai found out” (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

all...that had been done (ULT)

Alternate translation: “about Haman’s plan to kill all the Jews” or “about those letters”

ULT

¹ [Now when Mordecai knew about](#) all that had been done, [Mordecai](#) tore his garments and put on [sackcloth](#) and ashes. And he went out into the midst of the city and cried out a great and bitter outcry.

Mordecai tore his garments and put on sackcloth and ashes (ULT)

These actions demonstrate extreme sadness. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Mordecai tore his garments and put on sackcloth and ashes (ULT)

You can explain why Mordecai did this. Alternate translation: “he was so anguished that he tore his clothes and put on rough sackcloth and threw ashes over himself” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And he went out into the midst of the city (ULT)

The next verse shows that Mordecai was heading towards the king’s palace. You could say that explicitly here. Mordecai might have wanted to call attention to the danger that the Jews were in by going to a public location where people were used to seeing him. Or he might have wanted to contact Esther and ask her to help with the trouble. Or he might have wanted both. Alternate translation: “he started walking towards the city center, towards the king’s palace” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and cried out a great and bitter outcry (ULT)

Great and **bitter** are two words that refer to the same thing and that work together. They indicate that Mordecai’s cry was so loud because it was so anguished. Alternate translation: “cried out in anguish” (See: [Doublet](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Now when Mordecai](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [knew about](#)
- [sackcloth](#)

Esther 4:2

And he came (ULT)

He means Mordecai. Alternate translation: "Mordecai came"

only as far as before the face of the gate of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of an object. The phrase means that Mordecai could not come inside the gate to the king's palace, but had to wait just outside of it. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the gate of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:19](#). Alternate translation: "the gate to the king's palace"

no one was to come into the gate of the king while wearing sackcloth (ULT)

Alternate translation: "But no one who was wearing sackcloth was allowed inside the palace gates" If it would be clearer in your language, you can put this information first in the verse because it explains why Mordecai waited outside. See the UST. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [only...before the face of](#)
- [the gate of](#)
- [the gate of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [sackcloth](#)

ULT

² And he came [only](#) as far as [before the face of the gate of the king](#) because no one was to come into [the gate of the king](#) while wearing [sackcloth](#).

Esther 4:3

And in every province by province (ULT)

This expression means in every single province. See how you translated the term “province” in 1:1. Alternate translation: “in each and every province” or “in every province of the empire” (See: [Idiom](#))

any place where the decree of the king and his law reached (ULT)

Alternate translation: “anywhere that the letter that said to destroy the Jews was announced in public”

the decree of the king and his law (ULT)

These two phrases are referring to the same thing, that is, the information that the letter conveyed. The repetition is used to emphasize how serious a situation this was. Alternate translation: “the letter from the king” or “the law that said to destroy the Jews” (See: [Doublet](#))

there was great mourning by the Jews (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the Jews mourned greatly” or “when the Jews heard about it, they mourned greatly”

and fasting (ULT)

Fasting is a sign of mourning. If your readers would not understand this, you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “they went without food because they were so upset” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and weeping and lamenting (ULT)

These two words mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how distressed the Jews were. Alternate translation: “wailed loudly” (See: [Doublet](#))

sackcloth and ashes were laid out by the multitudes (ULT)

These were actions that demonstrated deep grief. “Many of them lay on the ground, dressed in sackcloth and sitting in ashes” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the decree of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and his law](#)
- [by the Jews](#)
- [and fasting](#)

ULT

³ And in every [province by province](#), any place where [the decree of the king and his law](#) reached, there was great mourning [by the Jews, and fasting](#) and weeping and lamenting; [sackcloth](#) and ashes were laid out by the multitudes.

- sackcloth

Esther 4:4

the young female attendants of Esther (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Esther's female servants" of "Esther's maids"

with her eunuchs and (ULT)

See how you translated this term in 1:10. Alternate translation: "her male servants" or "her other officials" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

they told her (ULT)

That is, they told her that Mordecai was sitting outside the gate wearing sackcloth. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly, as in the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

even the queen was seized with extreme fear (ULT)

The queen means Esther. You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "Esther herself became very afraid" or "this made the queen very distressed" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

even the queen was seized with extreme fear (ULT)

The implication is that this happened when she heard what Mordecai was doing. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "When she heard about this, Esther herself became very afraid" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai (ULT)

She means Esther. This was her way of encouraging Mordecai to be hopeful and act publicly as if whatever situation he was worried about were not completely desperate. Alternate translation: "she sent servants to take to Mordecai some good clothes to wear" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

but he did not accept (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he refused to put them on" This was Mordecai's way of replying to Esther that the situation truly was desperate. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [young female attendants of](#)
- [the...Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [his sackcloth](#)

ULT

⁴ When the [young female attendants of Esther](#) came with her eunuchs and they told her, even [the queen](#) was seized with extreme fear. And she sent garments to clothe [Mordecai](#) and to take off [his sackcloth](#) from upon him, but he did not accept.

Esther 4:5

And Esther called for Hathak, from the eunuchs of the king...he (ULT)

Alternative translation: “then Esther summoned Hathak, one of the king’s officials”

for Hathak (ULT)

This is a man’s name. It occurs several times in this chapter. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

from the eunuchs of the king whom he had caused to stand before her face (ULT)

Alternate translation: “who was one of the royal guardians whom the king had assigned to serve Esther personally” You can put this information first because it provides background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

from the eunuchs of (ULT)

See how you translated this term **eunuch** in 1:10. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

before her face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase means that the guardians served Esther personally. (See: [Metonymy](#))

to know what this was and on account of what this was (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. In both cases, “this” refers to what Mordecai was doing. The repetition is used to emphasize that Esther now knew there must be a very serious reason why Mordecai was wearing sackcloth in such a public place. Alternate translation: “to find out why he was so distressed that he was sitting at the palace gate wearing sackcloth” (See: [Parallelism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [the king...he](#)
- [before her face](#)
- [She commanded him](#)
- [Mordecai](#)

ULT

⁵ And [Esther](#) called for Hathak, from the eunuchs of [the king](#) whom [he](#) had caused to stand [before her face](#). [She commanded him](#) concerning [Mordecai](#) to know what this was and on account of what this was.

Esther 4:6

And Hathak went out to Mordecai (ULT)

Hathak went out specifically to speak with Mordecai and find out why he was so distressed, as Esther had asked him to do. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Hathak went out to speak with Mordecai" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

6 And Hathak went out to [Mordecai](#), to the open place of the city that was [before the face of the gate of the king](#).

the open place of the city (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the central plaza"

before the face of (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of an object. The phrase means that the open square was in front of the palace gate. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the gate of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the citadel gate" The citadel is being described by reference to something associated with it, the gate that leads into it. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [before the face of](#)
- [the gate of](#)
- [the king](#)

Esther 4:7

all that had happened to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Mordecai, but here Mordecai figuratively represents the entire group of which he is a member. Alternate translation: "everything that Haman was planning to do to the Jews" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

the exact amount of silver that Haman had said to weigh out into the treasuries of the king against the Jews to destroy them (ULT)

This could mean either of two possibilities: (1) the amount of silver that Haman said the king would get for his treasury from the plunder that the people who destroyed the Jews would take from them, or (2) the amount of silver that Haman had said he would contribute to pay for the expenses of the plan to destroy the Jews. You could say either one as an alternate translation, but it should agree with your interpretation of [3:9](#).

ULT

⁷ And [Mordecai](#) reported to him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of [silver](#) that Haman had said to weigh out into the treasuries of [the king](#) against the Jews to destroy them.

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [the...silver](#)
- [the king](#)
- [against the Jews](#)
- [to destroy them](#)

Esther 4:8

a copy of the writing of the law (ULT)

Alternate translation: “a copy of the letter that Haman had sent out” or “a copy of the decree”

the law that had been given in Susa (ULT)

If it would help your readers to understand, you can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the law that the heralds had read out loud in Susa” or “the decree that the king’s servants had posted in Susa” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁸ Also he gave to him a copy of the writing of [the law](#) that had been given in Susa to [annihilate them](#), in order to show [Esther](#) and to inform her and to lay a charge upon her to go to [the king to implore his favor and to seek from before his face](#) concerning [her people](#).

to...annihilate them (ULT)

Alternative translation: “that said that all the Jews must be killed”

in order to show Esther and to inform her (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. They are repeated to emphasize how important Mordecai knew it was for Esther to understand just what Haman was planning. “so that Esther could see exactly what it said.” (See: [Parallelism](#))

and to lay a charge upon her (ULT)

Alternate translation: “and to urge her”

to implore his favor and to seek (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. They are repeated to emphasize the force of the action that Mordecai felt was needed. Alternate translation: “to plead with him” (See: [Doublet](#))

from before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. In this context, the phrase means that Esther should go into the presence of the king to ask personally for the king’s intervention. Alternate translation: “to go to the king personally” (See: [Metonymy](#))

concerning her people (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to act mercifully toward her people”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the law](#)
- [to...annihilate them](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the king](#)

- to implore...favor
- and to seek
- from before his face
- her people

Esther 4:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Esther
- Mordecai

ULT

⁹ And Hathak went and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

Esther 4:10

And Esther spoke to Hathak and commanded him to say to Mordecai (ULT)

Alternate translation: "then Esther told Hathak to go back to Mordecai and tell him this"

ULT

¹⁰ And Esther spoke to Hathak and commanded him to say to Mordecai:

Translation Words - ULT

- Esther
- and commanded him
- Mordecai

Esther 4:11

All the servants of the king and the people of the provinces of the king are knowing (ULT)

All the servants of the king refers to the royal officials in the palace. **The people of the provinces** refers to those living out in the empire. So this phrase means something like “those both near and far.” Esther is using a figure of speech to refer to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it in order to include everything in between those parts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like, “everyone in the whole empire knows.” Alternate translation: “all the king’s officials and all the people in the empire know this law” (See: [Merism](#))

ULT

¹¹ “All [the servants of the king](#) and the people of [the provinces of the king are knowing](#) that for any man or woman who goes to [the king](#), to the inner [court](#), who has not been called, [his law](#) is one: [to cause to die](#), apart from when [the king](#) holds out to him [the scepter of gold](#); [then he will live](#). But as for me, I have not been called to come to [the king](#) these 30 days.”

All the servants of the king and the people of the provinces of the king are knowing (ULT)

Esther says this to show that there is no uncertainty about this being the law. You can put this information after the description of the law itself, if that would be clearer in your language, so that it can serve to emphasize how definite the law is that was just described.

for any man or woman who (ULT)

Here, Esther once again refers to a group figuratively by describing two parts of it. She means all of the people whom Ahasuerus rules as king. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like “anyone”. (See: [Merism](#))

goes to the king, to the inner court (ULT)

As [5:1](#) makes clear, this refers to a courtyard right outside the room where King Ahasuerus sat on his throne. He could see out of the entrance to the room into the courtyard and tell if anyone came and stood there. Anyone who did that was asking to speak to the king. Alternate translation: “who goes into the inner courtyard of the palace, where the king can see them” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

who has not been called (ULT)

If it would help your readers to understand, you can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “when the king has not summoned that person” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

his law is one (ULT)

Alternate translation: “this law applies to everyone in the kingdom” If that would be clearer in your language, you could put this after the explanation of the law itself.

to cause to die (ULT)

Alternate translation: “that person must be executed” or “the guards will kill that person”

apart from when the king holds out to him the scepter of gold (ULT)

If the king pointed his scepter toward a person, that meant that the king was accepting him. Alternate translation: “unless the king extends his golden scepter towards him” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

the scepter of...gold (ULT)

A scepter was an ornamental staff or wand that rulers carried or held as a symbol of their authority. According to this, the scepter of King Ahasuerus was made of gold. Alternate translation: “golden scepter” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

then he will live (ULT)

This means that the guards will not kill this person and he can proceed to speak to the king. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “then the guards will not kill him and he can speak to the king” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

But as for me, I have not been called to come to the king these 30 days (ULT)

Esther is saying by implication that she cannot speak to the king as Mordecai has requested because the king has not been calling for her, which would have given her an opportunity to speak to him. If she goes without being summoned, she could be put to death. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly, as in the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

But as for me (ULT)

This expression indicates a contrast between Esther’s present situation and the situation she has just described. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

these 30 days (ULT)

The phrase means that Esther has not been called in the king’s presence for a period of at least 30 days. You could use an equivalent expression in your language that would indicate this is a long enough time that Esther has reason to believe the king is not interested in seeing her. Alternate translation: “in over a month”

these 30 days (ULT)

Alternate translation: “thirty days” (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the servants of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the scepter of](#)
- [gold](#)
- [then he will live](#)
- [the provinces of](#)

- are knowing
- the...court
- his law
- to cause to die

Esther 4:12

And they told to Mordecai (ULT)

From this point on, the author focuses only on Mordecai and Esther and does not specify who the messenger is. You can use a general phrase such as, “they told Mordecai” or “Mordecai was told” or “messengers told Mordecai.” If that would be confusing, you can continue to specify that the messenger was Hathak, as the ancient Greek version did. See the UST.

ULT

¹² And they told to [Mordecai](#) the words of [Esther](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- [to Mordecai](#)
- [Esther](#)

Esther 4:13

And Mordecai said to return to Esther (ULT)

Alternate translation: "then Mordecai sent back this message to Esther"

Translation Words - ULT

- Mordecai
- Esther
- to yourself
- in the palace of
- the king
- the Jews

ULT

¹³ And **Mordecai** said to return to **Esther**: "Do not think **to yourself** to escape **in the palace of the king**, different from all **the Jews**."

Esther 4:14

relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place (ULT)

Here, **relief** and **deliverance** are spoken of as if they are living things that can rise up. Alternate translation: “someone else will rise up from another place and rescue the Jews” (See: [Personification](#))

relief and deliverance (ULT)

Here, **relief** and **deliverance** mean very similar things. They are used together to emphasize the great emotion behind being delivered from this great evil. If it works better in your language, you can use one word instead of two, as in the UST. (See: [Doublet](#))

but you and the house of your father will perish (ULT)

Alternate translation: “you and your relatives will be killed” The implication is that the Jews will be rescued starting in that other place, but the ones living in Susa will still be in danger because no one who could have helped them there (such as Esther) would have done anything.

And who knows if you have arrived at royalty for such a time as this (ULT)

This is really a statement, and it is about what is happening right then. Mordecai asks it in question form so that Esther will think deeply about her role in this situation. Alternate translation: “who knows, perhaps it was to intervene in this very situation that you became queen” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and deliverance](#)
- [for the Jews](#)
- [and...house of](#)
- [the...your father](#)
- [will perish](#)
- [knows](#)
- [at royalty](#)

ULT

¹⁴ For if you indeed remain silent at this time, relief [and deliverance](#) will arise [for the Jews](#) from another place, but you and the [house of your father will perish](#). And who [knows](#) if you have arrived [at royalty](#) for such a time as this?”

Esther 4:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Esther
- Mordecai

ULT

¹⁵ And Esther said to return to Mordecai:

Esther 4:16

all...the Jews who are found in Susa (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “all the Jews who live here in Susa” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

And fast on account of me (ULT)

The verb **fast** here is plural, including Mordecai and all of the Jews. Fasting (that is, going without eating) was a symbolic act that the Jews did when they were praying intensely. You could make the connection with prayer explicit. Alternate translation: “fast and pray for me” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

ULT

16 “Go, gather all [the Jews](#) who are found in Susa. [And fast](#) on account of me, neither eating nor drinking for three days, both night and day. Also, I myself and my young female attendants will fast likewise. Then, in such circumstances, I will go to [the king](#), which is not [according to the law](#). And if [I perish, I perish](#).”

neither eating nor drinking for three days, both night and day (ULT)

This expression means that Esther was asking the Jews in Susa not to eat or drink anything during the day or the night for a period of three days. Alternate translation: “tell them to not eat or drink anything for three days and three nights” (See: [Numbers](#))

Also, I myself and my young female attendants will fast likewise (ULT)

Alternate translation: “my maids and I will also fast”

Then, in such circumstances (ULT)

Alternate translation: “after we have all done that, and while still fasting”

which is not according to the law (ULT)

Alternate translation: “even though there is a law against going without being summoned”

And if I perish, I perish (ULT)

Alternate translation: “then if they kill me, they kill me”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [And fast](#)
- [the king](#)
- [is...according to the law](#)
- [I perish](#)
- [I perish](#)

Esther 4:17

And Mordecai went (ULT)

The implication is that Mordecai did this after Hathak brought Esther's reply back to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "so after Hathak told this to Mordecai, he went" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁷ And [Mordecai](#) went and did according to the whole charge that [Esther](#) had laid upon him.

according to the whole charge that Esther had laid upon him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "everything that Esther had told him to do"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [Esther](#)

Esther 5

Esther 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about Haman's fall (Chapters 5-7).

Special concepts in this chapter

Esther's respect

Esther approached the king with the utmost of respect. By doing this, her character became respected by the king. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Esther 5:1

And it happened on the third day (ULT)

This introduces a new event in the story. Alternate translation: “three days later” or “when Esther had been fasting for three days” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

that Esther put on royalty (ULT)

You can use an adjective and a concrete noun to translate the abstract noun “royalty,” as in the UST, or you could use a phrase to explain what they were. Alternate translation: “Esther put on the robes that showed that she was the queen” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

that Esther put on royalty (ULT)

It is clear from the story that before she went to see the king, Esther got a banquet ready so that she could invite him and Haman to come to it right away. If it is confusing to leave that out, you can explain that here. Alternate translation, add: “Esther prepared a grand banquet and then put on her royal robes” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in the inner court of the palace of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this in [4:11](#). Alternate translation: “the inner courtyard of the palace”

opposite to the house of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: “across from the room where the king was”

Now the king was sitting on the throne of his royalty in the palace of royalty (ULT)

Royalty is an abstract noun that refers to those things that belonged only to the king. You can translate this idea with a verb, “the throne he ruled from” and “the palace where he reigned,” or with an adjective, “his royal throne” and “his royal palace.” Alternate translation: “in the throne room of the palace, sitting on the king’s throne” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

opposite to...the entrance of the palace (ULT)

Alternate translation: “facing the entrance of the room”

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [royalty](#)
- [the...his royalty](#)
- [the...royalty](#)
- [in the...court of](#)

ULT

1 And it happened on the third day that [Esther](#) put on [royalty](#) and stood in the inner [court of the palace of the king](#), opposite to [the house of the king](#). Now [the king](#) was sitting on the [throne of his royalty](#) in the [palace of royalty](#) opposite to the entrance of [the palace](#).

- the palace of
- in...palace of
- the palace
- the king
- the king
- Now the king
- the house of
- throne of

Esther 5:2

And it happened that (ULT)

This expression introduces what happened next. Alternate translation: “Now” or “and” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

as soon as...saw (ULT)

Alternate translation: “when ... noticed”

she lifted favor in his eyes (ULT)

See how you translated similar expressions in 2:9, 2:15, and 2:17. Review the explanations there if that would be helpful. In this context, it probably means that King Ahasuerus **thought Esther looked very attractive** as she stood in the court. It could also mean that King Ahasuerus was very pleased to see her. It could mean both. Alternate translation: “he was very pleased to see her” or “he approved of her” (See: [Idiom](#))

she lifted favor in his eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. This phrase means that King Ahasuerus decided not to kill Esther for coming into the inner court without being summoned. Alternate translation: “he was very pleased to see her” (See: [Metaphor](#))

And the king held out to Esther the scepter of gold that was in his hand (ULT)

King Ahasuerus did this to show that he would not enforce the law that said that Esther should be executed for coming into the king’s inner court without being summoned. See how you translated this in 4:11. Alternate translation: “he extended the gold scepter toward her.” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

And the king held out to Esther the scepter of gold that was in his hand (ULT)

King Ahasuerus did this to show that he would not enforce the law that said Esther should be executed. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “he extended the gold scepter toward her to signal that he would be glad to talk to her.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

so...approached (ULT)

Alternate translation; “so ... came close” or “so ... came up to the throne”

and touched the head of the scepter (ULT)

This action was probably customary for a king’s subjects in a Persian court, when the king extended the royal scepter. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

ULT

² And it happened that, as soon as the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she lifted favor in his eyes. And the king held out to Esther the scepter of gold that was in his hand, so Esther approached and touched the head of the scepter.

and touched the head of the scepter (ULT)

This action demonstrated that Esther respected the authority of King Ahasuerus and was thankful for his kindness to her. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could include that information here, such as: "...to show that she respected his authority." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the head of the scepter (ULT)

Here, **head** is a metonym meaning the top (or uppermost part) of an object or location. This phrase means that Esther touched the top of the king's scepter on the end that was extended toward her. Alternate translation: "the top of the scepter" or "the tip of the scepter" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the head of](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [in the court](#)
- [favor](#)
- [scepter of](#)
- [the scepter](#)
- [the...gold](#)
- [was in his hand](#)

Esther 5:3

What is to you, Esther the queen (ULT)

Alternate translation: "What do you want, Queen Esther?"

What is to you, Esther the queen? And what is your request (ULT)

These two phrases mean almost the same thing. Ahasuerus says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show that he is very interested in hearing why Esther has come to see him. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if it would be more natural in your language to combine them into one. Alternate translation: "What do you want, Queen Esther?" (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

³ And [the king](#) said to her, "What is to you, [Esther the queen](#)? And what is your request? As much as half of [the kingdom](#), and let it be given to you."

As much as half of the kingdom, and let it be given to you (ULT)

This was probably a formal and customary expression in the Persian royal court, meant to show honor to the person making a request of the king and to indicate the king's willingness to be very generous when answering the request. King Ahasuerus was almost certainly not offering to give Esther half of his kingdom. If it would be clearer to your readers, you could express the meaning: "I will give you anything you ask for, no matter how great it is." Alternate translation: "I will give you what you want, even if you ask me to give you half of my kingdom!" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

and let it be given to you (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who will do the action. Alternate translation: "I will give you anything you ask for" or "I will give you what you want" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [the kingdom](#)

Esther 5:4

If it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom. See how you translated it in 1:19 and 3:9. Alternate translation: "If it seems like a good idea to you, O king" (See: [Idiom](#))

If it is good to the king (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "if it seems like a good idea to you, O king" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

let the king come with Haman (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "O king, please come with Haman" or "you and Haman come" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

the banquet that I have made for him (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "the banquet that I have prepared for you" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

the banquet that I have made for him (ULT)

If you decide to translate this as "the banquet that I have prepared for you," then the word "you" should be singular, since here it refers just to the king. (See: [Forms of 'You' — Singular](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [it is good](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the banquet](#)

ULT

⁴ And [Esther](#) said, "If [it is good to the king](#), let [the king](#) come with Haman today to [the banquet](#) that I have made for him."

Esther 5:5

And the king said (ULT)

The king would have said this to his servants, not to Esther. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly.
Alternate translation: "The king said to his servants" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Bring Haman quickly, in order to do the word of Esther

The **word of Esther** means her invitation to the banquet. Alternate translation: "go and get Haman and bring him quickly to the banquet that Esther has prepared"

had made (ULT)

Alternate translation: "had prepared for them"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the banquet](#)

ULT

⁵ And [the king](#) said, "Bring Haman quickly in order to do the word of [Esther](#)." And [the king](#) came with Haman to [the banquet](#) that [Esther](#) had made.

Esther 5:6

What is your petition? And let it be given to you. And what is your request? As much as half of the kingdom, and let it be done (ULT)

These two question-and-statement pairs mean almost the same thing. Ahasuerus says the same thing twice in slightly different ways to show that he is truly disposed to give Esther whatever she wants. If this is confusing, you do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation. You could combine them into one or replace the repetition with a statement of what the repetition means, as in the UST. Alternate translation: “now please tell me what you really want. I will do it for you” (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

⁶ And [the king](#) said to [Esther](#) during the [banquet of wine](#), “What is your petition? And let it be given to you. And what is your request? As much as half of [the kingdom](#), and let it be done.”

What is your petition? And let it be given to you. And what is your request? As much as half of the kingdom, and let it be done (ULT)

When Ahasuerus asked Esther in the throne room what she wanted, she said that she wanted him and Haman to come to a banquet she had prepared. But since the king asks her once again at the banquet what she wants, it is clear that he knew this was not her real request. Instead, he knew that she wanted to show him hospitality first, as a gesture of respect for him and their relationship. You can indicate this by translating, “Now please tell me what you really want.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

is your petition...is your request (ULT)

The two abstract nouns **petition** and **request** can be expressed with a single phrase using the verb “want.” Alternate translation: “what you really want” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

And let it be given...and let it be done (ULT)

You can capture these parallel passive statements with one statement using an active form. Alternate translation: “I will give you anything you ask for” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

As much as half of the kingdom (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in [5:3](#). Review the explanation there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: “I will give you anything you ask for, no matter how great it is”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [during...banquet of](#)
- [the...wine](#)
- [the kingdom](#)

Esther 5:7

And...answered...and said (ULT)

Here a single idea is being expressed by using two words connected with "and." Together the two words mean that Esther responded to the question that the king asked her. Alternate translation: "answered" or "replied" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

ULT

⁷ And [Esther](#) answered and said, "My petition and my request:

My petition and my request (ULT)

The words **petition** and **request** mean the same thing. Esther probably used these words together as a way of speaking very formally and respectfully to the king. Alternate translation: "this is what I want" (See: [Doublet](#))

My petition and my request (ULT)

The two abstract nouns **petition** and **request** can be expressed with a single phrase using the verb "want." Alternate translation: "this is what I want" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)

Esther 5:8

if I have found favor in the eyes of the king (ULT)

The expression **find favor** means to gain the approval or acceptance of another person. Alternate translation: “if you are pleased with me” (See: [Idiom](#))

if I have found favor in the eyes of the king (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. The phrase means the King Ahasuerus is pleased with Esther and willing to grant her request. Alternate translation: “if the king evaluates me and approves” or “if the king is pleased with me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

if I have found favor in the eyes of the king (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: “if you evaluate me and approve” or “if you are pleased with me” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

and if it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom. See how you translated it in [1:19](#), [3:9](#), and [5:4](#). Alternate translation: “If it seems like a good idea to you, O king” (See: [Idiom](#))

to grant my petition and to perform my request (ULT)

The phrases **to grant my petition** and **to perform my request** mean the same thing. Alternate translation: “to do what I want” (See: [Doublet](#))

let the king come with Haman to the banquet that I will make for them (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: “please come with Haman to another banquet that I will prepare for you” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

let the king come with Haman to the banquet that I will make for them (ULT)

If you decide to translate this as “the banquet that I have prepared for you,” then the word “you” should be dual if your language uses that form, since it refers to the king and Haman, otherwise it should be plural. (See: [Forms of ‘You’ — Dual/Plural](#))

and tomorrow I will do according to the word of the king (ULT)

The **word of the king** means his request for Esther to tell him what she wants. Alternate translation: “I will answer your question then”

ULT

⁸ if I have found favor in the eyes of the king, and if it is good to the king to grant my petition and to perform my request, let the king come with Haman to the banquet that I will make for them, and tomorrow I will do according to the word of the king.”

according to the word of the king (ULT)

Esther speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: “according to your word”
(See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- favor
- the king
- the king
- the king
- the king
- it is good
- the banquet

Esther 5:9

And...went out (ULT)

Alternate translation: "and ... left the banquet"

joyful and pleased of heart (ULT)

The word **joyful** and the phrase **good of heart** mean the same thing. These terms are used together to show that Haman was very happy after attending Esther's banquet with King Ahasuerus. Alternate translation: "feeling very good" [Doublet](#)

and pleased of heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** figuratively represents the action of thinking or feeling. The phrase means that Haman felt happy. (See: [Metaphor](#))

that he neither rose up (ULT)

Under other circumstances, officials were expected to bow low to the ground to show respect for Haman. See [3:2](#). But since Mordecai was already sitting on the ground as a sign of mourning, he would have been expected to stand up to show respect. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Mordecai did not stand up to show respect for Haman" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

nor trembled from him (ULT)

The phrase means that Mordecai was not afraid of Haman or of what Haman might do to him for refusing to show the respect that the king had commanded. Alternate translation: "or tremble fearfully in front of him" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

then Haman was filled with rage on account of Mordecai (ULT)

Here, **Haman's rage** is described as something that could fill him up. See how you translated this expression in [3:5](#). Alternate translation: "Haman became very angry because of Mordecai" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- joyful
- and pleased of
- heart
- Mordecai
- Mordecai
- at the gate of
- the king
- trembled

ULT

⁹ And Haman went out that day [joyful and pleased of heart](#). But as soon as Haman saw [Mordecai at the gate of the king](#), that he neither rose up nor [trembled](#) from him, then Haman was filled with rage on account of [Mordecai](#).

Esther 5:10

But Haman restrained himself (ULT)

There is a contrast between this sentence and the previous one. Haman felt very much like doing one thing, but he decided it would be better to do something else. The contrast can be indicated with a phrase such as “but even though.” Alternate translation: “but even though Haman was so angry, he kept himself from losing his temper” or “Haman refused to show how angry he was” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

ULT

10 But Haman restrained himself and went to [his house](#). Then he sent and brought his friends and Zeresh his wife.

Zeresh (ULT)

This is a woman’s name. It occurs several times in this chapter and the next. Be sure to translate it consistently. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [his house](#)

Esther 5:11

And...recounted to them (ULT)

Alternate translation: "then ... made a long speech to them about"

the glory of...his wealth (ULT)

Glory and **wealth** are both abstract nouns. Alternate translation: "Haman told them about how great his wealth was" or "Haman told them about the many great things he owned" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

and the multitude of his sons (ULT)

Having many sons was probably seen as a mark of honor and status in Persian culture. This phrase probably means that Haman was boasting about the status he enjoyed in Persian society because he had many sons. Alternate translation: "how many sons he had" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

his sons (ULT)

This word can sometimes be used in Hebrew to mean both male and female children. However, here it clearly refers to male children, so you should translate it that way. (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

had made him great (ULT)

Alternate translation: "how the king had continually given him more authority" or "how the king had honored him many times by giving him more important work"

he had lifted him over (ULT)

Here, **lifting** is a metaphor meaning to "advance" or "promote" a person to a higher, more important position than they had previously. Alternate translation: "given him a position more important than" (See: [Metaphor](#))

the officials and administrators of the king (ULT)

This means all of the others, as [3:1](#) makes clear. Alternate translation: "all of his other officials and administrators" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the officials and administrators of the king (ULT)

The words **officials** and **administrators** mean similar things. If your language uses one word for these, you can combine them. (See: [Doublet](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the glory of](#)
- [his sons](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)

ULT

11 And Haman recounted to them [the glory of](#) his wealth and the multitude of [his sons](#) and all about how [the king](#) had made him great and how he had lifted him over [the officials and administrators of the king](#).

- the officials
- and administrators of

Esther 5:12

In addition (ULT)

Alternate translation: “and that is not all” You can translate it as an exclamation because Haman believes he has saved the best for last and is now introducing what he considers to be his most recent significant honor. (See: [Exclamations](#))

Esther the queen did not bring...with the king...anyone...except me (ULT)

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “I was the only one Queen Esther invited besides the king” or “Queen Esther invited just two of us, the king and me” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

she had made (ULT)

Alternate translation: “she had prepared”

And also for tomorrow, I am called by her with the king (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “and she has invited me to attend another banquet with the king again tomorrow” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the banquet](#)

ULT

¹² And Haman said, “In addition, [Esther the queen](#) did not bring anyone with [the king](#) to [the banquet](#) that she had made except me. And also for tomorrow, I am called by her with [the king](#).”

Esther 5:13

But all of this is not equal for me to every time that I see (ULT)

This is a figurative way of speaking. It is as if Haman is weighing his happiness on one side of a scale and his unhappiness on the other side. Haman is saying that his happiness over all the honors he has received is still not greater than his unhappiness over seeing Mordecai fail to honor him, so on balance, he is unhappy. Alternate translation: "I still cannot be happy as long as I keep seeing" or "all of this does not make me happy" or "...does not satisfy me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹³ But all of this is not equal for me to every time that I see [Mordecai the Jew](#) sitting [at the gate of the king.](#)"

But all of this (ULT)

Haman is continuing to speak here. You can show this by beginning with "Then Haman said."

the Jew (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Mordecai. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

sitting at the gate of the king (ULT)

Haman could be referring to the way Mordecai has been refusing to stand up to honor him, or he could be referring generally to the way Mordecai has never honored him (by either bowing or standing up) ever since he was appointed to a position in the king's service and stationed at the gate. Either way, being reminded of this dishonor is the reason why Haman continues to be unhappy. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "sitting at the citadel gate and refusing to honor me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

at the gate of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the citadel gate"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [the Jew](#)
- [at the gate of](#)
- [the king](#)

Esther 5:14

And Zeresh his wife, with all of his friends, said to him (ULT)

The verb is feminine, so it is Zeresh who is speaking here. By mentioning the friends, it is implied that they are in agreement with what she says. If it would be clearer, you could say, "Then Haman's wife Zeresh suggested, and his friends agreed." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

with all of his friends (ULT)

This means the friends whom Haman had invited to his home that day. Alternate translation: "his friends who were there"

Let them make (ULT)

You can say who would do the action. Alternate translation: "have your servants set up" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

a pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

50 cubits high (ULT)

You can convert this to a modern measure if that is the style of translation that you are using. Alternate translation: "seventy-five feet high" or "twenty-five meters high" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

speak to the king, and let them hang Mordecai on it (ULT)

If it is clearer in your language, you can make explicit what Haman would say to the king. Alternate translation: "speak to the king and tell him that you would like to hang Mordecai on it" or "tell the king that you intend to hang Mordecai on it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and let them hang Mordecai on it (ULT)

If it is clearer in your language, you can make explicit who does the action. Probably, Haman's servants would carry out the action. But since it would happen under Haman's orders and perhaps under his supervision, you could also describe him as the one who does the action if that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and have your servants hang Mordecai on it" or "and hang Mordecai on it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁴ And Zeresh his wife, with all of his friends, said to him, "Let them make a pole 50 cubits high. And in the morning speak [to the king, and let them hang Mordecai](#) on it. Then go with [the king to the banquet joyful](#)." And the word was good [before the face of Haman](#), and he made the pole.

Then go...to the banquet joyful (ULT)

Then indicates more than a time sequence here. Zeresh and the friends are saying what the result would be. Alternate translation: “after he is dead, you will be able to go to the banquet ... in a good mood” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

And the word was good before the face of Haman (ULT)

The **word** was the suggestion that Zeresh and the friends made. Here, **face** figuratively represents Haman himself by something associated with him, his face, which showed what he was thinking and feeling. Alternate translation: “Haman decided that he liked this idea” or “that suggestion pleased Haman” (See: [Metonymy](#))

and he made the pole (ULT)

Haman most likely did not do this personally. He ordered it to be done. Alternate translation: “he gave his servants orders to set up the pole” or “he told his servants to construct the gallows”

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [to the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and let them hang](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [the banquet](#)
- [joyful](#)
- [before the face of](#)

Esther 6

Esther 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the story of Haman's fall.

Special concepts in this chapter

Approaching the king

It was not possible for a person to easily approach the king. Normally, access to him was very limited. There are several events in this chapter which show the layers of protection surrounding the king.

Esther 6:1

That night (ULT)

This introduces a new event in the story. Use a natural way of introducing a new event in your language. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

the sleep of the king fled away (ULT)

Here, **sleep** is spoken of as if it were a living thing that could flee away. Alternate translation: “the king could not sleep” (See: [Personification](#))

And he said to bring (ULT)

He means the king. The implication is that he told the young men who attended him to do this. Verses 3 and 5 indicate this. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “so he commanded his servants to fetch” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the...book of...records of the events of days (ULT)

This is equivalent to the expression “the book of the events of days” in [2:23](#). See how you translated that expression. Alternate translation: “the royal chronicles” or “the records of what had happened during all the time that he had been king”

and they were being called out (ULT)

This means that the chronicles were read out loud. You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the young men got the chronicles and began to read them out loud” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase means that the book was being read in the king’s presence. Alternate translation: “to the king” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [before the face of](#)

ULT

¹ That night the sleep of [the king](#) fled away. And he said to bring the book of records of the events of days, and they were being called out [before the face of the king](#).

Esther 6:2

And it was found written (ULT)

Both terms **found** and **recorded** can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: “they found that the writers had recorded there” or “they read the part where the writers had written” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Mordecai had told about (ULT)

The implication is that Mordecai had saved the king’s life by discovering the plot and telling him about it. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Mordecai had saved the king’s life by discovering a plot against the king and telling him about it” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Mordecai had told about (ULT)

To relate the events in chronological order, you can put this at the end of the verse. Alternate translation: “but Mordecai had saved the king’s life by discovering their plot and telling him about it” (See: [Order of Events](#))

Bigthana and Teresh (ULT)

These are the same two men who are named in [2:21](#). However, there the first man’s name is said to be “Bigthan.” Decide on a consistent way of translating these names so your readers will know that they are the same men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

two of the eunuchs of the king (ULT)

See how you translated the term **eunuch** in [1:10](#). Alternate translation: “two of the royal guardians” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

who were from the guardians of the doorway (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in [2:23](#). Alternate translation: “who protected the doorway to the king’s private quarters”

they had sought (ULT)

Here, **seeking** figuratively means actively trying to do something. Alternate translation: “they had planned” or “they had tried” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to stretch out a hand (ULT)

As in [2:21](#), the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to cause someone physical harm with the intention of killing them. Alternate translation: “to assassinate” or “to kill” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

² And it was found written that **Mordecai** had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the eunuchs of **the king** who were from the guardians of **the doorway**, that **they had sought** to stretch out **a hand against the king Ahasuerus**.

Translation Words - ULT

- Mordecai
- the king
- against the king
- the doorway
- they had sought
- a hand
- Ahasuerus

Esther 6:3

What honor or greatness was done for Mordecai (ULT)

Honor and **greatness** have similar meanings and they are used together to emphasize that Mordecai should certainly have been honored in some grand way for saving the king's life. If it would be clearer in your language, you can express this by putting the terms together. For example, you could say, "What great honor was done for Mordecai?" Alternate translation: "what did we do to reward Mordecai or to show that we appreciated what he did" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

ULT

³ And [the king](#) said, "What [honor](#) or [greatness](#) was done [for Mordecai](#) on account of this?" And [the young men of the king who served him](#) said, "Not a thing has been done with him."

was done (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "what did I do" or "what did we do" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Not a thing has been done with him (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. However, it would be good to say this in a way that does not create the impression that the young men are accusing the king. Alternate translation: "no one did anything for him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

on account of this (ULT)

Alternate translation: "for saving my life"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [honor](#)
- [for Mordecai](#)
- [the young men of](#)
- [who served him](#)

Esther 6:4

Who is in the court (ULT)

This could mean either: (1) The king knows that there is someone in the courtyard, maybe because he heard someone walking there; he wants to know who it is. (2) Since there are always people around the palace, the king assumes that there must be someone out in the courtyard. In either case, the king wants to know if there is someone there with whom he could consult about the best way to honor Mordecai. As the story has already said in [1:13](#), it was the king's habit to consult his advisors on important questions. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king wanted to consult someone about the best way to honor Mordecai, so he asked, 'who is in the courtyard'" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁴ And [the king](#) asked, "Who [is in the court](#)?" Now Haman had come [into the outer court of the house of the king](#) to say [to the king to hang Mordecai](#) on the pole that he had prepared for him.

Who is in the court (ULT)

In order to present the events in logical and chronological order, you can put the king's question last in the verse if that would be more natural in your language. Haman had already come in the courtyard by the time the king asked this question.

Now Haman had come into the outer court of the house of the king to say to the king to hang Mordecai on the pole that he had prepared for him (ULT)

This sentence indicates that Haman had already entered the outer court when King Ahasuerus asked his question. You could indicate this with a phrase such as "at that moment" or "just then" or "while they were talking" (See: [Connect — Background Information](#))

into the outer court of the house of the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the outer courtyard of the palace" This phrase is describing the first courtyard a person would come to after entering the palace from the outside.

to say to the king to hang Mordecai (ULT)

Alternate translation: "to tell the king that he wanted to hang Mordecai" or "to tell the king that he wanted to impale Mordecai"

the pole that he had prepared for him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on the pole that he had set up" or "on the gallows that he had set up for Mordecai"

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- the king
- the king
- to the king
- is in the court
- into the...court of
- the house of
- to hang
- Mordecai

Esther 6:5

And the young men of the king said (ULT)

It is implied that the young men went and looked, perhaps through a window or a doorway, to see who might be in the courtyard before they answered the king. You can say so if it would make the translation clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “the young men who served the king looked and saw that Haman was in the courtyard. They said” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁵ And [the young men of the king](#) said to him, “Behold, Haman is standing [in the courtyard.](#)” And [the king](#) said, “Let him come.”

Behold (ULT)

This is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If there is not a good way to translate this term in your language, this term can be omitted from the translation. You could also have the young men address the king directly to get his attention. Alternate translation: “O king” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Let him come (ULT)

Alternate translation: “he may come in”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the young men of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [in the courtyard](#)

Esther 6:6

And Haman came, and the king said to him (ULT)

Alternate translation: “when Haman came in, the king said”

What is one to do for the man in whose honor the king is delighted (ULT)

Here the king speaks of himself in the third person. If it would be clearer in your language, you can use the first person instead. Alternate translation: “what should I do for the man whom I would really like to honor” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

in whose honor the king is delighted (ULT)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do it and to really want to do it. Alternate translation: “whom I am glad to honor” or “whom I want to honor” (See: [Idiom](#))

Then Haman said in his heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** could mean two different things: (1) Heart could figuratively represent the action of thinking or feeling. In that case, the phrase would mean “then Haman said in his thoughts.” (2) Heart could also be a metaphor meaning to be inside someone or something. In that case, the phrase would mean “then Haman said inside himself.” Either way, the phrase means that Haman was not saying this out loud, but saying it to himself in his thoughts. Alternate translation: “Haman thought to himself” (See: [Metaphor](#))

For whom would the king delight to do honor more than me (ULT)

Haman is actually making a statement to himself rather than asking a question and trying to figure out the answer. He uses a question form to emphasize how true he believes the statement to be. If it would be clearer in your language, instead of a question, you could use a statement such as, “Surely there is no one whom the king would take pleasure in honoring more than me!” Alternate translation: “whom would the king like to honor more than me” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [in...honor](#)
- [honor](#)
- [is delighted](#)
- [would...delight](#)
- [in his heart](#)

ULT

⁶ And Haman came, and [the king](#) said to him, “What is one to do for the man in whose [honor the king is delighted?](#)” Then Haman said [in his heart](#), “For whom would [the king delight](#) to do [honor](#) more than me?”

Esther 6:7

For a man whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do it and to really want to do it. Alternate translation: “for a man the king is glad to honor” or “for a man the king wants to honor” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁷ And Haman said to [the king](#), “For a man whom [the king delights to honor](#):

For a man whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You can have him address the king in the second person. Alternate translation: “if you really want to honor someone” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [delights](#)
- [to honor](#)

Esther 6:8

let them bring (ULT)

The implication is that the king's servants would do this. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "let someone bring" or "tell your servants to bring" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁸ let them bring a garment of [royalty](#) with which [the king](#) has clothed himself, and a horse on which [the king](#) has ridden and which has been given a [crown of royalty](#) for its head.

a garment of royalty with which the king has clothed himself (ULT)

Royalty is an abstract noun that refers to anything that belongs to the king. You can translate this idea with an adjective, "a royal garment." Alternate translation: "one of your own royal robes that you have already worn yourself" or "one of the robes you wear to show that you are the king" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

with which the king has clothed himself (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You can have him address the king in the second person. Alternate translation: "that you have already worn yourself" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

and a horse on which...has ridden (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You can have him address the king in the second person. Alternate translation: "a horse that you have already ridden yourself" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

and which has been given a crown of royalty for its head (ULT)

This whole phrase refers to the horse. You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "and that has a royal crown on its head" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

and which has been given a crown of royalty for its head (ULT)

The implication is that this would be done to show that this was one of the king's own horses. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "and that has a royal crown on its head to show that it belongs to you" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

a crown of royalty (ULT)

Royalty is an abstract noun that refers to the royal authority that the king exercised. You can translate this idea with an adjective, "a royal crown." (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [royalty](#)
- [royalty](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and a horse](#)

- a crown of

Esther 6:9

And give this garment and this horse into the hand of a man from the...officials of the king (ULT)

Here, **hand** is a metaphor meaning power, control, or authority. It appears that the king himself would not perform such acts of service to one of his subjects even if he really wanted to honor that person. So Haman is saying that on behalf of the king, representing his authority and power, one of the king's most noble officials should present the man with the robe and the horse. Alternate translation: "then, on your behalf, have one of your most noble officials present the man with the robe and the horse" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And give this garment and this horse into the hand of a man from the most noble officials of the king. And let them clothe the man whom the king delights to honor, and cause him to ride on the horse in the open square of the city, and proclaim before his face, 'Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king delights to honor!'"

a man from the most noble officials of the king (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. If it would be clearer in your language, you can use the second person. Alternate translation: "one of your most noble officials" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

And let them clothe (ULT)

Since **them** is plural, it likely refers to the king's servants. You can say this explicitly if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "have your servants clothe ... with the robe" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the man...whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do something or to want to do something. Alternate translation: "the man whom you really want to honor" (See: [Idiom](#))

the man...whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. If it would be clearer in your language, you can use the second person. Alternate translation: "the man whom you really want to honor" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

in the open square of the city (ULT)

This refers to a large, open space in the city, either the space that was in front of the palace (as in [4:6](#)), or a space inside one of the city gates. In either case, this would have been a public area where people could gather, and so it was a place where a great number of people would have seen how the king was honoring Mordecai. Alternate translation: "through the public square of the city"

and proclaim (ULT)

Alternate translation: "and tell the noble official and servants to proclaim" or "and have them shout out"

before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of a person. The phrase means that the servants were to shout out to the people in front of the man on the horse, that is, to the people who were in the path of his horse as it approached. Alternate translation: “to whoever is in front of them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do something or to want to do something. Alternate translation: “the king is doing this because he really wants to honor this man” or “this is what the king does when he especially wants to honor someone” (See: [Idiom](#))

Thus shall it be done (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who is doing the action. Alternate translation: “the king is doing this” or “this is what the king does” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and this horse](#)
- [the horse](#)
- [the hand of](#)
- [and proclaim](#)
- [before his face](#)
- [from the...officials of](#)
- [most noble](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [delights](#)
- [delights](#)
- [to honor](#)
- [to honor](#)

Esther 6:10

And the king said (ULT)

The implication is that the king liked Haman's suggestion. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king liked this idea, so he replied" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

according to how you have spoken, and do thus (ULT)

Alternate translation: "do everything that you have said" or "do just what you have suggested"

the man who sits at the gate of the king (ULT)

As in [2:19](#), this is likely an idiom which means that Mordecai worked for the king in some capacity and was stationed at the gate. Alternate translation: "one of my servants, who is stationed at the king's gate" (See: [Idiom](#))

the man who sits at the gate of the king (ULT)

Here the king speaks of himself in the third person. If it would be clearer in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: "one of my servants, who is stationed at the gate to the palace" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Do not allow a word to fall (ULT)

Here the action of letting **fall** is a metaphor meaning to leave out or leave unfulfilled. The phrase means that Haman must do absolutely everything that he said. Alternate translation: "do not leave out anything that you suggested" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Do not allow a word to fall (ULT)

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Be sure to do absolutely everything that you have said" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the horse](#)
- [for Mordecai](#)
- [the Jew](#)
- [at the gate of](#)

ULT

10 And [the king](#) said to Haman, "Hurry, take the garment and [the horse](#), according to how you have spoken, and do thus [for Mordecai the Jew](#), the man who sits [at the gate of the king](#). Do not allow a word to fall of all that you have spoken."

Esther 6:11

and caused him to ride in the open place of the city (ULT)

See how you translated these expressions in verse 9. Alternate translation: “seated him on the horse and then led the horse through the public square of the city”

and called out before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of a person. The phrase means that Haman shouted out to the people in front of Mordecai, that is, the people who were in the path of his horse as it approached. Alternate translation: “called out to all of the people in front of him” (See: [Metonymy](#))

whom the king delights to honor (ULT)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do something or to want to do something. Alternate translation: “the king is doing this because he really wants to honor this man” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the horse](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [and called out](#)
- [before his face](#)
- [the king](#)
- [delights](#)
- [to honor](#)

ULT

11 And Haman took the garment and [the horse](#), and he clothed [Mordecai](#) and caused him to ride in the open place of the city [and called out before his face](#), “Thus shall it be done for the man whom [the king delights to honor!](#)”

Esther 6:12

mourning with a covering of head (ULT)

People often covered their heads to show that they were either extremely sad or ashamed. Alternate translation: “covering his head because he felt completely disgraced” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [the gate of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [his house](#)
- [mourning](#)
- [head](#)

ULT

¹² And [Mordecai](#) returned to [the gate of the king](#), but Haman hurried to [his house](#), [mourning](#) with a covering of [head](#).

Esther 6:13

And Haman recounted (ULT)

The implication is that, just as Haman gathered his friends together in [5:10](#) to boast of his status, now he gathered them together once again to talk about what had just happened. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Haman brought all his friends together again. He told..." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

everything...that had happened to him (ULT)

The implication is that he told about the things that had happened to him "that day." If that would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Then his wise men and Zeresh...said to him (ULT)

The implication is that, just as King Ahasuerus had royal advisors, Haman had advisors of his own. They would have been included among the "friends" he gathered for this occasion. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "some of his friends were also his advisors, and they and his wife Zeresh told him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

his wise men (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in [1:13](#). Alternate translation: "his advisors"

If...then...Mordecai, before whose face you have begun to fall (ULT)

This could mean either of two possibilities: (1) The action of falling could refer to bowing down and it could be a metaphor meaning to be dishonored and defeated. Haman wanted Mordecai to bow down in front of him. But instead, the story would be saying that Haman is starting to bow down (in a metaphorical sense) in front of Mordecai. Alternate translation: "Mordecai has begun to humiliate you. If he..." (2) "Fall" could be a figurative way of saying "be killed in battle." In that case, Zeresh would be comparing Haman and Mordecai to two soldiers who are fighting. She is saying that Haman has already "begun to fall," that is, he is losing the battle, and he is likely to be killed. Alternate translation: "Mordecai has begun to defeat you. Since he..." (See: [Metaphor](#))

before...face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of a person. This could mean: (1) that Haman has already begun to fall down (bow down) in front of Mordecai figuratively, or (2) that Haman and Mordecai are facing one another figuratively in hand-to-hand combat. Alternate translation: "before whom" or "in whose presence" (See: [Metonymy](#))

is from the seed of the Jews (ULT)

Here, **seed** is a metaphor meaning "offspring." It is a comparison: Just as plants produce seeds that grow into many more plants, so people can have many offspring. Alternate translation: "one of the Jewish people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

13 And Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and to all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then **his wise men** and Zeresh his wife said to him, "If **Mordecai, before whose face** you have begun to fall, **is from the seed of the Jews**, then you will not prevail against him, but you will surely fall **before his face.**"

you will not prevail against him (ULT)

Here Haman's wife and friends are again speaking figuratively as if Haman is in a battle with Mordecai. Alternate translation: "you will not win against him" or "you will not have greater honor than he has" (See: [Metaphor](#))

but (ULT)

This conjunction indicates a contrast between the actions of prevailing (in the previous clause) and falling. (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

you will surely fall (ULT)

Here the action of **falling**: (1) either refers once again to prostrating oneself, and is a metaphor meaning to be dishonored and defeated, or (2) Haman's wife and friends are saying that for Haman, defeat will be the outcome of the figurative battle. Alternate translation: "you will certainly lose to him" (See: [Metaphor](#))

before his face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of a person. The phrase means that Haman will lose in his struggle with Mordecai. Alternate translation: "before him" or "in his presence" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [his wise men](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [before...face](#)
- [before his face](#)
- [is from the seed of](#)
- [the Jews](#)

Esther 6:14

They were still speaking with him (ULT)

This phrase indicates something that happened after Haman's wife and friends started talking with Haman and while they were still talking. You should indicate this with a phrase such as "while."

Alternate translation: "while they were still talking together, the king's eunuchs arrived" (See: [Connect — Background Information](#))

ULT

14 They were still speaking with him when the eunuchs of [the king](#) arrived. And they hurried to bring Haman to [the banquet](#) that [Esther](#) had made.

when the eunuchs of the king (ULT)

See how you decided to translate this term in [1:10](#). Not all of the king's eunuchs came. This can be stated explicitly.

Alternate translation: "some of the king's servants" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

And they hurried to bring Haman (ULT)

Alternative translation: "they wanted to bring Haman quickly"

that Esther had made (ULT)

Esther's servants would have done most of the work of preparing the banquet. This can be stated explicitly.

Alternate translation: "that Esther and her servants had prepared" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the banquet](#)
- [Esther](#)

Esther 7

Esther 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Haman's fall concludes in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Covering Haman's face

When "the servants covered Haman's face," they were showing that he had been condemned to be executed. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Esther 7:1

And the king came with Haman to drink with Esther the queen (ULT)

Esther hosted Ahasuerus and Haman for more than just drinks. This is a figure of speech in which a part of something is used to mean the whole thing. An entire banquet is being described here by reference to one part of it, the drinks. Alternate translation: "so the king and Haman went to the second banquet that Queen Esther had prepared" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

¹ And [the king](#) came with Haman to drink with [Esther the queen](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)

Esther 7:2

on the second day (ULT)

This refers to the day after the first banquet, as mentioned in 5:8. Alternate translation: “at that second banquet” or “on that second day of feasting” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

during the banquet of wine (ULT)

Alternate translation: “while they were drinking wine” or “while the servants were pouring the wine and giving it to them”

ULT

² And [the king](#) said to [Esther](#) again on the second day [during](#) the [banquet of wine](#), “What is your petition, [Esther the queen](#)? And let it be given to you. And what is your request? As much as half of [the kingdom](#), and let it be done.”

What is your petition...And let it be given to you. And what is your request? As much as half of the kingdom, and let it be done (ULT)

These two statements mean almost the same thing. Ahasuerus says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show that he is truly disposed to giving Esther what she wants. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: “now please tell me what you really want. Tell me, and I will do it for you” (See: [Parallelism](#))

What is your petition (ULT)

Ahasuerus has now allowed Esther to show her hospitality at two banquets. But he knows that she has done this as a gesture of respect for him and their relationship, and that this signals that she has an important and urgent request to make. You can indicate this by having the king ask, “Now please tell me what you really want.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And let it be given...and let it be done (ULT)

You can capture these parallel passive statements with one statement using an active form. Alternate translation: “I will give you what you ask for” or “I will do for you what you ask” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

is your petition...is your request (ULT)

The two abstract nouns **petition** and **request** can be expressed with a single phrase using the verb “want.” Alternate translation: “what you really want” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

As much as half of the kingdom (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in 5:3 and 5:6. Alternate translation: “I will give you anything you ask for, no matter how great it is” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [during...banquet of](#)

- the...wine
- the queen
- the kingdom

Esther 7:3

And...answered...and said (ULT)

Here a single idea is being expressed by using two words connected with "and." Together the two words mean that Esther responded to the question that the king asked her. Alternate translation: "answered" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

ULT

³ And [Esther the queen](#) answered and said, "If I have found [favor](#) in your eyes, [O king](#), and if [it is good to the king](#), let [my life](#) be given to me at my petition and [my people](#) at my request."

If I have found favor in your eyes (ULT)

Favor means the approval or acceptance of another person. Alternate translation: "if you evaluate me and approve" or "if you are pleased with me" (See: [Idiom](#))

If I have found favor in your eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: "if you evaluate me and approve" or "if you are pleased with me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

O king (ULT)

In this case, Esther is addressing Ahasuerus directly as "O king"; she is not speaking about him in the third person as a sign of respect, as she and others usually do elsewhere in the story. This may indicate a special urgency to what she is saying, so it would be good to include this difference in your translation or indicate the urgency in some other way.

and if it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom that also appears in [1:19](#), [3:9](#), [5:4](#), and [5:8](#). The suggested translation in those cases was, "If it seems like a good plan to you, O king." That was suitable for the deferential tone the speakers were using. But here, Esther has just addressed the king directly with "O king" and she is pleading urgently for the survival of her whole people. So an alternate translation here could be something more like, "I hope you will be willing to do what I ask" (See: [Idiom](#))

let my life be given to me at my petition and my people at my request (ULT)

The phrases **at my petition** and **at my request** mean the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize the urgency of the request. If it would be more natural in your language, you could combine the two requests. Alternate translation: "please spare my life and save my people" or "my request is that you spare my life and the lives of my people" (See: [Parallelism](#))

let my life be given to me (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "please spare my life" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

at my petition (ULT)

The abstract noun **petition** can be expressed with the verb "ask for." Alternate translation: "that is what I am asking for" or "that is what I want" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

and my people (ULT)

If this is unclear in your language, you can repeat from the previous clause the words that have been left out. Alternate translation: “and let my people be given to me” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

at my request (ULT)

The abstract noun **request** can be expressed with the verb “ask for.” Alternate translation: “that is what I am asking for” or “that is what I want” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [favor](#)
- [O king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [it is good](#)
- [my life](#)
- [and my people](#)

Esther 7:4

For we have been sold (ULT)

As Esther points out later in the verse, the Jews actually have not been exchanged for money. Rather, **sell** is a figurative way of saying “turn over to.” If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this meaning by saying something like “For someone has turned us over to our enemies.” Alternatively, you could use the same figure, but show that it is a comparison. Alternate translation: “it is as though I and my people are cattle that have been sold to be slaughtered” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁴ For we have been sold, I **and my people, for annihilation, for slaughter, and for destruction**. Now if we had been sold as slaves and female servants, I would have kept silent, because the distress would not have been equal to a burden of **the king**.”

For we have been sold (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “for someone has sold us” or “for someone has put us in danger of our enemies” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

for annihilation, for slaughter, and for destruction (ULT)

As in [3:13](#), these words mean the same thing and are used together to emphasize the completeness of the destruction. If using three words would be difficult or confusing in your language, you can use one word for this and indicate that the destruction is extreme. Alternate translation: “and they are going to kill every one of us” (A “doublet” can involve the use of more than two words.) (See: [Doublet](#))

for annihilation, for slaughter, and for destruction (ULT)

If your language does not use abstract nouns such as these, you can replace them with one or more verbs. Alternate translation: “and they are going to kill every one of us” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

we have been sold...Now if...as slaves and female servants (ULT)

Alternate translation: “if the men and even the women had been sold into slavery”

the distress would not have been equal to a burden of the king (ULT)

Esther is speaking very deferentially and with some exaggeration in order to impress on the king how important this is to her. She is saying that it would have been worth less to her to see her people rescued from slavery than it would have been to see the king spared the trouble of intervening on their behalf. (Haman uses the expression of “not equal” in this same sense in [5:13](#).) Alternate translation: “that would have been a matter too small to bother you with” or “that would be a small matter to a king like you, but this is very much worse” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

the king (ULT)

Esther addresses King Ahasuerus in the third person as a way of showing respect. Alternate translation: “you” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and my people](#)

- for annihilation
- and for destruction
- for slaughter
- the king

Esther 7:5

And...spoke...and said (ULT)

These two words mean the same thing. Alternate translation: “responded” (See: [Doublet](#))

Who is he, this man? Where is this man, he (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. They both ask about the identity of the man who is trying to destroy the Jews. King Ahasuerus uses the repetition to emphasize how outraged he is. If the repetition would be confusing in your language, you could combine the two phrases. However, from another perspective, both the man’s identity and his location are important to know so that his plot can be stopped. So, for that reason, you could also decide to include both phrases in your translation. (See: [Parallelism](#))

Who is he, this man? Where is this man, he (ULT)

Alternate translation: “who has done this”

Where is this man, he whose heart is full to do thus (ULT)

Here the concept of a **full heart** uses two metaphors at once. “Heart” figuratively represents the action of thinking or feeling. Also, saying that the “heart” is “full” is a figurative way of saying that someone is fully intending to do something, usually something that should not be done. Alternate translation: “where is the man who is intending to do such a thing” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [heart](#)

ULT

⁵ And [the king Ahasuerus](#) spoke and said [to Esther the queen](#), “Who is he, this man? Where is this man, he whose [heart](#) is full to do thus?”

Esther 7:6

an adversary, and an enemy (ULT)

These words mean the same thing. Together, they emphasize Haman's complete hostility towards the Jews. If it is more natural in your language, you can combine them and indicate the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "the one who is our absolute nemesis" (See: [Doublet](#))

was terrified (ULT)

Alternative translation: "was extremely afraid"

was terrified from before the face of (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the presence of a person. The phrase means that Haman was now extremely afraid to be in the presence of King Ahasuerus and Queen Esther. Alternate translation: "this made Haman very afraid to be in the presence of the king and the queen" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [an adversary](#)
- [evil](#)
- [from before the face of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and the queen](#)

ULT

⁶ [Esther](#) answered, "A man, [an adversary](#), and an enemy—this [evil](#) Haman!" Then Haman was terrified [from before the face of the king and the queen](#).

Esther 7:7

And the king rose up in his rage from the banquet of wine (ULT)

Here, **in his rage** is an idiom meaning to be extremely angry. Alternate translation: “the king was extremely angry and got up” (See: [Idiom](#))

to the garden of the palace (ULT)

The implication is that Ahasuerus went outside to absorb the shock that a man he had promoted to the highest position in his empire was plotting to destroy his queen and her whole people. Ahasuerus needed to sort out his conflicting loyalties and decide what to do about this. If it is clearer, you can say explicitly why he went outside. Alternate translation: “he went outside to the palace garden to decide what to do.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in order to seek for his life (ULT)

Here, **seeking** figuratively means to beg or plead urgently for something. This phrase means that Haman wanted to beg Esther to persuade the king not to order his execution. Alternate translation: “to plead with Queen Esther to spare his life” (See: [Metaphor](#))

for he saw (ULT)

Here, **seeing** is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: “he realized” or “he understood” (See: [Metaphor](#))

evil was determined against him by the king (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the king had decided to cause a disaster against him” or “the king was decided to destroy him” or “the king had decided to kill him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

evil was determined against him by the king (ULT)

Here the abstract noun **evil** means “harm,” not something that is morally wrong as in the previous verse. In this context, it can be expressed with a verb such as “execute.” Alternate translation: “the king was likely to execute him” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [in his rage](#)
- [from...banquet of](#)
- [the...wine](#)
- [the palace](#)
- [in order to seek](#)
- [his life](#)
- [from Esther](#)

ULT

⁷ [And the king](#) rose up [in his rage](#) from the [banquet of wine](#) to the garden of [the palace](#). But Haman remained [in order to seek](#) for [his life from Esther the queen](#), for he saw that [evil](#) was determined against him by [the king](#).

- the queen
- evil

Esther 7:8

Now when the king returned...Haman was fallen (ULT)

The implication is that when the king returned to the room, he saw what this verse describes next. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “when the king returned..., he saw that Haman had fallen...” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Haman was fallen on the couch on which Esther was (ULT)

The implication is that Haman was doing this as he pleaded for his life. If it would be clearer in your language, you can add that information to the end of this phrase: “...as he was begging Esther to spare his life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Haman was fallen on the couch on which Esther was (ULT)

If you prefer to present the events in chronological order, you can put this information first in the verse. See the UST. (See: [Order of Events](#))

Haman was fallen on the couch on which Esther was (ULT)

The expression **was fallen** means that as Haman was begging for his life, he was not standing up; he had suddenly come down very close to Esther as she was reclining on a couch. (From the impression that the king got when he returned, it is possible that Haman was even grabbing her arms or shoulders as he pleaded with Esther.) Alternate translation: “Haman had come down very close to Esther as she was reclining on a banqueting couch” or “Haman had thrown himself down on the couch where Esther was reclining” (See: [Idiom](#))

the couch on which Esther was (ULT)

In this culture, especially at a banquet like this one, wealthy people would recline on couches as they ate and drank. Alternate translation: “Esther’s banqueting couch”

Is it also to subdue the queen with me in the house (ULT)

The king phrases this as a question to show his shock and anger at what he thinks Haman is doing. If it is clearer in your language, you can phrase it as a statement. Alternate translation: “he is even trying to rape the queen” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

to subdue the queen (ULT)

The story is using a mild expression to refer to something that is disturbing. In this context, “subdue” means “rape.” The king thought that Haman was trying to rape Esther, and he likely said just that. You can show this in your translation if you want to make this clear. Alternate translation: “trying to rape the queen” (See: [Euphemism](#))

ULT

⁸ Now when the king returned from the garden of the palace to the house of the banquet of wine, Haman was fallen on the couch on which Esther was. And the king said, “Is it also to subdue the queen with me in the house?” The word was going out from the mouth of the king when they covered the face of Haman.

with me in the house (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used to emphasize the idea that they are expressing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine the phrases. However, each one does indicate something slightly different about what a serious offense it would be if Haman actually were trying to rape Esther. It would be a violation of the king's personal trust and a violation of the trust implicit in hospitality. So you can also include both phrases. Alternate translation: "in my presence and in my own house" (See: [Parallelism](#))

The word was going out from the mouth of the king (ULT)

This expression describes the action of speaking. Alternate translation: "as soon as the king said this" (See: [Idiom](#))

The word...when they covered the face of Haman (ULT)

The king spoke, and then the servants covered Haman's face. One action followed upon another. However, this happened so quickly that almost no time seemed to pass in between. You can indicate this with a phrase like "as soon as." Alternate translation: "when the king said this, immediately they covered Haman's face" (See: [Connect — Background Information](#))

when they covered the face of Haman (ULT)

The implication is that some of the king's servants who were present did this, and they did it because they understood that the king wanted Haman to be executed. Alternate translation: "some of his servants covered Haman's face because he was going to be executed" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

when they covered the face of Haman (ULT)

Covering the face in this culture, as in many others, was a sign that a person had been condemned to death. Alternate translation: "some of his servants covered Haman's face to show that he would be executed" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Now when the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [the palace](#)
- [when...the face of](#)
- [the house of](#)
- [in the house](#)
- [banquet of](#)
- [the...wine](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)

Esther 7:9

Harbona (ULT)

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in [1:10](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

one from the eunuchs before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase means that Harbona was one of the eunuchs who served King Ahasuerus personally. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the eunuchs before the face of the king (ULT)

See how you translated this term and this phrase in [1:10](#). Alternate translation: "the guardians who served the king personally" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

behold (ULT)

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If there is not a good way to translate this term in your language, it can be omitted from your translation. But consider using an expression that is natural in your language for someone to address the king directly to get his attention. For example, you could say, "O king!"

Also...the pole that Haman made for Mordecai...is standing at the house of Haman (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Haman has also set up a pole [or gallows] at his house because he wants to impale [or hang] Mordecai on it"

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

for Mordecai, who spoke good for the king (ULT)

This expression means that Mordecai said something that benefitted the king. Specifically, Mordecai reported an assassination plot and saved the king's life. Alternate translation: "Mordecai, who saved the king's life." (See: [Idiom](#))

spoke good for the king (ULT)

Harbona addresses the king in the third person as a way of showing respect. Alternate translation: "saved your life" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

ULT

⁹ And Harbona, one from the eunuchs before the face of the king, said, "Also, behold, the pole that Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good for the king, is standing at the house of Haman 50 cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on it."

is standing (ULT)

Alternate translation: "is set up"

50 cubits high (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you can convert this to a modern measure. See how you translated this phrase in [5:14](#). Alternate translation: "seventy-five feet high" or "twenty-five meters high" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

Hang him on it (ULT)

Him means Haman. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "hang [or impale] Haman on it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [before the face of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king \(2\)](#)
- [the king](#)
- [for Mordecai](#)
- [good](#)
- [at...house of](#)
- [Hang him](#)

Esther 7:10

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

and the rage of the king subsided (ULT)

Here the story figuratively compares the king's anger to floodwaters, which can cause great destruction. "Subside" means for waters to drain away and for their level to go down. You could express the meaning by saying something like "Then the king's rage lessened," or "Then the king was not so angry." Or you could use a different metaphor that would be meaningful in your language, such as, "Then the king cooled off." (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And they hanged](#)
- [for Mordecai](#)
- [and the rage of](#)
- [the king](#)

ULT

10 [And they hanged](#) Haman on the pole that he had prepared [for Mordecai](#), and [the rage of the king](#) subsided.

Esther 8

Esther 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's protection

Yahweh is at work in this chapter preventing the possible destruction of the Jews. God used Esther and Mordecai to protect their people.

Esther 8:1

On that day (ULT)

This could mean one of three things: (1) A new series of events is now being described, but the story makes clear that they happened on the same day as the second banquet. While it must have been some time later in the day, the idea is that when Haman lost his life, and also his property, Esther gained what her enemy had lost.

Alternate translation: “that same day” (2) The expression could also be an idiom that means “as of that day.” This would refer to the effective date for the transfer of Haman’s property to Esther.

Alternate translation: “as of that day” (3) The term “day” could also be used figuratively to mean around the same time. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

ULT

¹ On that day, [the king Ahasuerus](#) gave to [Esther the queen](#) the [house of Haman](#), [the adversary of the Jews](#). And [Mordecai](#) came [before the face of the king](#) because [Esther](#) told what he was to her.

the king Ahasuerus gave to Esther the queen the house of Haman (ULT)

Here, **house** figuratively represents all the household and property of Haman. The story could be referring to all the property by naming one part of it, the house. Or “house” could be a metonym for “property,” meaning everything a person owns and keeps in their house, and by extension everything they own beyond the house as well. Alternate translation: “King Ahasuerus declared that everything that Haman had owned would now belong to Queen Esther” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

the adversary of the Jews (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Haman. Alternate translation: “the enemy of the Jews” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

And Mordecai came before the face of the king (ULT)

The implication is that when the king learned how Mordecai was related to Esther, he summoned Mordecai into his presence. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “when he learned that, the king sent for Mordecai to come into his presence” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase indicates that Mordecai was allowed to come into the king’s presence. Alternate translation: “into his presence” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Esther told what he was to her (ULT)

Alternate translation: “Esther told the king how Mordecai was related to her” You can say this before saying that the king summoned Mordecai, since it happened first. See the UST. (See: [Order of Events](#))

Esther told what he was to her (ULT)

Esther told this to the king. She would likely have explained not just how she and Mordecai were related, but that he had raised her after her parents died. You can say this if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate

translation: "Esther told the king that Mordecai was her cousin and that he had been like a father to her" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- the king
- the king
- Ahasuerus
- to Esther
- Esther
- the queen
- house of
- the adversary of
- the Jews
- And Mordecai
- before the face of

Esther 8:2

And the king removed his signet ring...and he gave it to Mordecai (ULT)

Giving the ring to Mordecai showed that Mordecai could now act on the king's own authority, and it enabled him to do that. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king now gave this ring to Mordecai to show that Mordecai had the power to act on the authority of the king" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

ULT

² And [the king](#) removed his signet ring, which he had caused to pass from Haman, and he gave it [to Mordecai](#). And [Esther](#) placed [Mordecai](#) over the [house of Haman](#).

his signet ring (ULT)

See how you translated this in [3:10](#). Review the explanation there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: "the ring that had his official seal on it" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

which he had caused to pass from Haman (ULT)

This means that the king had taken back his signet ring from Haman. He would have done this when he sentenced Haman to death. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king had given Haman the ring that had his official seal on it, but he had taken it back from Haman when he sentenced Haman to death, and the king was wearing it again." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

which he had caused to pass from Haman (ULT)

If it is clearer in your language, you can put this information first in the verse because it happened before everything else. (See: [Order of Events](#))

and he gave it to Mordecai (ULT)

By giving his signet ring to Mordecai, the king gave Mordecai the authority to write important papers that people would have to obey. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. See the UST. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And Esther placed Mordecai over the house of Haman (ULT)

To place someone over something figuratively means to put them in charge of it. Alternate translation: "Esther appointed Mordecai to be in charge of everything that had belonged to Haman" (See: [Metaphor](#))

the house of Haman (ULT)

See the explanation of this phrase in verse 1. Alternate translation: "everything that Haman had owned" or "the household of Haman" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [to Mordecai](#)

- Mordecai
- Esther
- house of

Esther 8:3

And Esther repeated her action, and she spoke before the face of the king (ULT)

Here the exact meaning of the progression of verbs is uncertain, but this verse probably begins a new event in the story separate from what happened in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “then Esther again spoke in the king’s presence” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. Alternate translation: “while she was in his presence” (See: [Metonymy](#))

She fell before the face of his feet (ULT)

Here, **falling** is an idiom referring to the action of bowing down or prostrating oneself, and **face** figuratively represents the front of a person, place, or object. Alternate translation: “and she bowed down” or “and she prostrated herself” (See: [Idiom](#))

She fell before the face of his feet (ULT)

This may actually mean that Esther put her face right on top of the feet of King Ahasuerus. This would have been an act of humility and desperation by which she showed that her need was very great and that she believed the king had great power to help her. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

She fell before the face of his feet (ULT)

Esther’s action was probably a recognized sign of pleading in this culture. However, it would likely still have been remarkable for a queen to fall at the feet of her husband, the king. You can show this by introducing the information with a phrase like “in fact.” Alternate translation: “in fact, to show how desperately she was pleading, Esther got down and put her face right on top of his feet” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

before the face of his feet (ULT)

Here, **face** is a metonym meaning the front of a person, place, or object. This phrase means that Esther prostrated herself in front of the feet of King Ahasuerus. (See: [Metonymy](#))

to take away the evil of Haman the Agagite (ULT)

Here, **the evil** refers to Haman’s plan. This expression means to prevent a wrong action from happening. Alternate translation: “to stop the evil plan of Haman the Agagite” or “to prevent the evil things from happening that Haman the Agagite had planned” (See: [Idiom](#))

the Agagite (ULT)

This is the name of Haman’s people group. See how you translated this in [3:1](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

³ And **Esther** repeated her action, and she spoke **before the face of the king**. She fell **before the face of** his feet and wept **and implored favor** from him to take away **the evil of** Haman the Agagite and his plot that he had plotted against **the Jews**.

and his plot...that he had plotted (ULT)

Alternate translation: "and the plot that he had invented" or "and the plot that Haman invented"

Translation Words - ULT

- Esther
- before the face of
- before the face of (2)
- the king
- and implored favor
- the evil of
- the Jews

Esther 8:4

And the king held out to Esther the scepter of gold (ULT)

As in 5:2, King Ahasuerus did this to show that Esther had his favor. In that earlier episode, this indicated that he would not enforce the law that said Esther should be executed for coming into the inner court without being summoned. But since Esther was apparently already in the king's presence on this occasion, it seems that the gesture could also be used generally to show that the king was positively disposed towards a person and would grant the person's request. Alternate translation: "the king held out his golden scepter to Esther" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

ULT

⁴ And [the king](#) held out [to Esther](#) the [scepter of gold](#), so [Esther](#) rose up and stood [before the face of the king](#).

the...scepter of...gold (ULT)

See how you translated this in 4:11. If it would be helpful, review the explanation of what this object was. Alternate translation: "golden scepter" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

so Esther rose up (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Esther got up off the floor"

before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the front of a person, place, or object. This phrase means the Esther now stood facing King Ahasuerus. Alternate translation: "and stood facing the king" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [scepter of](#)
- [the...gold](#)
- [before the face of](#)

Esther 8:5

If it is good to the king...and the word is proper before the face of the king (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Esther is saying very deferentially that she hopes that the king will think that her suggestion is a good idea and will, therefore, grant her request. Esther uses the repetition to emphasize the importance of what she is expressing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: "if what I am going to suggest seems like a good idea to you" (See: [Parallelism](#))

and if I have found favor before his face...and I am good in his eyes (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Esther is saying very deferentially that she hopes that the king is positively disposed towards her, that he thinks well of her, and will, therefore, grant her request. Esther uses the repetition to emphasize the importance of what she is expressing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: "if you are pleased with me" (See: [Parallelism](#))

If it is good to the king, and if I have found favor before his face (ULT)

Here Esther addresses the king throughout in the third person as a way of showing respect. You could express the same meaning in the second person, as in the UST. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

If it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom that also appears in [1:19](#), [3:9](#), [5:4](#), and [5:8](#). A suggested translation in those cases was, "If it seems like a good idea to you, O king." That was suitable for the deferential tone the speakers were using. But in another place, [7:3](#), when Esther was pleading urgently for the survival of her whole people, the suggested alternate translation was, "I hope you will be willing to do what I ask" Here, Esther is also pleading, so you could use that phrase here in your translation as well. Alternate translation: "if what I ask for seems right in the king's evaluation" (See: [Idiom](#))

and if I have found favor (ULT)

This expression also appears many times in the story. It means to gain the approval or acceptance of another person. Alternate translation: "if you are pleased with me" (See: [Idiom](#))

before his face...before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively means the presence of a person. These phrases could mean "as I stand here before you." But "face" could also be referring figuratively to the king himself by naming one part of him. What he thought and felt about Esther's request would become evident in his face first, so it would be an appropriate part of him to use to represent all of him. Alternate translation: "you" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁵ And she said, "If it is good to the king, and if I have found favor before his face, and the word is proper before the face of the king, and I am good in his eyes, let it be written to bring back the letters, the plot of Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king."

in his eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent the action of seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. Alternate translation: “if you evaluate me and I please you” or “if you are pleased with me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

let it be written to bring back the letters (ULT)

The first letters that told of the plan to destroy the Jews would not be brought back to Susa physically. Rather, **bring back** is an idiom that means “cancel” or “revoke.” Alternate translation: “make a new law to cancel what Haman decreed” (See: [Idiom](#))

let it be written to bring back the letters (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “write a new letter” or “make a new law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- it is good
- and...am good
- the king
- the king
- the king
- the provinces of
- favor
- before his face
- before the face of
- son of
- to destroy
- the Jews

Esther 8:6

For (ULT)

Here Esther is giving the reason why she is asking King Ahasuerus to revoke the letters. Alternate translation: “the reason I am asking is that” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

⁶ For how could I bear to see [the evil](#) that [my people](#) would find? And how could I bear seeing [the destruction](#) of my kindred?”

how could I bear to see the evil that my people would find? And how could I bear seeing the destruction of my kindred (ULT)

Esther is actually making a statement, but she expresses herself in question form to show how strongly she feels about what she is saying. She does not actually expect the king to tell her how she could bear seeing her people destroyed. Alternate translation: “I cannot bear to see disaster fall on the Jews” or “I cannot endure watching my relatives be killed” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

how could I bear to see the evil that my people would find? And how could I bear seeing the destruction of my kindred (ULT)

These two sentences mean basically the same thing. Esther uses the repetition to emphasize the importance of what she is saying. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: “I could not bear to see my relatives and my whole people destroyed” (See: [Parallelism](#))

the evil that my people would find (ULT)

Even though it was morally very wrong for Haman to want to destroy Mordecai’s whole people, here the abstract noun **evil** likely means “harm,” as in [7:7](#). It means the same thing as “destruction” in the next sentence. Alternate translation: “my people being destroyed” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

would find (ULT)

As in [1:5](#), **find** is an idiom that means something exists in a certain place or time, not that people were looking for it and located it. Esther is speaking of the harm that will exist for the Jews if the effect of Haman’s letters is not undone. Alternate translation: “would be destroyed” (See: [Idiom](#))

the destruction (ULT)

This abstract noun can be expressed with a verb such as “destroyed.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

of my kindred (ULT)

Alternate translation: “my relatives”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the evil](#)
- [my people](#)
- [the destruction](#)

Esther 8:7

Behold (ULT)

This is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If there is not a good way to translate this term in your language, this term can be omitted from the translation, or you can use an alternate translation like “as you know.”

I have given the house of Haman to Esther (ULT)

See the note about this expression in [8:1](#). Alternate translation: “I have given Esther all the property that belonged to Haman” or “I have given Esther the household of Haman”

the house of Haman (ULT)

Here, **house** is a metonym meaning the entire household of Haman. Alternate translation: “the household of Haman” (See: [Metonymy](#))

and they have hanged him on the pole (ULT)

Alternate translation: “I had my servants impale Haman on a wooden pole” or “I had my servants hang Haman on a gallows” You can put this information first because it happened before the king gave Haman’s property to Esther. (See: [Order of Events](#))

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. Be sure your translation is consistent in the chapters that follow. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

he stretched out his hand (ULT)

Here the expression ****to stretch out a hand**** means to cause someone physical harm with the intention of killing them. Alternate translation: “because he plotted to destroy all the Jews” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [to Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [and to Mordecai](#)
- [the Jew](#)
- [against the Jews](#)
- [house of](#)
- [they have hanged](#)
- [his hand](#)

ULT

⁷ And [the king Ahasuerus](#) said [to Esther the queen](#) and [to Mordecai the Jew](#), “Behold, I have given the [house of Haman](#) [to Esther](#), and [they have hanged](#) him on the pole on account of this, that he stretched out [his hand against the Jews](#).”

Esther 8:8

So...you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "so this is what you should do"

write for the Jews as is good in your eyes (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I am giving you permission to write other letters to save your people"

as is good in your eyes (ULT)

Here, **eyes** figuratively represent the action of seeing, and seeing is a metaphor for knowledge, notice, attention, or judgment. This phrase means that Esther and Mordecai have permission to write what they think is best. Alternate translation: "as you think is best" or "what you think is best" (See: [Metaphor](#))

in the name of the king (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metaphor meaning authority. This phrase means Esther and Mordecai have permission to write with the authority of the King Ahasuerus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

in the name of the king (ULT)

King Ahasuerus refers to himself in the third person. You can have him say this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I give you permission to write with my own authority" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

with the signet ring of the king (ULT)

This is a special ring that could be used to imprint the king's official seal on a law or decree. Alternate translation: "the ring that has my official seal on it" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

with the signet ring of the king (ULT)

King Ahasuerus refers to himself in the third person. You can have him say this in the first person. Alternate translation: "the ring that has my official seal on it" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

For (ULT)

Here, King Ahasuerus is expressing the reason why he cannot simply revoke the first letter and also why Esther and Mordecai can write another letter that people must obey. Alternate translation: "you see" or "people will obey your letter because" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

there is none to take back (ULT)

As in verse 5, this expression means "revoke." Alternate translation: "no one can revoke" or "no one can nullify"

ULT

⁸ So, in the name of the king, you write for the Jews as is good in your eyes, and seal it with the signet ring of the king. For there is none to take back a writing that has been written in the name of the king and has been sealed with the signet ring of the king."

a writing...there is none to take back (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you can put this first in the verse because it explains why Ahasuerus answers Esther and Mordecai in the way that he does. See the UST.

a writing that has been written in the name of the king and has been sealed with the signet ring of the king (ULT)

The king is describing a general situation, but he has Haman's letter specifically in mind. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Haman wrote his letter with my authority, and he sealed it with the ring that has my official seal on it. No one can revoke a letter like that" (The story explained in [1:19](#) that the king's laws could not be changed once they had been made and proclaimed.) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- in the name of
- in the name of
- the king
- the king
- the king
- the king
- the Jews
- as is good
- and seal it
- and has been sealed

Esther 8:9

And the scribes of the king were called (ULT)

This indicates that what is described in this verse was done because of what the king said in the previous verse. Use a connecting word or phrase to show this in your language. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

And the scribes of the king were called (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the king called his scribes” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

And the scribes of the king were called (ULT)

If you use an expression such as “called,” make sure your readers will understand that the king likely sent an official to go and bring the scribes back with him. The king did not call out in a loud voice to get them to come.

in the third month (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in month three” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

in the third month (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in the third month of the year” It would still be the same year as in [3:7](#), the twelfth year that Ahasuerus reigned as king of Persia. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

which is the month of Sivan (ULT)

Sivan is the name of the third month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: “the month of Sivan” (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

which is the month of Sivan (ULT)

The story is being recorded from the perspective of the Persian court, but for the benefit of its intended Jewish audience, the Hebrew name of the month is given. This month overlaps with May and June on a Western calendar.

on the twenty-third of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on day 23” or “on the twenty-third day of the month” The exact date of the letter helps to establish its legal authority. This would be on June 25th of a Western calendar. (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

ULT

⁹ And [the scribes of the king](#) were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third of it. And according to all that [Mordecai commanded](#), it was written to [the Jews](#), and to the satraps, [and the governors and officials of the provinces](#) that were from India even as far as [Ethiopia](#): 127 [provinces, province by province](#) according to its writing, [and people by people according to its tongue](#), and to [the Jews](#) according to their writing [and according to their tongue](#).

And according to all that Mordecai commanded, it was written (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “and they wrote in a letter everything that Mordecai dictated to them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to the Jews (ULT)

It appears from verse 11 that the letter would have been addressed specifically to the Jews in the empire, telling them that the king had authorized them to defend themselves. But copies were also sent to all the royal and provincial officials. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the letter addressed the Jews in the empire, but copies were also sent” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and to the satraps, and the governors and officials of the provinces (ULT)

See how you translated these terms in [3:12](#), where they were used to describe who received Haman’s letter. These are all people in government positions. The first one is the governor of the province and the other two are rulers under him who govern cities or smaller areas. If your language uses one term for all of these, you could use that with a descriptive phrase such as “to the government leaders of each province and also to the leaders under him.”

that were from India even as far as Ethiopia: 127 provinces (ULT)

This is background information explaining how far this new letter had to be sent. See how you translated this phrase in [1:1](#). Alternate translation: “the empire of Ahasuerus had 127 provinces, stretching all the way from India in the east to Ethiopia in the west”

127 provinces (ULT)

Alternate translation: “one hundred and twenty-seven provinces” (See: [Numbers](#))

province by province (ULT)

This expression means “to people in every province.” Alternate translation: “the scribes wrote to the people in each province” (See: [Idiom](#))

according to its writing (ULT)

Alternate translation: “using its own alphabet” or “written in its own script”

and people by people (ULT)

This expression means “every people group.” Alternate translation: “and to each ethnic group” (See: [Idiom](#))

according to its tongue (ULT)

Here, **tongue** figuratively means the language spoken by a person or a group of people. Alternate translation: “in its own language” (See: [Metonymy](#))

and to the Jews according to their writing and according to their tongue (ULT)

The Jews would have been included among all the people groups in the empire in the phrase “people by people.” So this seems to be saying, “and especially to the Jews.” Verse 11 explains that it was particularly important for the Jews to read the letter because it gave them the right to defend themselves. Alternate translation: “they wrote especially to the Jews in their own script and in their own language”

Translation Words - ULT

- the scribes of
- the king
- and people
- by people
- according to its tongue
- and according to their tongue
- Mordecai
- commanded
- the Jews
- the Jews
- and the governors
- and officials of
- the provinces
- provinces
- province
- by province
- Ethiopia

Esther 8:10

And he wrote...and he sealed (ULT)

He refers to Mordecai. You can use his name here if that would be clearer in your language.

in the name of the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metaphor meaning authority. Alternate translation: "Mordecai wrote with the authority of King Ahasuerus" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁰ And he wrote [in the name of the king Ahasuerus](#), and he sealed with the signet ring of [the king](#). And he sent letters (by the [hand of](#) runners [on horses](#), riders of the [royal](#) pack horses, [sons of](#) the mares)

and he sealed with the signet ring of the king (ULT)

This means that Mordecai sealed the letters with this ring. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "and he sealed the letters with the ring that had the king's official seal on it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

by the hand of runners on horses (ULT)

As in [3:13](#), **hand** could mean two different things. (1) It could literally mean "hand," meaning that the runners carried the letters in their hands. (2) It could also be a metaphor for power, control, or authority, meaning that runners were the ones who delivered the letters to all the provinces throughout the empire. Alternate translation: "couriers on horseback delivered the letters" (See: [Metaphor](#))

riders of the royal pack horses, sons of the mares (ULT)

Alternate translation: "They rose fast horses that were used in the king's service. These horses had been bred in the king's stables."

sons of the mares (ULT)

Here, **sons** is a metonym meaning the offspring of royal livestock. Alternate translation: "the offspring of the king's horses" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [in the name of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [and he sealed](#)
- [by...hand of](#)
- [on horses](#)
- [royal](#)
- [sons of](#)

Esther 8:11

in every city, city by city (ULT)

This expression means “in each and every city.” It is possibly referring to the entire empire by naming one part of it, its cities. The story says in [9:19](#) that not just Jews living in cities but Jews living in rural areas also defended themselves. It is likely that the messengers only published the news in the cities and not the entire countryside, but the news was certainly intended for everyone, not only people living in the cities. Alternate translation: “throughout the empire” or “in each and every city” or “in every single city” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

11 that [the king](#) gave [to the Jews](#) who were in every city, city by city: to gather and to stand for [their life](#), [to annihilate](#), [and to slaughter](#), [and to destroy](#) any strength of [a people or province](#) that would attack them, children and women, and plunder their spoil;

to gather and to stand for their life (ULT)

Here, **to stand** is a metaphor meaning to defend oneself and fight back instead of running away from an enemy. Alternate translation: “to join together and fight for their lives” or “to join together and fight back” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to annihilate, and to slaughter, and to destroy (ULT)

These words mean the same thing and are used together to emphasize the completeness of the destruction that is being described. See how you translated this in [3:13](#) and [7:4](#). Alternate translation: “completely destroy” (A “doublet” can involve the use of more than two words.) (See: [Doublet](#))

any...strength of a people or province that would attack them (ULT)

Strength is a figurative way of referring to an army or to a person carrying weaponry. Alternate translation: “the army of any people or province that attacked them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

children and women (ULT)

Alternate translation: “they could also kill the wives and children of the armed men”

and plunder their spoil (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in [3:13](#). Alternate translation: “and take everything that belonged to them”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [to the Jews](#)
- [their life](#)
- [to annihilate](#)
- [and to destroy](#)
- [and to slaughter](#)
- [a people](#)
- [or province](#)

Esther 8:12

on one day (ULT)

This was the day that Haman had set for destroying the Jews in [3:13](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: “on the same day that Haman had set for destroying the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹² on one day in all [the provinces of the king Ahasuerus](#), on the thirteenth of month 12, which is the month of Adar.

in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in every province of the kingdom”

on the thirteenth (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on day 13” or “on the thirteenth day” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of month 12 (ULT)

Alternate translation: “of month 12” or “of the twelfth month” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of month 12 (ULT)

Implicitly, this means “the twelfth month of that same year.” If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

which is the month of Adar (ULT)

This is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:07](#) and [3:13](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the provinces of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)

Esther 8:13

A copy of the writing was to be given as a law (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the letter told the officials to proclaim this as a law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in every province by province (ULT)

This expression means “in each and every province.” Alternate translation: “in every single province” (See: [Idiom](#))

being uncovered for all the peoples (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the letter told the officials in every single province to post copies where everyone could see them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

and for the Jews to be prepared for that day (ULT)

Alternate translation: “that way the Jews would get ready to do what the letter said when the day came”

to take revenge from their enemies (ULT)

This expression, “to take revenge from” another person, means to correct a wrong they have done. In this context, the phrase means to correct the wrong of the original law that gave people permission to kill the Jews. Alternate translation: “and fight back against their enemies” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [as a law](#)
- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the peoples](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [from their enemies](#)

ULT

¹³ A copy of the writing was to be given [as a law](#) in every [province by province](#), being uncovered for all [the peoples](#), and for [the Jews](#) to be prepared for that day to take revenge [from their enemies](#).

Esther 8:14

The runners, the riders of the royal pack horses (ULT)

See how you translated this in [8:10](#). Alternate translation: “messengers riding on fast horses that were used for the king’s business”

ULT

¹⁴ The runners, the riders of the [royal pack horses](#), went out hastened and hurried by the word of [the king](#). [And the law](#) was given in Susa [the citadel](#).

hastened and hurried by the word of the king (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the king commanded the couriers to deliver the letters as quickly as possible” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

hastened and hurried (ULT)

These two terms mean almost the same thing and are used together to emphasize the fact that the couriers were told to deliver the letters as quickly as possible. Alternate translation: “they went immediately” or “as quickly as possible” (See: [Doublet](#))

The runners, the riders of the royal pack horses (ULT)

To present the events in chronological order, you can put this after the king’s command, as in the UST. (See: [Order of Events](#))

And the law was given (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the king’s officials also posted and read copies of the letter” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [royal](#)
- [the king](#)
- [And the law](#)
- [the citadel](#)

Esther 8:15

And Mordecai went out (ULT)

This introduces a new event in the story. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

from before the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase means that Mordecai had been in the presence of King Ahasuerus and was now leaving in order to fulfill his duties as a high official in the Persian government. Alternate translation: “from the palace” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

15 And Mordecai went out from before the face of the king in a garment of royalty of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a robe of fine linen and purple, and the city of Susa cheered and rejoiced.

in a garment of royalty of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a robe of fine linen and purple (ULT)

The implication is that the king gave Mordecai these special things to wear to show that he was now his highest officer. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. To put these events in chronological order, you can place this information before the report that Mordecai left the king’s presence to fulfill his duties. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in a garment of royalty of blue (ULT)

Alternate translation: “a blue and white garment that the king had worn”

with a great crown of gold (ULT)

Alternate translation: “a large golden crown”

and the city of Susa cheered and rejoiced (ULT)

Here, **the city** represents the people living in it. Alternate translation: “the people of Susa” (See: [Metonymy](#))

cheered and rejoiced (ULT)

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with “and.” The word **rejoiced** tells how they cheered. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the meaning by saying something like “shouted joyfully.” Alternate translation: “cheered and were happy” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

cheered and rejoiced (ULT)

The implication is that the people did this when they saw Mordecai. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And Mordecai](#)
- [from before the face of](#)

- the king
- royalty of
- with a...crown of
- gold
- and purple
- and rejoiced

Esther 8:16

there was light (ULT)

Here, **light** figuratively represents happiness. Alternate translation: “the Jews felt happy” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

16 For the Jews there was light and joy and rejoicing and honor.

there was light and joy (ULT)

The terms **light** and **joy** refer to the same thing here. They are used together to emphasize the extreme happiness that the Jews felt. Alternate translation: “the Jews felt very happy” (See: [Doublet](#))

and rejoicing and honor (ULT)

These terms have similar meaning and are used together with the previous doublet to emphasize again the great happiness and joy that the Jews felt. (See: [Doublet](#))

and honor (ULT)

Here, **honor** might have two possible meanings. (1) Other people honored the Jews. Alternate translation: “other people honored them” (2) The Jews themselves felt honor instead of shame. Alternate translation: “they felt honored” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [For the Jews](#)
- [and joy](#)
- [and rejoicing](#)
- [and honor](#)

Esther 8:17

In every province by province (ULT)

This expression means “each and every province.” Alternate translation: “in every single province” (See: [Idiom](#))

and in every city by city (ULT)

This expression means “each and every city.” Alternate translation: “in every single city” (See: [Idiom](#))

any place where the word of the king and his law came (ULT)

This expression describes the king’s message as if it were a person that could travel to a particular place. This phrase refers to all the places that received the king’s letter. Alternate translation: “wherever the king’s couriers took his decree” or “wherever the couriers read the letter announcing the king’s decree” (See: [Personification](#))

there was joy and rejoicing for the Jews (ULT)

The terms **joy** and **rejoicing** have similar meaning and are used together to emphasize the great happiness and joy that the Jews felt. Alternate translation: “the Jews rejoiced greatly” (See: [Doublet](#))

a feast and a good day (ULT)

These two terms mean something similar and are used together to emphasize the great happiness and joy that the Jews felt. Alternate translation: “and had festive celebrations” (See: [Doublet](#))

and a good day (ULT)

This expression generally means a day of happiness or celebration. Alternate translation: “and a holiday” (See: [Idiom](#))

And many from the peoples of the land became Jews (ULT)

The implication is that they did this because they thought that the Jews might attack them when the Jews fought back against their enemies. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And many from the peoples of the land became Jews (ULT)

Alternate translation: “many people from the other ethnic groups in the empire”

from the peoples of the land (ULT)

The **peoples of the land** were the non-Jewish people groups within the empire. (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

17 In every province by province and in every city by city, any place where the word of the king and his law came, there was joy and rejoicing for the Jews, a feast and a good day. And many from the peoples of the land became Jews because dread of the Jews had fallen upon them.

dread of the Jews had fallen upon them (ULT)

Here, **falling** is a metaphor meaning to affect someone. Alternate translation: “they had become very afraid of the Jews” (See: [Metaphor](#))

dread of the Jews had fallen upon them (ULT)

To present the events in chronological order, you can say this before saying that the people from the other groups became Jews themselves. (See: [Order of Events](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- province
- by province
- from the peoples of
- dread of
- the word of
- the king
- and his law
- there was joy
- and rejoicing
- for the Jews
- became Jews
- the Jews
- a feast
- good

Esther 9

Esther 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Purim

The events of this chapter were so significant, the Jews celebrated these events every year after this. It is known as "Purim."

Important stylistic devices in this chapter

Ironic Situation

The day that was supposed to bring great victory to the enemies of the Jews became a day of great victory for the Jews. This is a type of irony.

Opening Summary

Verse 1 of chapter 9 provides a summary of everything that happens in this chapter. If using an opening summary is not normally used in your language, be sure to mark this as a summary either in the text or in a footnote. An opening summary like this is a characteristic device of Hebrew storytelling. So even though it describes the final outcome, we do not recommend that you move it to the end of the chapter unless it is very confusing to leave it here. To make it clear that verse 1 is only a summary and not the entire story, you could say something like this at the end of the verse: "This is what happened" or "Here are more details about what happened."

Esther 9:1

Now in month 12 (ULT)

This introduces a new event. Use a natural way in your language to indicate a new event. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

Now in month 12, which is the month of Adar, on day 13 of it (ULT)

The implication is that this happened in the twelfth month of the same year that the letters were sent out. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of that year, the month of Adar” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Now in month 12 (ULT)

Alternate translation: “now in the twelfth month” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

which is the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:7](#), [3:13](#), and [8:12](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

on day 13 of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on the thirteenth day of the month” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

when...the time...the word of the king and his law...to be done (ULT)

Alternate translation: “what the letters said the king had decreed”

when the word of the king and his law had reached the time to be done (ULT)

This expression describes the king’s decree as if it had traveled through time (as a person travels through space) and reached this particular day. This phrase means that it was time for people to obey the decree. Alternate translation: “when the time came for people to obey the king’s law and decree” or “when it was the day established in the king’s letters for people to carry out the king’s law” (See: [Personification](#))

when...the time...on the day...the enemies of the Jews hoped to dominate them (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the enemies of the Jews had expected to defeat the Jews on that day”

to dominate (ULT)

This word usually means “to rule over,” but here it figuratively means “to have power over, to be able to destroy.” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹ Now in month 12, which is the month of Adar, on day 13 of it, when **the word of the king and his law** had reached the time to be done, on the day when **the enemies of the Jews** hoped to dominate them: but being overturned, it happened that **the Jews** themselves dominated those who hated them.

but being overturned (ULT)

Saying that a situation was turned over is a figurative way of saying that what happened was the opposite of what was expected. Alternate translation: "the situation was reversed" or "the opposite happened" (See: [Metaphor](#))

when...the time...it happened...the Jews themselves dominated those who hated them (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Instead, it was the Jews themselves who destroyed their enemies"

those who hated them (ULT)

This is an idiom that describes enemies (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the word of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [and his law](#)
- [the enemies of](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [the Jews](#)

Esther 9:2

to stretch out a hand (ULT)

Here the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to cause someone physical harm with the intention of killing him. Alternate translation: “to defend themselves” or “to fight” (See: [Idiom](#))

against those seeking their evil (ULT)

Here the abstract noun **evil** likely means “harm,” as in [7:7](#) and [8:6](#). In this context, the term can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: “who were trying to destroy them” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

But a man did not stand to their face (ULT)

Alternate translation: “no one stood against them” or “no one was able to defeat them” (See: [Idiom](#))

But a man did not stand to their face (ULT)

Here, **standing** is a metaphor meaning to defend oneself and to fight back instead of running away from an enemy. Alternate translation: “was able to fight back” (See: [Metaphor](#))

to their face (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively stands for the presence of a person, so here it means “when faced with them.” Alternate translation: “against them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

sudden fear of them had fallen on all the peoples (ULT)

Here, **falling** is a metaphor meaning to affect someone. Alternate translation: “all the peoples suddenly became very afraid” (See: [Metaphor](#))

sudden fear of them had fallen on all the peoples (ULT)

The implication is that as a result, no one helped anyone who attacked the Jews. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [The Jews](#)
- [assembled themselves](#)
- [the peoples](#)
- [the provinces of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [a hand](#)
- [against those seeking](#)
- [their evil](#)
- [to their face](#)

ULT

² [The Jews assembled themselves](#) in their cities in all [the provinces of the king Ahasuerus](#) to stretch out [a hand](#) against those seeking their evil. But a man did not stand [to their face](#), for [sudden fear of them](#) had fallen on all [the peoples](#).

- sudden fear of them

Esther 9:3

the officials of the provinces, and the satraps and the governors (ULT)

See how you translated these terms in [3:12](#) and [8:9](#). Alternate translation: “the government leaders in each province”

and those doing the work that was for the king (ULT)

Alternate translation: “anyone the king had trusted with his affairs”

were lifting up the Jews (ULT)

Here, **lifting up** is a figurative way of saying “helping.” The picture is likely of someone helping a tired or injured person to stand or walk by holding them up. Alternate translation: “helped the Jews” (See: [Metaphor](#))

dread of Mordecai had fallen on them (ULT)

Here, **falling** is a metaphor meaning to affect someone. Alternate translation: “they were afraid of Mordecai” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the officials of](#)
- [the provinces](#)
- [and the governors](#)
- [was for the king](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [dread of](#)
- [Mordecai](#)

ULT

³ And all [the officials of the provinces](#), and the satraps [and the governors](#) and those doing the work that [was for the king](#) were lifting up [the Jews](#), for [dread of Mordecai](#) had fallen on them.

Esther 9:4

For (ULT)

This term introduces the reason why the officials and satraps and governors were becoming afraid of Mordecai. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Mordecai was great in the palace of the king (ULT)

The implication is that this is why all the other officials were afraid of Mordecai. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation, add: “They were afraid of him because” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Mordecai was great in the palace of the king (ULT)

The palace of the king is a figurative way of describing the king’s administration by referring to the place where it was headquartered. Alternate translation: “was very important in the king’s government” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Mordecai was great in the palace of the king (ULT)

Great here is the same term that, as a verb, describes promotion within the king’s service in in [3:1](#) and [5:11](#). Alternate translation: “Mordecai was a very important royal official”

and the report of him was going out into all the provinces (ULT)

Here the story speaks of the news of Mordecai’s greatness as if it were a living thing that could travel throughout the empire. Alternate translation: “throughout the empire, everyone was hearing the news of his greatness” (See: [Personification](#))

Mordecai was progressing and becoming great (ULT)

This expression means that Mordecai continued to become more powerful and influential. Alternate translation: “Mordecai was becoming more famous because the king was giving him more and more power” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [Mordecai](#)
- [in the palace of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [the provinces](#)

ULT

⁴ For [Mordecai](#) was great [in the palace of the king](#), and the report of him was going out into all [the provinces](#), for the man [Mordecai](#) was progressing and becoming great.

Esther 9:5

And the Jews struck to all their enemies a strike of sword (ULT)

After the information about Mordecai, the story now returns to tell what happened on the appointed day. You could add a phrase to show this. Alternate translation, add: “on the day when they were allowed to defend themselves”

ULT

⁵ And [the Jews](#) struck to all [their enemies](#) a strike [of sword and slaughter and destruction](#). And they did to those who hated them according to their pleasure.

And the Jews struck to all their enemies a strike of sword (ULT)

This expression means that the Jews defended themselves against their enemies, even to the point of killing people who attacked them. Alternate translation: “the Jews attacked all of their enemies and killed them with their swords” (See: [Idiom](#))

a strike of sword (ULT)

Swords were not necessarily the only weapons the Jews had and used. The sword is used to represent all of their weaponry. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this more general meaning. Alternate translation: “the Jews took up their weapons and used them against their enemies” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

and slaughter and destruction (ULT)

These two words have the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: “they destroyed them completely” (See: [Doublet](#))

And they did to those who hated them according to their pleasure (ULT)

This expression does not mean that the Jews felt pleasure when they killed their enemies. Rather, it means that the Jews were able to defend themselves against their enemies and were not hindered in any way. Alternate translation: “they were able to do everything they wanted to do against their enemies” (See: [Idiom](#))

to those who hated them (ULT)

This is an idiom that describes enemies. (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [their enemies](#)
- [of sword](#)
- [and slaughter](#)
- [and destruction](#)

Esther 9:6

And in Susa the citadel (ULT)

Alternate translation: "just in Susa, the capital city"

slaughtered...and destroyed (ULT)

These two words have the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "killed" (See: [Doublet](#))

500 men (ULT)

Alternate translation: "five hundred men" (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the citadel](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [slaughtered](#)
- [and destroyed](#)

ULT

⁶ And in Susa [the citadel the Jews](#) [slaughtered and destroyed](#) 500 men.

Esther 9:7

Parshandatha...Dalphon...Aspatha (ULT)

The story lists the names of Haman's sons before explaining that they were his sons and that the Jews killed them. To be clear who these people are, you can add this information from verse 10 explicitly here. Alternate translation, add: "the Jews killed the ten sons of their enemy Haman son of Hammedatha. The names of his sons were..." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁷ And Parshandatha and Dalphon and Aspatha

Parshandatha...Dalphon...Aspatha (ULT)

These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Esther 9:8

Poratha...Adalia...Aridatha (ULT)

These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁸ and Poratha and Adalia and Aridatha

Esther 9:9

Parmashta...Arisai...Aridai...Vaizatha (ULT)

These are the names of men. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁹ and Parmashta and Arisai and Aridai
and Vaizatha,

Esther 9:10

the ten sons of (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the 10 sons” (See: [Numbers](#))

the adversary of the Jews (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Haman. Alternate translation: “the enemy of the Jews” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

they did not stretch out their hand (ULT)

Here the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to take something from another person. Alternate translation: “they did not take” (See: [Idiom](#))

But...to the plunder (ULT)

Alternate translation: “But ... their possessions”

Translation Words - ULT

- the...sons of
- son of
- the adversary of
- the Jews
- they slaughtered
- their hand

ULT

¹⁰ the ten [sons of](#) Haman, the [son of](#) Hammedatha, [the adversary of the Jews, they slaughtered](#). But they did not stretch out [their hand](#) to the plunder.

Esther 9:11

On that day (ULT)

Alternate translation: "at the end of that day"

the report of the number of...came...to the face of the king (ULT)

Here the story speaks about the report as if it were a living thing that could come into the the king's presence. Alternate translation: "one of the king's servants told the king the number of" (See: [Personification](#))

to the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** figuratively represents the presence of a person. This phrase likely means that someone came into the king's presence in order to deliver this report. Alternate translation: "someone came in and reported to the king" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the report of the number of those who were killed (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "how many people the Jews had killed" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the citadel](#)
- [to the face of](#)
- [the king](#)

ULT

11 On that day, the report of the number of those who were killed in Susa [the citadel](#) came [to the face of the king](#).

Esther 9:12

have slaughtered...and destroyed (ULT)

These terms mean the same thing and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: “killed” (See: [Doublet](#))

500 men (ULT)

Alternate translation: “five hundred men” (See: [Numbers](#))

with (ULT)

Alternate translation: “including”

ten sons of (ULT)

Alternate translation: “10 sons” (See: [Numbers](#))

In the rest of the provinces of the king, what have they done (ULT)

The king is making a statement, but he uses a question form to show that he is very convinced that the Jews must have also killed many people in the other provinces. Alternate translation: “what they must have done in the rest of the king’s provinces” or “they must have killed many more in the rest of the king’s provinces” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Now what is your petition? And it will be given to you. And what is your request? Again, and it will be done (ULT)

These two statements mean basically the same thing. Ahasuerus says the same thing twice to show that he is truly disposed to give Esther what she wants. If it would be confusing, you do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation. Alternate translation: “is there anything more that you want? Tell me, and I will do it for you” (See: [Parallelism](#))

And it will be given to you...and it will be done (ULT)

You can capture these parallel passive statements with one statement using an active form. You can also say who will do the action. Alternate translation: “I will do it for you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

your petition...your request (ULT)

The two abstract nouns **petition** and **request** can be expressed with a single phrase using the verb “want.” Alternate translation: “anything more that you want” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [the king](#)
- [to Esther](#)

ULT

¹² And [the king](#) said to Esther the queen, “In Susa [the citadel the Jews have slaughtered and destroyed](#) 500 men, with the ten [sons of Haman](#). In the rest of [the provinces of the king](#), what have they done? Now what is your petition? And it will be given to you. And what is your request? Again, and it will be done.”

- the queen
- the citadel
- the Jews
- have slaughtered
- and destroyed
- sons of
- the provinces of

Esther 9:13

If it is good to the king (ULT)

This is an idiom that has been used many times in the story.
Alternate translation: "if it seems like a good idea to you, O king"
(See: [Idiom](#))

let it be given (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can indicate that Esther is asking the king to do it. Alternate translation: "please allow" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

also tomorrow to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the law of today (ULT)

Alternate translation: "all the Jews who live in Susa to obey today's decree tomorrow also" or "to do tomorrow also what was decreed that they should do today"

are in Susa (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in the capital city of Susa"

let the ten sons of Haman hang (ULT)

The request is not for the king to allow the bodies to be impaled (or hanged), but instead, for the king to order this.
Alternate translation: "and have the bodies of Haman's ten sons hanged [or impaled]"

let the ten sons of Haman hang (ULT)

The purpose of this would not be to kill the sons, since they are already dead, but to demonstrate publicly that the enemies of the Jews had been completely defeated. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

let the ten sons of Haman hang (ULT)

It is implicit that since Haman's sons are already dead, what Esther is actually asking for is for their bodies to be impaled or hanged. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the bodies of Haman's ten sons" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ten sons of (ULT)

Alternate translation: "10 sons" (See: [Numbers](#))

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

¹³ And Esther said, "If it is good to the king, let it be given also tomorrow to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the law of today, and let the ten sons of Haman hang on the pole."

Translation Words - ULT

- Esther
- it is good
- the king
- to the Jews
- according to...law of
- sons of
- let...hang

Esther 9:14

And the king said for this to be done (ULT)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the king granted both of Esther’s requests” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

And a law was given in Susa (ULT)

This phrase, “in Susa,” seems to indicate that this refers to Esther’s first request. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “he issued a decree allowing the Jews in Susa to fight against their enemies again the next day” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

And a law was given in Susa (ULT)

This can be stated in active form as in the UST. (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in Susa (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in the capital city of Susa”

they hanged (ULT)

This was Esther’s second request. You can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “he ordered his servants to hang [or impale] the bodies of Haman’s ten sons” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ten sons of (ULT)

Alternate translation: “10 sons” (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [a law](#)
- [they hanged](#)
- [sons of](#)

ULT

14 And [the king](#) said for this to be done.
And [a law](#) was given in Susa, and [they hanged](#) the ten [sons of](#) Haman.

Esther 9:15**were in Susa (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "who lived in the capital city of Susa"

And...assembled themselves (ULT)

Alternate translation: "joined together"

on day 14 (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on day 14" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:7](#), [3:13](#), [8:12](#), and [9:1](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

in Susa (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in the capital city of Susa"

300 men (ULT)

Alternate translation: "three hundred men" (See: [Numbers](#))

But they did not stretch out their hand to the plunder (ULT)

Here, the expression **to stretch out a hand** means to take something from another person. Alternate translation: "they did not take the things that belonged to them" (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [their hand](#)

ULT

15 And [the Jews](#) who were in Susa assembled themselves also on day 14 of the month of Adar, and they killed 300 men in Susa. But they did not stretch out [their hand](#) to the plunder.

Esther 9:16

assembled themselves and stood for their lives (ULT)

Here, **standing** is a metaphor meaning to defend oneself and to fight back instead of running away from an enemy. See how you translated this in [8:11](#). Alternate translation: “joined together to fight back against their enemies” (See: [Metaphor](#))

assembled themselves and stood for their lives (ULT)

It’s implicit here, and stated explicitly in the next verse, that these other Jews fought their enemies only on the thirteenth day. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly here. Alternate translation, add: “on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and they rested from their enemies (ULT)

Here, **resting** is a figurative way of saying that they no longer needed to fight against their enemies because they had won the battle. Alternate translation: “they had no more trouble from their enemies” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and they slaughtered 75,000 of those who hated them (ULT)

Alternate translation: “and killed 75,000 of them”

75,000 (ULT)

Alternate translation: “seventy-five thousand” (See: [Numbers](#))

they did not stretch out their hand (ULT)

Alternate translation: “they did not take the things that belonged to them” or “they did not take the valuable things” or “they did not take their possessions”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [were in the provinces of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [assembled themselves](#)
- [their lives](#)
- [and they rested](#)
- [from their enemies](#)
- [their hand](#)

ULT

¹⁶ And the rest of [the Jews](#) who [were in the provinces of the king](#) [assembled themselves](#) and stood for [their lives](#), and they [rested from their enemies](#), and they slaughtered 75,000 of those who hated them. But they did not stretch out [their hand](#) to the plunder.

Esther 9:17

On day 13 (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on the thirteenth day” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:7](#), [3:13](#), [8:12](#), [9:1](#), and [9:15](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

On the fourteenth of it, then they made it a day of feasting and rejoicing (ULT)

Alternate translation: “they devoted the next day, the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, to joyful celebration” or “they feasted joyfully the next day, the fourteenth day of the month of Adar”

On the fourteenth of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: “on day 14” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

feasting and rejoicing (ULT)

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with “and.” The word **rejoicing** tells how they celebrated. Alternate translation: “joyful celebration” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

feasting (ULT)

This is a figure of speech in which a part of something is used to mean the whole thing. The celebrations must have included more than just eating special meals together, but the story uses those meals to refer to the entire celebrations. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [then they rested](#)
- [feasting](#)
- [and rejoicing](#)

ULT

17 On day 13 of the month of Adar, [then they rested](#). On the fourteenth of it, then they made it a day of [feasting and rejoicing](#).

Esther 9:18

But the Jews who were in Susa assembled themselves (ULT)

Alternate translation: "but the Jews who lived in the capital city of Susa"

assembled themselves (ULT)

The implication is that they did this to fight against their enemies. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Jews who lived in Susa joined together to fight against their enemies" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

on the thirteenth of it and on the fourteenth of it (ULT)

If it would be clearer, you can say which month this is. Alternate translation: "on the thirteenth and fourteenth days of the month of Adar" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

on the thirteenth of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on day 13" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

and on the fourteenth of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: "and on day 14" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

And they rested on the fifteenth of it, and they made it a day of feasting and rejoicing (ULT)

Resting is a figurative way of saying that they no longer needed to fight against their enemies because they had won the battle. Alternate translation: "they defeated them, and there was no fighting on the fifteenth day. They devoted that day to joyful celebration" (See: [Metaphor](#))

on the fifteenth of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on day 15" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

feasting and rejoicing (ULT)

This phrase means the same thing as in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "for feasting joyfully" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [But the Jews](#)
- [assembled themselves](#)
- [And they rested](#)
- [feasting](#)

ULT

¹⁸ [But the Jews](#) who were in Susa [assembled themselves](#) on the thirteenth of it and on the fourteenth of it. [And they rested](#) on the fifteenth of it, and they made it a day of [feasting and rejoicing](#).

- and rejoicing

Esther 9:19

Therefore (ULT)

This term introduces the result of the events that were described in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “for that reason” or “that is why” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the Jews, the ones of the open country, the ones who dwell in the cities of the open areas (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. They are used together to make the identification of this group clear. The first phrase means that they lived in rural areas. The second phrase means they lived in settlements that did not have walls around them, that is, in villages. You can combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “the Jews who live in villages in the countryside” (See: [Parallelism](#))

make day 14 of...and a good day (ULT)

The implication is that this explanation is being offered for the benefit of city-dwelling Jews who might wonder why rural Jews celebrate this holiday on a different day. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation, add: “rather than on the fifteenth day.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

make day 14 of...and a good day (ULT)

Alternate translation: “observe this holiday on the fourteenth day”

day...14...of (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the fourteenth day” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:7](#), [3:13](#), [8:12](#), [9:1](#), [9:15](#) and [9:17](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

for rejoicing and for feasting (ULT)

As in verses 17 and 18, this means “by celebrating joyfully” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

and a good day (ULT)

This expression generally means a day of happiness or celebration. (See: [Idiom](#))

and for the sending of gifts, a man to his friend (ULT)

Giving gifts, in this culture as in many cultures, was a way of acknowledging a special occasion. Alternate translation: “and by giving gifts to one another” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

ULT

¹⁹ Therefore, [the Jews](#), the ones of the open country, the ones who dwell in the cities of the open areas, make day 14 of the month of Adar [for rejoicing and for feasting](#) and a [good](#) day and for the sending of gifts, a man to his friend.

a man to his friend (ULT)

Here, **a man** means “a person.” The term **friend** would include family members and neighbors as well as social friends. Alternate translation: “to one another” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [for rejoicing](#)
- [and for feasting](#)
- [good](#)

Esther 9:20

And...wrote...these...things (ULT)

Alternate translation: "wrote an account of all of these events"

all the Jews who were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Alternate translation: "all the Jews everywhere in the kingdom"

the near ones and the far ones (ULT)

This is a figurative way of referring to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it in order to include everything in between. This expression means the Jews who lived in or near Susa, those who lived far away, and all Jews in between. Alternate translation: "everywhere they lived" (See: [Merism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [the provinces of](#)
- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)

ULT

²⁰ And [Mordecai](#) wrote these things. And he sent letters to all [the Jews](#) who were in all [the provinces of the king Ahasuerus](#), the near ones and the far ones,

Esther 9:21

to set up for them to be making (ULT)

Here, **to set up** means to establish, and to **make** a day means to observe it as a holiday. Alternate translation: “to establish ... as a holiday” (See: [Idiom](#))

day...14 (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the fourteenth day” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

of the month of Adar (ULT)

Adar is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. See how you translated this in [3:7](#), [3:13](#), [8:12](#), [9:1](#), [9:15](#), [9:17](#), and [9:19](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#))

day 15 of it (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the fifteenth day” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

every year by year (ULT)

This expression means “every year.” Alternation translation: “each year” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²¹ to set up for them to be making day 14 of the month of Adar and day 15 of it, every year by year,

Esther 9:22

as the days when...as (ULT)

This verse gives the reason for what Mordecai told the Jews to do in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “because those were the days when” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the Jews rested on them from their enemies (ULT)

As in verses 16, 17, and 18, **resting** here is a figurative way of saying that they no longer needed to fight against their enemies because they had won the battle. Alternate translation: “the Jews stopped fighting because they had defeated their enemies” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and...the month when (ULT)

Alternate translation: “And that was the month when”

it had turned for them from sorrow into joy and from mourning into a good day (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used to emphasize how dramatic and wonderful the change was. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like “after being very sad, they became very happy.” Alternate translation: “they changed from being very sorrowful and crying to being very joyful and celebrating” (See: [Parallelism](#))

it had turned for them from sorrow into joy and from mourning into a good day (ULT)

It is implicit that the Jews were deeply distressed because they were being threatened with destruction, and they became very happy once they were safe from all their enemies. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that here. Alternate translation: “everything had changed for them. They had been deeply distressed because they were threatened with destruction. But they became very happy once they were safe from all their enemies” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

it had turned for them from sorrow into joy (ULT)

Turning figuratively represents changing. Alternate translation: “they changed from being very sad to being joyful” (See: [Metaphor](#))

from sorrow into joy (ULT)

The abstract nouns **sorrow** and **joy** can be expressed with adjectives such as “distressed” and “happy.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

²² as the days when **the Jews rested** on them **from their enemies** and as the month when it had turned for them from sorrow **into joy and from mourning** into a **good** day, in order to make them days of **feasting and rejoicing** and sending of gifts, a man to his friend and gifts to the needy.

in order to make them days of (ULT)

These are things that Mordecai is telling the Jews to do in his letters. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that here. Alternate translation: “so Mordecai told them to observe those days with” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

feasting and rejoicing (ULT)

As in verses 17, 18, and 19, this phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with “and.” The word “rejoicing” tells how the celebrating was to be done. Alternate translation: “joyful celebration” or “feasting joyfully” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

and sending of gifts, a man to his friend (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse 19. Review the notes there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: “and by giving gifts to one another”

a man to his friend (ULT)

Here, **a man** means “a person.” The term **friend** would include family members and neighbors as well as social friends. Alternate translation: “to one another” (See: [Idiom](#))

and gifts to the needy (ULT)

In this culture as in many others, helping the poor was also a way of acknowledging a special occasion. The idea was that no one should miss out on the benefits of the wonderful thing that God had done. Alternate translation: “Mordecai also told them that they should help the poor on those days” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

and gifts to the needy (ULT)

This is also something that Mordecai is telling the Jews to do in his letters. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that here. Alternate translation: “Mordecai also told them that they should give gifts to the poor on those days” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [rested](#)
- [from their enemies](#)
- [into joy](#)
- [and rejoicing](#)
- [and from mourning](#)
- [good](#)
- [feasting](#)

Esther 9:23

And...accepted...what Mordecai had written to them (ULT)

The implication seems to be that the Jews were glad to do what Mordecai had instructed, because they had already been doing it. You can add a word such as “readily” to indicate this. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²³ And [the Jews](#) accepted what they had begun to do and what [Mordecai](#) had written to them.

And...accepted (ULT)

Alternate translation: “agreed”

what...they had begun to do (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the Jews were already celebrating those days that way.” You can put this information first, to present the events in logical and chronological order. (See: [Order of Events](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [Mordecai](#)

Esther 9:24

For (ULT)

This introduces the reason for the events previously described. The story will now summarize everything that happened previously. The Jews were to celebrate because they were able to fight back when Haman plotted to destroy all of them. Alternate translation: “they would celebrate these days to remember” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

ULT

²⁴ For Haman, the [son of Hammedatha](#), the Agagite, [the adversary of all the Jews](#), had plotted concerning [the Jews to annihilate them](#). And he had cast a Pur (which is “[the lot](#)”) to vex them [and to destroy them](#).

For (ULT)

If it would be clearer in your language, you can say here what this reason is explaining. Alternate translation: “they would establish those days as a holiday in order to remember how” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the adversary of all the Jews (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Haman. Alternate translation: “the enemy of all the Jews” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

had plotted concerning the Jews to annihilate them (ULT)

Alternate translation: “had tried to carry out a plan that would destroy the Jews”

And he had cast a Pur (which is “the lot (ULT)

You can say explicitly why Haman did this. Alternate translation: “he threw Pur (that is, he threw lots) to find out what would be the best day” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

a Pur (which is “the lot (ULT)

As in 3:7, the storyteller is giving both the Persian and the Hebrew name because this is the story behind the Festival of Purim, which takes its name from “Pur.” So this is not repetition for emphasis. You can put in the Persian name and then the name for “lot” in your own language to show that the storyteller is doing this. Alternate translation: “a Pur (that is, a lot)” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

to vex them and to destroy them (ULT)

The terms **vex** and **destroy** mean basically the same thing. They are used together to emphasize the degree to which Haman’s deadly plans were distressing to the Jews. If it would be clearer in your language, you can combine the terms and express the emphasis with a word like “completely.” Alternate translation: “and completely destroy them” (See: [Hendiadys](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [son of](#)
- [the adversary of](#)
- [the Jews](#)

- the Jews
- to annihilate them
- and to destroy them
- the lot

Esther 9:25

But when she came to the face of the king (ULT)

In this summary, many details are communicated implicitly. **She** means Esther. Also, this verse continues the account of what this celebration is commemorating. If it would be clearer in your language, you can make these things explicit. Alternate translation: “the celebration also commemorated how Esther dared to come into the king’s presence without being summoned, and she won his favor” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²⁵ But when she came to the face of the king, he said with the letter, “Let his evil plot that he plotted concerning the Jews return on his head, and let them hang him and his sons on the pole.”

to the face of the king (ULT)

Here, **face** is a metonym meaning the presence of a person. This phrase means that Esther came into the king’s presence. Alternate translation: “into the king’s presence” or “before the king” (See: [Metonymy](#))

he said with the letter (ULT)

Once again, there is much information that is implicit here. If it would be clearer in your language, you can make it explicit. Alternate translation: “the king gave Mordecai the authority to send a letter throughout the empire saying that the Jews could defend themselves against their enemies” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Let his evil plot that he plotted concerning the Jews return on his head (ULT)

His, he, and **him** in this sentence refer to Haman. **Return on his head** is an idiom that means that what a person was planning to do to someone else happened to that person instead. Use an idiom with that meaning in your language. Alternate translation: “the wicked plan that Haman developed against the Jews will be done to him” (See: [Idiom](#))

and let them hang him and his sons on the pole (ULT)

The letter itself did not say this. The story is summarizing the events in compressed form. It is speaking of the letter as if it were a person who could take action and give commands like this, but it was the king who gave the command. Alternate translation: “the king also ordered his servants to hang [or impale] Haman on a wooden pole [or hang Haman on a gallows]. When the Jews in Susa killed his ten sons, the king had their bodies hanged [or impaled] as well” (See: [Personification](#))

the pole (ULT)

See how you translated this in [2:23](#). Review the note there if that would be helpful. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- to the face of
- the king
- evil
- the Jews
- his head

- and let them hang
- his sons

Esther 9:26

Therefore (ULT)

This introduces the reason why the Jews gave the name “Purim” to this celebration. Alternate translation: “for that reason” or “that is why” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

they called these days “Purim (ULT)

They means the Jews. Alternate translation: “the Jews called these days Purim, like the word Pur” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Purim (ULT)

This is the name of the festival that commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people in ancient Persia from Haman’s plot to destroy and kill all the Jews in a single day. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

on account of the name of Pur (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the Persian word for ‘lot’ is ‘Pur’” This is information that the original audience needed to understand how this celebration got its name. You can put this first in the verse because it explains what comes next. (See: [Background Information](#))

the name of Pur (ULT)

It can be stated clearly what “Pur” means. Alternate translation: “the word Pur, which means ‘lot’” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Therefore (ULT)

The story has just given the reason why the holiday is called Purim. Now it is going to give another reason. It will be explaining why the Jews added this holiday to their calendar, in addition to the festivals that were commanded in the Law of Moses. The next verse describes them adding the holiday. This verse gives the reasons why they did that. Alternate translation: “because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

Therefore...all the words of this letter (ULT)

This is a reference to the letter that Mordecai wrote, as described in verses 20–22. Alternate translation: “because Mordecai wrote to them to tell them to observe this holiday”

and what they had seen concerning this and what had come upon them (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used to emphasize what a vivid experience it was to live through the events that this story describes. If it would be clearer in your language, you can combine the phrases and express the emphasis with a word like “amazing.” Alternate translation: “the amazing things that had happened to them” (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

²⁶ Therefore, they called these days “Purim,” on account of the [name of Pur](#). Therefore, on account of all the words of this letter and what they had seen concerning this and what had come upon them,

and what they had seen concerning this and what had come upon them (ULT)

These phrases say generally “this” and “what,” but they are referring to the specific events the story has related. If it would be clearer in your language, you can describe these things specifically. Alternate translation: “because the Jews had been able to destroy the enemies who had wanted to destroy them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

and what they had seen concerning this and what had come upon them (ULT)

You can put this first, before the information about Mordecai’s letter, because it happened first. You can say “then” when you tell about the letter. (See: [Order of Events](#))

and what had come upon them (ULT)

This expression means “what had happened to them.” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [name of](#)

Esther 9:27

the Jews set up and accepted for themselves and for their seed and for all those who unite themselves to them...to be making these two days (ULT)

Alternate translation: “the Jews said that they would tell their descendants and those people who became Jews to be certain to celebrate this festival”

ULT

²⁷ the Jews set up and accepted for themselves and for their seed and for all those who unite themselves to them (and it will not pass away) to be making these two days according to their writing and according to their appointed time every year by year.

the Jews set up and accepted (ULT)

“Set up” and “accepted” mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that the Jews definitely agreed to do this. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: “agreed to establish” (See: [Doublet](#))

and for their seed (ULT)

As in [6:13](#), **seed** is a metaphor meaning “offspring.” Alternate translation: “and for their descendants” or “and for their offspring” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and it will not pass away (ULT)

This expression means that the Jews would never stop celebrating the feast of Purim every year. You can put this last since it applies to the whole verse. Alternate translation: “always” or “forever” (See: [Idiom](#))

to be making these two days (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to establish those two days as holidays and to observe them.” To present things in chronological order, you can put this before the reference to Jewish descendants and converts to Judaism. (See: [Order of Events](#))

according to their writing (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in the way that Mordecai had told them to do in the letter”

and according to their appointed time (ULT)

This means the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, as specified in [9:21](#). Alternate translation: “on those exact days of the month of Adar”

every year by year (ULT)

This expression means “each and every year.” Alternate translation: “every single year” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- the Jews
- their seed

Esther 9:28

And these days are remembered and are made (ULT)

This gives the result of the reasons described in verses 26 and 27.
Alternate translation: “therefore” or “that is why” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

And these days are remembered and are made (ULT)

Remembered and **made** mean basically the same thing here. The repetition is used to emphasize that the Jews have been faithful in doing this. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the general meaning by saying something like “So the Jews have celebrated these days.” Alternate translation: “therefore they said that they would remember and celebrate on those two days” (See: [Doublet](#))

And these days are remembered and are made (ULT)

This expression uses two passive forms, but you could say the same thing using active forms. Alternate translation: “so the Jews have celebrated and observed these days” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in every generation by generation (ULT)

This expression means “in each and every generation.” Alternate translation: “in every single generation” (See: [Idiom](#))

family by family (ULT)

This expression means “every family.” Alternate translation: “every Jewish family” (See: [Idiom](#))

province by province, and city by city (ULT)

This could be a figure of speech that refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it in order to include everything in between those parts. Generally speaking, a province would be the largest division of the empire that would identify a person’s location, and a city would be the smallest. Particularly, since the Jews would continue to celebrate Purim after the Persian empire and its provinces no longer exist, you might choose to express the meaning of this figure of speech in a more general way. Alternate translation: “everywhere they have lived” (See: [Merism](#))

province by province (ULT)

This expression means “every province.” Alternate translation: “in every single province” (See: [Idiom](#))

and city by city (ULT)

This expression means “every city.” Alternate translation: “in every single city” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²⁸ And these days are remembered and are made in every [generation by generation, family by family, province by province](#), and city by city. And these days of Purim will not pass away from the midst of [the Jews](#), and their remembrance will not come to an end [from their seed](#).

And these days of Purim will not pass away from the midst of the Jews, and their remembrance will not come to an end from their seed (ULT)

As in verse 27, this expression means that the Jews will never stop celebrating the feast of Purim. You can say this positively. Alternate translation: “will always observe the Festival of Purim faithfully” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

And these days of Purim will not pass away from the midst of the Jews, and their remembrance will not come to an end from their seed (ULT)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used to emphasize that the Jews will definitely not stop celebrating Purim each year. If it would be clearer in your language, you can combine the phrases and express the emphasis with a word like “definitely” or “certainly” or “always.” Alternate translation: “the Jews and their descendants will certainly always continue to celebrate this festival of Purim” (See: [Parallelism](#))

from the midst of the Jews (ULT)

Alternate translation: “within the Jewish community”

and their remembrance will not come to an end (ULT)

Alternate translation: “will always observe”

from their seed (ULT)

As in verse 27, **seed** is a metaphor meaning “offspring.” Alternate translation: “and for their descendants” or “and for their offspring” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [generation](#)
- [by generation](#)
- [family](#)
- [by family](#)
- [province](#)
- [by province](#)
- [the Jews](#)
- [from their seed](#)

Esther 9:29

the daughter of Abihail (ULT)

This information reminds the reader who Esther was. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

Abihail (ULT)

This man was Esther's father and Mordecai's uncle. See how you translated his name in [2:15](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

and Mordecai (ULT)

Since the Hebrew verb wrote is feminine singular, it means that the letter was from Esther. The mention of **Mordecai** here probably means that Mordecai helped her to write the letter. Alternate translation: "with Mordecai"

the Jew (ULT)

This phrase gives information about Mordecai to remind the reader. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

And...wrote...with all power (ULT)

Alternate translation: "using her royal authority" or "using the authority that she had as queen"

to set up this second letter of Purim (ULT)

This second letter of Purim could refer to: (1) this letter that Esther is writing, which is the second letter that the Jews will receive about the festival of Purim. Alternate translation: "an additional letter about Purim with her authority" or (2) the second letter that Mordecai wrote (see verses 20-22), creating the festival of Purim. Alternate translation: "to confirm what Mordecai had written about Purim in his second letter" In either case, this letter from Esther is to add her royal authority to what Mordecai had already written. (See: [Numbers](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [and Mordecai](#)
- [the Jew](#)
- [power](#)

ULT

²⁹ And [Esther the queen](#), the daughter of Abihail, [and Mordecai the Jew](#) wrote with all [power](#) to set up this second letter of Purim.

Esther 9:30

And he sent letters (ULT)

While this says “**he**,” in context it refers to the letter that Esther wrote with Mordecai’s help. Alternate translation: “they sent copies of this second letter” or “Mordecai ordered messengers to take copies of the letter” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

ULT

³⁰ And he sent letters to all [the Jews](#), to 127 [provinces](#), the [kingdom of Ahasuerus](#), words of [peace and truth](#)

to all the Jews, to 127 provinces, the kingdom of Ahasuerus (ULT)

These three phrases all mean the same thing. The repetition emphasizes that Esther and Mordecai sent this second letter out comprehensively throughout the empire. Alternate translation: “to all the Jews throughout the entire empire of Ahasuerus” (See: [Parallelism](#))

127 provinces (ULT)

The letter was not sent to the provinces as geographical territories, but to the Jews who lived in them. The Jews are being described by something associated with them, the places where they lived. (See: [Metonymy](#))

127 provinces (ULT)

Alternate translation: “one hundred and twenty-seven provinces” (See: [Numbers](#))

words of peace and truth (ULT)

The abstract nouns **peace** and **truth** can be expressed in other ways. Alternate translation: “encouraging the Jews that they are now safe and can live peacefully” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

words of peace and truth (ULT)

The Hebrew word translated as **truth** here also refers to things that are “sure” or “secure.” When “peace” and “truth” are paired together, they can refer to a peaceful, stable political environment, as in 2 Kings 20:19 and Jeremiah 33:6. Alternate translation: “with a message that assured them of their peaceful and stable situation”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Jews](#)
- [provinces](#)
- [kingdom of](#)
- [the...Ahasuerus](#)
- [peace](#)
- [and truth](#)

Esther 9:31

to set up these days of Purim at their appointed times according to what Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had set up for them (ULT)

Alternate translation: “in this second letter, Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther confirmed that Purim should be celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar”

ULT

³¹ to set up these days of Purim at their appointed times according to what [Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen](#) had set up for them and according to what they had set up concerning [their lives](#) and concerning [their seed](#), the matters of [the fasts and their outcry](#).

the Jew (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Mordecai. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

and according to what they had set up concerning their lives and concerning their seed, the matters of the fasts and their outcry (ULT)

This is referring to background information that the original audience would have known. They would have known what the fasting was about. It could be either: (1) fasting as a part of Purim. We know that some Jews fasted on the 13th day of the month of Adar to commemorate the day that Haman intended to destroy them, or (2) other times of fasting. Ever since the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews had been fasting and mourning in the fifth month of the year to show their sorrow over what had happened. (The story refers to the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 2:6.) You could put this information in a footnote if it would help your readers to understand this.

and concerning their seed (ULT)

Here, **seed** is a metaphor meaning the offspring or descendants of the Jews. Alternate translation: “and for their descendants” or “and for their offspring” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Mordecai](#)
- [the Jew](#)
- [and Esther](#)
- [the queen](#)
- [their lives](#)
- [their seed](#)
- [the fasts](#)
- [and their outcry](#)

Esther 9:32

and it was written in the book (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: "and the royal scribes made an official record of it" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [And the decree of](#)
- [Esther](#)

ULT

³² [And the decree of Esther](#) set up these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.

Esther 10

Esther 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Mordecai's new position

Through the power of Yahweh, Mordecai was given a new position in the Persian Empire. Mordecai was now the second in command in the kingdom of Persia and he used his position to help other Jews.

Esther 10:1

And the king Ahasuerus set (ULT)

This introduces a new event in the story. Use a natural way to introduce a new event in your language. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

ULT

¹ And [the king Ahasuerus](#) set a [tribute](#) on the land and the islands of the sea.

And...set...a tribute (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Then ... levied a tax"

on the land and the islands of the sea (ULT)

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the greatness of Mordecai. It does that by showing that he was second in command to a very powerful emperor. Referring to both the land and the sea is a way to include everything that lives in a very large area of the earth. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the general meaning by saying something like "everyone throughout his empire." Alternate translation: "on all the people in the empire ... even the people who lived on the islands in the Mediterranean Sea" or "on everyone throughout the land and even the far-away islands" (See: [Merism](#))

and the islands of the sea (ULT)

The phrase **the islands of the sea** likely refers to the fact that the Persian kings had conquered territories reaching all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. If it would be clearer in your language, you can say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "which reached all the way to the Mediterranean Sea." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

on the land and the islands of the sea (ULT)

These geographic features were not expected to pay the tax. The land and coastlands represent the people living there. The story is describing those people figuratively by reference to something associated with them, the places where they live. (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the king](#)
- [Ahasuerus](#)
- [a tribute](#)

Esther 10:2

And all the deeds of his power and his might (ULT)

Power and **might** mean essentially the same thing. They are used together to emphasize how powerful King Ahasuerus was. If it is more natural in your language, you can use one word with that meaning, with another word that gives it emphasis. Alternate translation: “all that he achieved because of how very powerful he was” or “all the great things that he did because of his great power” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

² And all the deeds of [his power](#) and his might, with the full account of the greatness of [Mordecai](#) to which [the king](#) had made him great, are they not written in the book of the events of days [for the kings of Media and Persia](#)?

his power and his might (ULT)

The abstract nouns **power** and **might** can be translated with an adjective. See the UST. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

with the full account of (ULT)

“They also wrote a full account”

the greatness of Mordecai (ULT)

Alternate translation: “of how important Mordecai was” or “of how the king had honored Mordecai for the great things he had done”

had made him great (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 3:1 and 5:11. Alternate translation: “had promoted him”

are they not written in the book of the events of days for the kings of Media and Persia (ULT)

This is actually a statement. The question form is used to emphasize the certainty of the statement. If questions are not used this way in your language, then use a statement instead, as in the UST. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

are they not written (ULT)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: “The king’s scribes made a record...” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

are they not written (ULT)

Because it comes first logically, you can put this first in the verse if that would be clearer in your language.

the book of the events of days for the kings of Media and Persia (ULT)

See how you translated this in 2:23. Alternate translation: “the royal record books of Media and Persia” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- his power
- Mordecai
- the king
- for the kings of
- Media
- and Persia

Esther 10:3

For (ULT)

This word indicates that this verse will give the reason why the scribes made a record about Mordecai. (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

the Jew (ULT)

This phrase gives clarifying information about Mordecai. (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

was second to the king Ahasuerus (ULT)

Alternate translation: “was the second most important person after King Ahasuerus himself”

and great among the Jews (ULT)

Alternate translation: “and a great leader of the Jews”

his brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** is a figurative way of describing fellow members of the same people group. Alternate translation: “fellow Jews” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

seeking good for his people and speaking peace to all its seed (ULT)

These two phrases basically mean the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how hard Mordecai worked for the good of his people. If it would be clearer in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like, “He worked hard so his people and their descendants would prosper.” (See: [Parallelism](#))

seeking good for his people and speaking peace to all its seed (ULT)

The abstract nouns **good** and **peace** refer in this context to prosperity and security. You could translate these ideas with verbs, for example, you could say, “He worked hard to make sure that his people would prosper and their descendants would be secure.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

seeking good for his people (ULT)

Seeking is a figurative way to describe actively trying to do something or work hard for something. (See: [Metaphor](#))

and speaking peace to all its seed (ULT)

Speaking peace is a figurative way of describing actions that benefit the general welfare of others. (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

³ For **Mordecai the Jew** was second to the king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and favored by the multitude of his brothers, seeking good for his people and speaking peace to all its seed.

to all its seed (ULT)

Here, **seed** figuratively means “descendants.” Even if you combine the two parallel phrases, you can still convey the idea of “down through the generations” with a word such as “always.” Alternate translation: “and for their descendants” or “and for their offspring” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Mordecai
- the Jew
- among the Jews
- to the king
- Ahasuerus
- his brothers
- seeking
- good
- for his people
- peace



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Version 24

Abstract Nouns

Description

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, or situations. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it.

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

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

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 between those ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, weight, and many, many more.

Some languages, such as Biblical Greek and English, use abstract nouns a lot. They provide a way of giving names to actions or qualities. With names, people who speak these languages can talk about the concepts as though they were things. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin."

But some languages do not use abstract nouns very much. In these languages, speakers may not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," but they would express the same meaning in other ways. For example, they would express, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned," by using verb phrases instead of nouns for those ideas.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas. Instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will use other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs to express the meaning of the abstract noun. For example, "What is its **weight**?" could be expressed as "How much does it **weigh**?" or "How **heavy** is it?"

Examples From the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

The abstract noun "salvation" here refers to being saved.

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

The abstract noun "slowness" refers to the lack of speed with which something is done.

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun. Alternative translations are indented below the Scripture example.

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

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

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

But **being godly** and **content** is very **beneficial**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **are godly** and **content**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **honor and obey God** and when we are **happy with what we have**.

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

Today the people in this house **have been saved** ... Today God **has saved** the people in this house ...

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

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **moving slowly** to be.

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

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

(Go back to: Esther 1:2; 1:3; 1:4; 1:7; 1:8; 1:9; 1:11; 1:19; 2:16; 2:17; 3:1; 3:15; 5:1; 5:6; 5:7; 5:11; 6:8; 7:2; 7:3; 7:4; 7:7; 8:6; 9:2; 9:12; 9:22; 9:30; 10:2; 10:3)

Active or Passive

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

- Active: **My father** built the house in 2010.
- Passive: **The house** was built in 2010.

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

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

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

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 bolded the subject.

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

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

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

Purposes for the Passive

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

Translation Principles Regarding the Passive

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

Examples From the Bible

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

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

When the men of the city arose early in the morning, and see, the altar of Baal **was torn down**. (Judges 6:28a ULT)

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

The king's servants gave Jeremiah a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

- (2) Use the same verb in an active sentence, and do not tell who did the action. Instead, use a generic expression like "they" or "people" or "someone."

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

It would be better for him if **they were to put** a millstone around his neck and **throw** him into the sea.

It would be better for him if **someone were to put** a heavy stone around his neck and **throw** him into the sea.

- (3) Use a different verb in an active sentence.

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

He **received** a loaf of bread every day from the street of the bakers.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Abstract Nouns

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

(Go back to: Esther 1:5; 1:19; 1:20; 2:1; 2:3; 2:6; 2:8; 2:13; 2:14; 2:16; 2:19; 2:22; 2:23; 3:6; 3:7; 3:9; 3:11; 3:12; 3:13; 3:14; 3:15; 4:4; 4:8; 4:11; 4:16; 5:3; 5:6; 5:12; 6:1; 6:2; 6:3; 6:8; 6:9; 7:2; 7:3; 7:4; 7:7; 8:5; 8:9; 8:13; 8:14; 9:11; 9:12; 9:13; 9:14; 9:28; 9:32; 10:2)

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Assumed knowledge is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker does not give the audience this information because he believes that they already know it.

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?*

When the speaker does give the audience information, he can do so in two ways. The speaker gives explicit information in what he states directly. Implicit Information is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from other things he says.

Description

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

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

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

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

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

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

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

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in **Tyre and Sidon** which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But

I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the **day of judgment** than for you.
(Matthew 11:21-22 ULT)

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes to live in**, and the birds of the sky **have nests to live in**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."

It will be more tolerable for **Tyre and Sidon** at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.

>

At the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for **those cities of Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked**, than it will be for you. or At

the day of judgment, It will be more tolerable for those **wicked cities, Tyre and Sidon**, than for you.

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

The 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 bread.

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

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

The implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, then, like Jesus, he would have to live without a house.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but **I, the Son of Man, have no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live.**"

It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.

At the day of judgment, God will **punish Tyre and Sidon**, cities whose people were very wicked, **less severely than he will punish you.**
or:

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

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

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo\]\]](#)

(Go back to: Esther 1:4; 1:5; 1:6; 1:7; 1:8; 1:11; 1:12; 1:15; 1:17; 1:18; 1:19; 1:20; 1:22; 2:1; 2:2; 2:6; 2:8; 2:12; 2:13; 2:14; 2:15; 2:17; 2:18; 2:19; 2:21; 3:1; 3:2; 3:3; 3:4; 3:6; 3:7; 3:8; 3:10; 3:12; 3:13; 3:15; Notes; 4:1; 4:3; 4:4; 4:6; 4:11; 4:17; Notes; 5:1; 5:2; 5:5; 5:6; 5:9; 5:11; 5:13; 5:14; 6:1; 6:2; 6:4; 6:5; 6:8; 6:9; 6:10; 6:13; 6:14; Notes; 7:2; 7:7; 7:8; 7:9; 8:1; 8:2; 8:3; 8:8; 8:9; 8:10; 8:12; 8:15; 8:16; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 9:4; 9:7; 9:13; 9:14; 9:16; 9:18; 9:19; 9:22; 9:23; 9:24; 9:25; 9:26; 10:1)

Background Information

Description

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

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

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

[Order of Events](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

Example — The bolded phrases in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because **their village was going to have a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day!** They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope **they had brought with them** and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter’s cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin’s pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are: “their village was going to have a feast the next day,” “He once killed three wild pigs in one day,” and “that they had brought with them.”

Often background information uses “be” verbs like “was” and “were,” rather than action verbs. Examples of these are “their village was going to have a feast the next day,” and “Peter **was** the best hunter in the village.”

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are “because,” “once,” and “had.”

A writer may use background information:

- to help their listeners be interested in the story
- to help their listeners understand something in the story
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- to tell the setting of a story
 - > * Setting includes:
 - > * where the story takes place
 - > * when the story takes place
 - > * who is present when the story begins
 - > * what is happening when the story begins

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

Examples From the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram **was 86 years old** when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:15-16 ULT)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, **was about 30 years of age**. He **was the son** (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULT)

And Jesus himself was beginning about 30 years old. He was the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli,

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story resumes in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Then **it happened on a Sabbath** that he was **going through the grain fields**, and his **disciples were picking and eating the heads of grain**, rubbing them in their hands. But some of the Pharisees said ... (Luke 6:1-2a ULT)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the phrase, "But some of the Pharisees said"

Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study how people tell stories in your language. Observe how your language marks background information. You may need to write down some stories in order to study this. Observe what kinds of verbs your language uses for background information and what kinds of words or other markers signal that something is background information. Do these same things when you translate, so that your translation is clear and natural and people can understand it easily.

(1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.

(2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULT English translations.

And Jesus himself **was** beginning about 30 years old. He **was** the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULT)

English uses the word "and" to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb "was" shows that it is background information.

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, **having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother**, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The bolded phrases happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb "had" in "had done" shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

(2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first.

Hagar gave birth to Abram’s son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. **Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.** (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

“**When Abram was 86 years old,** Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael.”

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, **having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother,** and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done,** added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

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

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

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/grammar-connect-words-phrases\]\]](#)
[Introduction of a New Event](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:10](#); [1:11](#); [1:13](#); [2:6](#); [2:7](#); [2:8](#); [2:12](#); [4:5](#); [9:26](#))

Biblical Distance

Description

The following terms are the most common measures for distance or length that were originally used in the Bible. Most of these are based on the sizes of the hand and forearm.

- The **handbreadth** was the width of the palm of a man’s hand.
- The **span** or handspan was the width of a man’s hand with the fingers spread out.
- The **cubit** was the length of a man’s forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.
- The **“long” cubit** is used only in Ezekiel 40-48. It is the length of a normal cubit plus a span.
- The **stadium** (plural, **stadia**) referred to a certain footrace that was about 185 meters in length. Some older English versions translated this word as “furlong,” which referred to the average length of a plowed field.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the lengths and distances that are in the Bible?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-decimal]]
 [[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-fraction]]

The metric values in the table below are close but not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact length from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Metric Measure
handbreadth	8 centimeters
span	23 centimeters
cubit	46 centimeters
“long” cubit	54 centimeters
stadia	185 meters

Translation Principles

The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.

Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.

Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

If you do not use the Biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one cubit as “.46 meters” or even as “46 centimeters,” readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say “half a meter,” “45 centimeters,” or “50 centimeters.”

Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word “about” to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, Luke 24:13 says that Emmaus was 60 stadia from Jerusalem. This can be translated as “about ten kilometers” from Jerusalem.

When God tells people how long something should be, and when people make things according to those lengths, do not use “about” in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how long something should be.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)
- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 25:10 below.

They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half. (Exodus 25:10 ULT)

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

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half kubits**; its width will be **one kubit and a half**; and its height will be **one kubit and a half**.”

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

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement. For example, if you measure things using the standard meter length, you could translate it as below.

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

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

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half cubits (one meter)**; its width will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**; and its height will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**.”

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

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

The footnotes would look like:

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

The footnotes would look like:

[1] two and a half cubits
[2] one cubit and a half

(Go back to: [Esther 5:14; 7:9](#))

Biblical Money

Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of money in the Bible?*

In early Old Testament times, people weighed their metals, such as silver and gold, and would pay a certain weight of that metal in order to buy things. Later, people started to make coins that each contained a standard amount of a certain metal. The daric is one such coin. In New Testament times, people used silver and copper coins.

The two tables below show some of the most well-known units of money found in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). The table for Old Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it weighed. The table for New Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it was worth in terms of a day's wage.

Unit in OT	Metal	Weight
daric	gold coin	8.4 grams
shekel	various metals	11 grams
talent	various metals	33 kilograms

Unit in NT	Metal	Day's Wage
denarius/denarii	silver coin	1 day
drachma	silver coin	1 day
mite	copper coin	1/64 day
shekel	silver coin	4 days
talent	silver	6,000 days

Translation Principle

Do not use modern money values since these change from year to year. Using them will cause the Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate.

Translation Strategies

The value of most money in the Old Testament was based on its weight. So when translating these weights in the Old Testament, see Biblical Weight. The strategies below are for translating the value of money in the New Testament.

- (1) Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)
- (2) Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many coins were used.
- (3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.
- (4) Use the biblical term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

(5) Use the biblical term and explain it in a footnote.

Translation Strategies Applied

The translations strategies are all applied to Luke 7:41 below.

█ The one owed 500 denarii, and the other, 50. (Luke 7:41b ULT)

Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)

█ "The one owed **500 denali**, and the other, **50**."

Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many pieces or coins were used.

█ "The one owed **500 silver coins**, and the other, **50**."

(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.

█ "The one owed **500 days' wages**, and the other, **50**."

(4) Use the Bible term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

█ "The one owed **500 denarii** 1, and the other owed **50 denarii**. 2"

The footnotes would look like:

█ [1] 500 days' wages [2] 50 days' wages

(5) Use the Bible term and explain it in a footnote.

█ "The one owed **500 denarii**,¹ and the other, **50**." (Luke 7:41 ULT)

█ ^[1] A denarius was the amount of silver that people could earn in one day of work.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate\]\]](#)
[Translate Unknowns](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 3:9](#))

Connect — Background Information

Time Relationship

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate clauses that give background information?*

Background Clause

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

When Solomon was old, he also worshiped their gods. (OBS Story 18 Frame 3)

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

And his parents went **every year** to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the feast. (Luke 2:41-42 ULT)

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

And it came about that, **while** they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. (Luke 2:6 ULT)

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

And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of

Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.
(Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

This example begins with five background clauses (marked by commas), signalled as background by the words “while” and “during.” Then the main event happens: “the word of God came to John.”

Translation Strategies

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

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

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

Example of Differences in Time Relationship Connecting Words:

Category	Example
Background setting	Yahweh’s word was rare in those days ;
Background repeated	there was no frequent prophetic vision.
Introduction of main event	At that time, when Eli
Background	whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well,
Simultaneous background	was lying down in his own bed.
Simultaneous background	The lamp of God had not yet gone out,
Simultaneous background	and Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh,
Simultaneous background	where the ark of God was.
Main event	Yahweh called to Samuel,
Sequential event	who said, “Here I am.” (1 Sam 3:1-4 ULT)

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

(Go back to: [Esther 6:4](#); [6:14](#); [7:8](#))

Connect — Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a contrast relationship?*

Contrast Relationship

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave with the humble way that he behaves. The contrast is marked by the word “yet.”

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

It was unexpected that the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would be able to conquer and lay claim to the promised land.

Translation Strategies

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

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

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

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

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

The hill country will also be yours. It is a forest, **but** you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders. They have chariots of iron, and they are strong, **but** you will drive out the Canaanites.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

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

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

(Go back to: [Esther 2:15](#); [3:15](#); [4:11](#); [5:10](#); [6:13](#))

Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Logical Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the reason-result relationship?*

Reason-and-Result Relationships

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

The **result** is that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The **reason** is because he rested on the seventh day from his work.

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

The **result** is that the poor are blessed. The **reason** is that the kingdom of God is theirs.

But he raised up in their place their sons that Joshua circumcised, being uncircumcised, **because** they had not been circumcised on the way. (Joshua 5:7 ULT)

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

- (1) The kingdom of God belongs to you who are poor. **Therefore**, the poor are blessed.
- (2) Blessed are the poor, **because** yours is the kingdom of God.
- (3) **The reason that** the poor are blessed **is because** yours is the kingdom of God.

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

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

Since he was not able to find out anything for certain because of the noise, he ordered that he be brought into the fortress. (Acts 21:34b ULT)

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

(Go back to: [Esther 1:8](#); [1:11](#); [1:13](#); [1:17](#); [2:10](#); [2:11](#); [3:2](#); [3:4](#); [3:7](#); [4:2](#); [5:14](#); [8:6](#); [8:8](#); [8:9](#); [9:4](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#); [9:24](#); [9:26](#); [9:28](#); [10:3](#))

Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Time Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How do I translate clauses with a sequential time relationship?*

Sequential Clause

Description

A sequential clause is a time relation that connects two events in which one happens and then the other happens.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate sequences of events in different ways; some use ordering, some use connecting words, some even use relative tense (Relative tense is a tense that refers to a time in relation to a reference point in the context.) Connecting words that may indicate sequence are words such as “then,” “later,” “after,” “afterward,” “before,” “first,” and “when.” Translators need to be certain that they communicate the order of the events in a way that is natural in their language. This may require ordering clauses differently than in the original languages.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

When Joseph came to his brothers, they kidnapped him and sold him to some slave traders.
(OBS Story 8 Frame 2)

First Joseph came to his brothers, and then they kidnapped and sold him. We know this because of the connecting word “**when**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but **after** I ate it, my stomach became bitter.
(Revelation 10:10b ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs first, and the event of the last clause occurs later. We know this because of the connecting word “**after**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs after the event of the second clause. First the land they dread will be desolate, and then the child will know to refuse evil and choose good. We know this because of the connecting word “**before**.” However, stating the clauses in this order may communicate the wrong order of events in your language. The translator may have to change the order so that the clauses come in the order that they happen. Or it may be possible to keep the order of the original language text and mark the ordering of sequence so that it is clear to the readers. You (the translator) need to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Here the general connector “**and**” connects four events. These are sequential events—each happens after the one before it. We know this because that is the only way that these events would happen. So in English, the general

connector “and” is enough to make the sequence clear for events such as these. You will need to decide if this also communicates this sequence clearly and correctly in your language.

Translation Strategies

If the sequence of events is clear in your language, then translate the sequence as it is.

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.
- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Then Mary arose in those days. **Then** she quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah. **Then** she entered into the house of Zechariah, **and then** she greeted Elizabeth.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

For the time will come when the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, **but even before that time**, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.

- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

For the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.

For more about sequences of events, see [Sequence of Events](#).

(Go back to: [Esther 2:19](#); [2:23](#); [3:1](#); [5:2](#))

Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

Time Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate clauses with a simultaneous time relationship?*

Simultaneous Clause

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

But in truth I say to you that there were many widows in Israel **during** the days of Elijah. (Luke 4:25b ULT)

The connecting word “**during**” tells us clearly that two things happened at the same time, but one event did not cause the other.

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

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

While they were looking intensely into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

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

(Go back to: [Esther 1:9](#); [2:6](#); [2:8](#); [2:19](#); [2:21](#))

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

This page answers the question: *When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that it is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
 - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the sentence is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
 - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples From the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

▮ The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

... for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is the reason that Abraham did not think that Sarah could bear a son. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age, and he was not telling anyone something new about her age. He simply did not think that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.
- (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

>

Because idols are worthless, I hate those who serve them.

... for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

... for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.

Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

>

Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

I will call on Yahweh, **who is worthy to be praised**. (2 Samuel 22:4a ULT) There is only one Yahweh. The phrase “who is worthy to be praised” gives a reason for calling on Yahweh.

I will call on Yahweh, because **he is worthy to be praised**

(2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information.

You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)

You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

Receiving my love, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Double Negatives](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 2:15](#); [3:10](#); [5:13](#); [8:1](#); [9:10](#); [9:24](#); [9:29](#); [9:31](#); [10:3](#))

Double Negatives

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each express the meaning of “not.” Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

This page answers the question: *What are double negatives?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples in English are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not,” such as the bolded parts of these words: “**un**happy,” “**im**possible,” and “**useless**.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

We did this **not** because we have **no** authority ... (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)

And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as Spanish, a double negative emphasizes the negative. The Spanish sentence, “No vi a nadie,” literally says “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages, a second negative cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages the double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as the languages of the Bible, the double negative can create a positive sentence, and often strengthens the statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is intelligent” or “He is very intelligent.”

To translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

... in order **not** to be **un**fruitful. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means “so that they will be fruitful.”

All things were made through him and **without** him there was **not** one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

By using a double negative, John emphasized that the Son of God created absolutely everything. The double negative makes a stronger statement than the simple positive.

Translation Strategies

If double negatives are natural and are used to express the positive in your language, consider using them. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely” or “absolutely.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is simply to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)

“For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

“... so that they may be fruitful.”

- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a strong positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives and put in a strengthening word or phrase such as “very” or “surely” or “absolutely.”

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **unpunished**. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

“Be sure of this—wicked people will **certainly** be punished.”

All things were made through him and **without** him there was **not** one thing made that has been made. (John 1:3 ULT)

“All things were made through him. He made **absolutely** everything that has been made.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 2:15](#); [5:12](#); [6:10](#); [9:28](#))

Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike [Hendiadys](#), in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. People might think that the verse is describing two ideas or actions, when it is only describing one. In this case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

Examples From the Bible

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

The bolded words mean the same thing. Together they mean the people were spread out.

He attacked two men **more righteous** and **better** than himself. (1 Kings 2:32b ULT)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

This means that they had decided to lie, which is another way of saying that they intended to deceive people.

... like of a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot**. (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any defect—not even one.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, consider these strategies.

- (1) Translate only one of the words or phrases.
- (2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words or phrases and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
- (3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate only one of the words.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

“You have decided to prepare **false** things to say.”

(2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

“He has one people **very spread out.**”

(3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

... like a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot.** (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

• English can emphasize this with “any” and “at all.”

“... like a lamb **without any blemish at all.**”

(Go back to: [Esther 1:4](#); [2:10](#); [2:17](#); [2:20](#); [3:1](#); [3:2](#); [3:6](#); [3:8](#); [3:13](#); [4:1](#); [4:3](#); [4:8](#); [4:14](#); [5:7](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#); [5:11](#); [7:4](#); [7:5](#); [7:6](#); [8:11](#); [8:14](#); [8:16](#); [8:17](#); [9:5](#); [9:6](#); [9:12](#); [9:27](#); [9:28](#); [10:2](#))

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis¹ occurs when a speaker or writer leaves out one or more words that normally should be in the sentence. The speaker or writer does this because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and supply the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. For example:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, **nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**
(Psalm 1:5 ULT)

There is ellipsis in the second part because “nor 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. With the action filled in, the complete sentence would read:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **will sinners stand** in the assembly of the righteous.

[¹] English has a punctuation symbol which is also called an ellipsis. It is a series of three dots (...) used to indicate an intentional omission of a word, phrase, sentence or more from text without altering its original meaning. This translationAcademy article is not about the punctuation mark, but about the concept of omission of words that normally should be in the sentence.

Two Types of Ellipsis

A Relative Ellipsis happens when the reader has to supply the omitted word or words from the context. Usually the word is in the previous sentence, as in the example above.

An Absolute Ellipsis happens when the omitted word or words are not in the context, but the phrases are common enough in the language that the reader is expected to supply what is missing from this common usage or from the nature of the situation.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know that there is information missing that the writer expects them to fill in. Or readers may understand that there is information missing, but they may not know what information is missing because they do not know the original biblical language, culture, or situation as the original readers did. In this case, they may fill in the wrong information. Or readers may misunderstand the ellipsis if they do not use ellipsis in the same way in their language.

Examples From the Bible

Relative Ellipsis

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. The full sentence with the information filled in would be:

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis ?* ([¹])

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**not as unwise but as wise**. (Ephesians 5:15b ULT)

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

Absolute Ellipsis

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that 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. The complete sentence would be:

“Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

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.

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinner in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinner will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

Then when the 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 ULT)



He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

(Go back to: [Esther 7:3](#))

Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

... they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa.
(1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons “were dead.” It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples From the Bible

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he did not say specifically** what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order **to be polite**, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.
- (2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT) — Some languages might use euphemisms like these:

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **dig a hole**”

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **have some time alone**”

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **slept with a man?**”

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

They found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

“They found Saul and his sons **dead** on Mount Gilboa.”

(Go back to: [Esther 7:8](#))

Exclamations

Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people said helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes]]

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

Examples From the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULT)

The word "Alas" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, "**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is "is" or "are."
- (2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
- (3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
- (4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

“You **are** such a worthless person!”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God **are** so deep!”

(2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. In the first suggested translation below, the word “wow” shows that they were astonished. In the second suggested translation, the expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.

They were extremely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” (Mark 7:37 ULT)

“They were extremely astonished, saying, ‘**Wow!** He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”

Alas, oh my Lord Yahweh! For because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face! (Judges 6:22b ULT)

“**Oh no,** Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.

“**Alas,** O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

“Lord Yahweh, **what will happen to me?** For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

“**Help,** Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“His judgments are **so** unsearchable and his ways are **far** beyond discovering!”

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, “**Alas,** O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. **He was terrified** and said, “**Alas,** Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(Go back to: [Esther 5:12](#))

First, Second or 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 refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms 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.

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?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is 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 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “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 **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” 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, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

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 ULT)

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 **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

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 **mine**?”

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-you\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:16](#); [1:19](#); [1:20](#); [2:2](#); [2:3](#); [2:4](#); [3:8](#); [3:9](#); [5:4](#); [5:8](#); [6:6](#); [6:7](#); [6:8](#); [6:9](#); [6:10](#); [7:4](#); [7:9](#); [8:5](#); [8:8](#))

Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural

Description

Some languages have a singular form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a plural form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a dual form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to only two people. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is dual or plural?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-you\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person. However, they do not show us whether it refers to only two people or more than two people. When the pronouns do not show us how many people the word “you” refers to, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular, dual, and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you,” translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know how many people the speaker was addressing.

Examples From the Bible

Then **James and John**, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him, saying to him, “Teacher, we desire that you to do for us whatever we ask you.” 36 So he said to them, “What do **you** want me to do for **you**?” (Mark 10:35-36 ULT)

Jesus is asking the two, James and John, what they want him to do for them. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

Jesus sent out two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village opposite us. As soon as **you** enter it, **you** will find a colt tied there, on which no one has yet sat. Untie it and bring it to me.” (Mark 11:1b-2 ULT)

The context makes it clear that Jesus is addressing two people. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are in the dispersion: Greetings. Consider it all joy, my brothers, when **you** experience various troubles. You know that the testing of **your** faith produces endurance. (James 1:1-3 ULT)

James wrote this letter to many people, so the word “you” refers to many people. If the target language has a plural form of “you,” it would be best to use it here.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the translationNotes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see who the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youdual.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Forms of 'You' — Singular](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 5:8](#))

Forms of 'You' — Singular

Description

Some languages have a singular form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is singular?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-you\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have both a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. When we read the Bible in a language that does not have different forms of you, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you,” translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people the speaker was speaking to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used the singular form of “you” even though they were speaking to a group of people. (See Forms of 'You' — Singular to a Crowd.)

Examples From the Bible

But he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” But when he heard this, Jesus said to him, “One thing is still lacking to **you**. All things, as much as **you** have, sell all and distribute to the poor, and **you** will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me.” (Luke 18:21-22 ULT)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said “I.” This shows us that when Jesus said “you” he was referring only to the ruler. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” need the singular form here.

The angel said to him, “Dress **yourself** and put on **your** sandals.” So he did that. He said to him, “Put on **your** outer garment and follow me.” (Acts 12:8 ULT)

The context makes it clear that the angel was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” would need the singular form here for “yourself” and “your.” Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, then the verbs “dress” and “put on” need the form that indicates a singular subject.

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. For this purpose I left **you** in Crete, that **you** might set in order things not yet complete and ordain elders in every city as I directed **you**. But **you**, say what fits with sound teaching. (Titus 1:4a, 5; 2:1 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus. Most of the time the word “you” in this letter refers only to Titus.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the notes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see how many people the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 5:4](#))

Hebrew Months

Description

This page answers the question: *What are the Hebrew months?*

The Hebrew calendar used in the Bible has twelve months. Unlike the western calendar, its first month begins in the spring of the northern hemisphere. Sometimes a month is called by its name (Aviv, Ziv, Sivan), and sometimes it is called by its order in the Hebrew calendar year (first month, second month, third month).

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may be surprised to read of months that they have never heard of, and they may wonder how those months correspond to the months that they use.
- Readers may not realize that phrases such as “the first month” or “the second month” refer to the first or second month of the Hebrew calendar, not some other calendar.
- Readers may not know when the first month of the Hebrew calendar begins.
- The Bible may tell about something happening in a certain month, but readers will not be able to fully understand what is said about it if they do not know what season of the year that was.

List of Hebrew Months

This is a list of the Hebrew months with information about them that may be helpful in the translation.

Aviv — (This month was called **Nisan** after the Babylonian exile.) This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is at the beginning of the spring season when the late rains come and people begin to harvest their crops. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on western calendars. The Passover celebration started on Aviv 10; the Festival of Unleavened Bread was right after that, and the Festival of Harvest was a few weeks after that.

Ziv — This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the harvest season. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

Sivan — This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the dry season. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars. The Feast of Weeks is celebrated on Sivan 6.

Tammuz — This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.

Ab — This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

Elul — This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season. It is during the last part of August and the first part of September on Western calendars.

Ethanim — This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the early rain season which would soften the land for sowing. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars. The Feast of Ingathering and the Day of Atonement are celebrated in this month.

Bul — This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the rainy season when people plough their fields and sow seed. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

Kislev — This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. This is at the end of the sowing season and the beginning of the cold season. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on Western calendars.

Tebeth — This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the cold season when there may be rain and snow. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.

Shebat — This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is the coldest month of the year, and it has heavy rainfall. It is during the last part of January and the first part of February on Western calendars.

Adar — This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the cold season. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on western calendars. The feast called Purim is celebrated in Adar.

Examples From the Bible

Today you are going out, in **the month of Aviv**. (Exodus 13:4 ULT)

You must eat unleavened bread from evening of the fourteenth day **in the first month of the year**, until evening of the twenty-first day of the month. (Exodus 12:18 ULT)

Translation Strategies

You may need to make some information about the months explicit. (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#).)

- (1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.
- (2) Use the names for months that people know.
- (3) State clearly what season the month occurred in.
- (4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the Hebrew name of the month. (If possible, use a footnote to show the Hebrew month and day.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The examples below use these two verses.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of Aviv**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt. (Exodus 23:15b ULT)

It will always be a statute for you that in **the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month**, you must humble yourselves and do no work. (Leviticus 16:29a ULT)

- (1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the first month of the year**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

- (2) Use the months that people know.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of March**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

It will always be a statute for you that **on the day I choose in late September** you must humble yourselves and do no work.

(3) State clearly what season the month occurs in.

It will always be a statute for you that **in the autumn, on the tenth day of the seventh month**, you must humble yourselves and do no work.

(4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the month.

It will always be a statute for you that in **the day I choose in early autumn**¹ you must humble yourselves and do no work.

The footnote would look like:

^[1] The Hebrew says, "the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month."

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Ordinal Numbers](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 2:16](#); [3:7](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [8:9](#); [8:12](#); [9:1](#); [9:15](#); [9:17](#); [9:19](#); [9:21](#))

Hendiadys

Description

When a speaker expresses a single idea by using two words that are connected with “and,” it is called a hendiadys. In a hendiadys, the two words work together. Usually one of the words is the primary idea and the other word further describes the primary one.

This page answers the question: *What is hendiadys and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

... his own **kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

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**.

Two phrases connected by “and” can also be a hendiadys when they refer to a single person, thing, or event.

while we look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

Titus 2:13 contains two hendiadyses. “The blessed hope” and “appearing of the glory” refer to the same thing and serve to strengthen the idea that the return of Jesus Christ is greatly anticipated and wonderful. Also, “our great God” and “Savior Jesus Christ” refer to one person, not two.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Often a hendiadys contains an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that the second word is further describing the first one.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that only one person or thing is meant, not two.

Examples From the Bible

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

“A mouth” and “wisdom” are nouns, but in this figure of speech “wisdom” describes what comes from the mouth.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

“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 or phrase describes the other.

(5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

For I will give you **wise words** ...

Walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

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 **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

for I will give you **words of wisdom**.

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

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 1:19a ULT)

If you are **willingly obedient** ...

(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

The adjective “obedient” can be substituted with the verb “obey.”

if you **obey willingly** ...

(4) and (5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

We look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

The noun “glory” can be changed to the adjective “glorious” to make it clear that Jesus’ appearing is what we hope for. Also, “Jesus Christ” can be moved to the front of the phrase and “great God and Savior” put into a relative clause that describes the one person, Jesus Christ.

We look forward to receiving **what we are longing for, the blessed and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, who is our great God and Savior**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Doublet](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 5:7](#); [6:3](#); [7:3](#); [8:15](#); [9:17](#); [9:18](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#); [9:24](#))

How to Translate Names

Description

The Bible contains the 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.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

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

[Translate Unknowns](#)

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.

For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, was the one who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULT)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name first indeed means “king of righteousness,” and then also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2b ULT)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples From the Bible

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beer Lahai Roi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his execution. (Acts 8:1a ULT)

But when the apostles, Barnabas and **Paul**, heard of it, they tore their clothing. (Acts 14:14a ULT)

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.

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

You went over the **Jordan River** and came to the **city of Jericho**. The men of Jericho fought against you, along with **the tribe of the Amorites**.

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Leave and go away from here, because **Herod** wants to kill you.” (Luke 13:31 ULT)

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying 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.

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

She called his name **Moses (which sounds like 'drawn out')**, and she said, "For out of the water I drew him."

(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 **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

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 7:58b ULT)

... a young man named **Paul** ¹

The footnote would look like:

^[1] Most versions say "Saul" here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called "Paul."

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

(5) Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write "Saul" where the source text has "Saul" and "Paul" where the source text has "Paul."

a young man named **Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULT)

a young man named **Saul**

The footnote would look like:

^[1] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

It came about in Iconium that **Paul** and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)

It came about in Iconium that **Paul**¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

[1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate]]

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:2](#); [1:9](#); [1:10](#); [1:14](#); [1:16](#); [1:21](#); [2:3](#); [2:5](#); [2:6](#); [2:7](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [2:18](#); [2:21](#); [3:1](#); [3:7](#); [4:5](#); [5:10](#); [6:2](#); [7:9](#); [8:3](#); [9:7](#); [9:8](#); [9:9](#); [9:24](#); [9:26](#); [9:29](#))

Hyperbole

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something that he means as completely true, or as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement. For example, the sentence below could mean three different things.

It rains here every night.

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 that it rains more than it actually does, usually in order to express a strong attitude toward the amount or frequency of rain, such as being annoyed or being happy about it.

This page answers the question: *What are hyperboles? What are generalizations? How can I translate them?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Hyperbole

In hyperbole, a figure of speech that uses exaggeration, a speaker deliberately describes something with 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 **stone upon stone in you**. (Luke 19:44b ULT)

This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.

Moses was educated in **all the wisdom of the Egyptians**. (Acts 7:22a ULT)

This hyperbole means that he had learned everything an Egyptian education could offer.

Generalization

This is a statement that is true most of the time or in most situations that it could apply to.

The one who ignores instruction **will have poverty and shame**, but **honor will come** to him who learns from correction. (Proverbs 13:18)

These generalizations tell about what normally happens to people who ignore instruction and what normally happens to people who learn from correction. There may be some exceptions to these statements, but they are generally true.

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as **the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words**. (Matthew 6:7)

This generalization tells about what Gentiles were known for doing. Many Gentiles did this. It does not matter if a few did not. The point was that the hearers should not join in this well-known practice.

Even though a hyperbole or a generalization may have a strong-sounding word like "all," "always," "none," or "never," it does not necessarily mean **exactly** "all," "always," "none," or "never." It simply means "most," "most of the time," "hardly any," or "rarely."

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.

If readers realize that a statement is not literally true, they need to be able to understand whether it is a hyperbole, a generalization, or a lie. (Though the Bible is completely true, it tells about people who did not always tell the truth.)

Examples From the Bible

Examples of Hyperbole

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

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

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel with 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The bolded phrase is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that the Philistine army was overwhelming in number. It means that there were **many, many** soldiers in the Philistine army.

But as his anointing teaches you **everything** and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27b ULT)

This is a hyperbole. It expresses the assurance that God's Spirit teaches us about **all things that we need to know**. God's Spirit does not teach us about everything that it is possible to know.

When they found him, they also said to him, "**Everyone** is looking for you." (Mark 1:37 ULT)

The disciples probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for Jesus, but that **many people** were looking for him, or that all of Jesus' closest friends there were looking for him. This is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that they and many others were worried about him.

Examples of Generalization

Can **any good thing** come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46b ULT)

This rhetorical question is meant to express the generalization that there is nothing good in Nazareth. The people there had a reputation for being uneducated and not strictly religious. Of course, there were exceptions.

One of them, of their own prophets, has said, "**Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies**." (Titus 1:12 ULT)

This is a generalization that means that Cretans had a reputation to be like this because, in general, this is how Cretans behaved. It is possible that there were exceptions.

A lazy hand causes a person to be poor, but the hand of the diligent person gains riches. (Proverbs 10:4 ULT)

This is generally true, and it reflects the experience of most people. It is possible that there are exceptions in some circumstances.

Caution

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

They saw Jesus **walking on the sea** and coming near the boat. (John 6:19b ULT)

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

- Do not assume that the word “all” is always a generalization that means “most.”
 - > Yahweh is righteous in **all** his ways
 - > and gracious in **all** he does. (Psalms 145:17 ULT)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole or generalization would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here are other options.

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
- (2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.
- (4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 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 13:18a ULT)

In general, the one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame

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 ULT)

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles **generally** do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.

- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.

The **whole** country of Judea and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

Almost all the country of Judea and **almost all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him.
or:

Many of the country of Judea and **many** of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

The **whole** country of Judea and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(Go back to: [Esther 1:16](#); [1:17](#); [3:9](#); [5:3](#); [7:2](#); [7:4](#))

Idiom

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg. (This means, “You are teasing me by telling me something that is not true.”)
- 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.”)

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

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 **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

I am not worthy that you would **come under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)

The phrase “come under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

Put these words **into your ears**. (Luke 9:44a ULT)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is probably created in a culture somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that produced the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

Examples From the Bible

Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your **flesh and bone**.” (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)

This means, “We and you belong to the same race, the same family.”

▮ The children of Israel went out **with a high hand**. (Exodus 14:8b ASV)

This means, “The Israelites went out defiantly.”

▮ the one who **lifts up my head** (Psalm 3:3b ULT)

This means, “the one who helps me.”

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
- (2) Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.

▮ Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your **flesh and bone**.” (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)

▮ Look, we all **belong to the same nation**.

▮ Then he **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)

▮ He started to travel to Jerusalem, **determined to reach it**.

▮ I am not worthy that you would come **under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)

▮ I am not worthy that you should enter **my house**.

- (2) Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

▮ Put these words **into your ears**. (Luke 9:44a ULT)

▮ **Be all ears** when I say these words to you.

▮ My **eyes grow dim** from grief. (Psalm 6:7a ULT)

▮ I am crying my **eyes out**

(Go back to: Esther 1:1; 1:5; 1:8; 1:10; 1:11; 1:14; 1:19; 1:21; 1:22; 2:2; 2:3; 2:11; 2:12; 2:15; 2:17; 2:19; 2:21; 2:22; 2:23; 3:1; 3:4; 3:6; 3:9; 3:12; 3:14; 4:3; 5:2; 5:4; 5:8; 6:2; 6:6; 6:7; 6:9; 6:10; 6:11; 7:3; 7:7; 7:8; 7:9; 8:3; 8:5; 8:6; 8:7; 8:9; 8:11; 8:13; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 9:4; 9:5; 9:10; 9:13; 9:15; 9:19; 9:21; 9:22; 9:25; 9:26; 9:27; 9:28; 10:2; 10:3)

Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages, people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

This page answers the question: *How do we introduce a new event in a story?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

[Order of Events](#)

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

Examples From the Bible

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, **there was a certain priest named Zechariah**, from the division of Abijah. And **his wife was** from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULT)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first bolded phrase tells when it happened, and the next two bolded phrases introduce the main people. The next two verses go on to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not have any children. All of this is the setting. Then the phrase “And it happened that” in Luke 1:8 helps to introduce the first event in this story:

And it happened that in his performing as priest before God, in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, he came up by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULT)

The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way. His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULT)

The bolded sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:1 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened **after** Jesus was born.

Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. (Matthew 3:1-22 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to John, to be baptized by him. (Matthew 3:13 ULT)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages, it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

6 Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a statement of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies:

- (1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
- (2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: "another time" or "someone."
- (3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.
- (4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, indicate that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

There was a **man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**. One night he came to Jesus.

One night **a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**, came to Jesus.

As he passed by, **he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, sitting** at the tax collector's tent, and he said to him ... (Mark 2:14a ULT)

As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collector's tent. Jesus saw him and said to him ...

As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...

As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collector’s tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...

(2) If readers would expect certain information, but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as “another time,” or “someone.”

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) — If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase “after that” can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.

After that, when Noah was 600 years old, the flood came upon the earth.

Again he began to teach beside the sea. (Mark 4:1a ULT) — In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone’s house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the sea.

Another time Jesus began to teach people again beside the sea.

Jesus went to the sea and **began to teach people again** there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was 600 years old and the flood came upon the earth.

This part tells about what happened when the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was 600 years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was 600 years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because **God had said that the waters of the flood would come.**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Background Information](#)

[Introduction of New and Old Participants](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [2:1](#); [2:8](#); [3:1](#); [5:1](#); [6:1](#); [8:1](#); [8:3](#); [8:15](#); [9:1](#); [10:1](#))

Introduction of New and Old Participants

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are **new participants**. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are **old participants**.

Now **there was a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus** ... **This man** came to Jesus at night ... Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a)

The first bolded phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. After being introduced, he is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he has become an old participant.

This page answers the question: *Why cannot the readers of my translation understand who the author was writing about?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

Examples From the Bible

New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man,” as in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who his family was, and what his name was.

Now there was a man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2a ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important participant is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah’s wife is simply referred to as “his wife.” This phrase shows her relationship to him.

Now there was one man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. **His wife** was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

Now King David was old, he had advanced in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm enough for him. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his,” and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she.”

His wife was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah’s wife is referred to by the noun phrase “the wife.”

The angel of Yahweh appeared to the wife and he said to her ... (Judges 13:3a ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant’s name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to by his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh. (Judges 13:8a ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages, people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See Verbs.)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.
- (2) If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
- (3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.

Then Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated as Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth ... (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) — Starting the sentence with Joseph’s name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.

There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement). There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

- (2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

And it happened that when he was praying in a certain place, when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1 ULT) — Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who “he” refers to.

It happened when Jesus finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”

(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20) — Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might prefer the pronoun.

Joseph's master took **him** and put **him** in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and **he** stayed there in the prison.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-pronouns\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:9](#); [2:2](#); [2:5](#); [4:1](#))

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

“I am **the alpha and the omega**,” says the Lord God,
“the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8 ULT)

I am **the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end**.
(Revelation 22:13, ULT)

This page answers the question: *What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

... I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** ..., (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
- (2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

In all places, people should praise Yahweh's name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)

He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

(Go back to: [Esther 1:5](#); [1:20](#); [3:13](#); [4:11](#); [9:20](#); [9:28](#); [10:1](#))

Metaphor

Description

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of one thing as if it were a different thing because he wants people to think about how those two things are alike.

For example, someone might say, “The girl I love is a red rose.”

A girl and a rose are very different things, but the speaker considers that they are alike in some way. The hearer’s task is to understand in what way they are alike.

This page answers the question: *What is a metaphor and how can I translate a Bible passage that has one?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-simile\]\]](#)

The Parts of a Metaphor

The example above shows us that a metaphor has three parts. In this metaphor, the speaker is talking about “the girl I love.” This is the **Topic**. The speaker wants the hearer to think about what is similar between her and “a red rose.” The red rose is the **Image** to which he compares the girl. Most probably, he wants the hearer to consider that they are both beautiful. This is the **Idea** that the girl and the rose both share, and so we may also call it the **Point of Comparison**.

Every metaphor has three parts:

- The **Topic**, the item being immediately discussed by the writer/speaker.
- The **Image**, the physical item (object, event, action, etc.) which the speaker uses to describe the topic.
- The **Idea**, the abstract concept or quality that the physical **Image** brings to the mind of the hearer when he thinks of how the **Image** and the **Topic** are similar. Often, the **Idea** of a metaphor is not explicitly stated in the Bible, but it is only implied from the context. The hearer or reader usually needs to think of the **Idea** himself.

Using these terms, we can say that a metaphor is a figure of speech that uses a physical **Image** to apply an abstract **Idea** to the speaker’s **Topic**.

Usually, a writer or speaker uses a metaphor in order to express something about a **Topic**, with at least one **Point of Comparison (Idea)** between the **Topic** and the **Image**. Often in metaphors, the **Topic** and the **Image** are explicitly stated, but the **Idea** is only implied. The writer/speaker often uses a metaphor in order to invite the readers/listeners to think about the similarity between the **Topic** and the **Image** and to figure out for themselves the **Idea** that is being communicated.

Speakers often use metaphors in order to strengthen their message, to make their language more vivid, to express their feelings better, to say something that is hard to say in any other way, or to help people remember their message.

Sometimes speakers use metaphors that are very common in their language. However, sometimes speakers use metaphors that are uncommon, and even some metaphors that are unique. When a metaphor has become very common in a language, often it becomes a “passive” metaphor, in contrast to uncommon metaphors, which we describe as being “active.” Passive metaphors and active metaphors each present a different kind of translation problem, which we will discuss below.

Passive Metaphors

A passive metaphor is a metaphor that has been used so much in the language that its speakers no longer regard it as one concept standing for another. Linguists often call these “dead metaphors.” Passive metaphors are extremely common. Examples in English include the terms “table **leg**,” “family **tree**,” “book **leaf**” (meaning a page

in a book), or the word “crane” (meaning a large machine for lifting heavy loads). English speakers simply think of these words as having more than one meaning. Examples of passive metaphors in Biblical Hebrew include using the word “hand” to represent “power,” using the word “face” to represent “presence,” and speaking of emotions or moral qualities as if they were “clothing.”

Patterned Pairs of Concepts Acting as Metaphors

Many ways of metaphorical speaking depend on pairs of concepts, where one underlying concept frequently stands for a different underlying concept. For example, in English, the direction “up” (the Image) often represents the concepts of “more” or “better” (the Idea). Because of this pair of underlying concepts, we can make sentences such as “The price of gasoline is going **up**,” “A **highly** intelligent man,” and also the opposite kind of idea: “The temperature is going **down**,” and “I am feeling very **low**.”

Patterned pairs of concepts are constantly used for metaphorical purposes in the world’s languages because they serve as convenient ways to organize thought. In general, people like to speak of abstract qualities (such as power, presence, emotions, and moral qualities) as if they were body parts, or as if they were objects that could be seen or held, or as if they were events that could be watched as they happened.

When these metaphors are used in normal ways, it is rare that the speaker and audience regard them as figurative speech. Examples of metaphors in English that go unrecognized are:

- “Turn the heat **up**.” More is spoken of as up.
- “Let us **go ahead** with our debate.” Doing what was planned is spoken of as walking or advancing.
- “You **defend** your theory well.” Argument is spoken of as war.
- “A **flow** of words.” Words are spoken of as liquids.

English speakers do not view these as metaphorical expressions or figures of speech, so it would be wrong to translate them into other languages in a way that would lead people to pay special attention to them as figurative speech. For a description of important patterns of this kind of metaphor in biblical languages, please see [Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns](#) and the pages it will direct you to.

When translating something that is a passive metaphor into another language, do not treat it as a metaphor. Instead, just use the best expression for that thing or concept in the target language.

Active Metaphors

These are metaphors that people recognize as one concept standing for another concept, or one thing for another thing. Metaphors make people think about how the one thing is like the other thing, because in most ways the two things are very different. People also easily recognize these metaphors as giving strength and unusual qualities to the message. For this reason, people pay attention to these metaphors. For example,

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.
(Malachi 4:2a ULT)

Here, God speaks about his salvation as if it were the sun rising in order to shine its rays on the people whom he loves. He also speaks of the sun’s rays as if they were wings. Also, he speaks of these wings as if they were bringing medicine that would heal his people. Here is another example:

And he said to them, “Go and tell that fox ...” (Luke 13:32a ULT)

Here, “that fox” refers to King Herod. The people listening to Jesus certainly understood that Jesus was intending for them to apply certain characteristics of a fox to Herod. They probably understood that Jesus intended to communicate that Herod was evil, either in a cunning way or as someone who was destructive, murderous, or who took things that did not belong to him, or all of these.

Active metaphors require the translator's special care to make a correct translation. To do so, you need to understand the parts of a metaphor and how they work together to produce meaning.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35 ULT)

In this metaphor, Jesus called himself the bread of life. The **Topic** is "I" (meaning Jesus himself) and the **Image** is "bread." Bread was the primary food that people ate in that place and time. The similarity between bread and Jesus is that people need both to live. Just as people need to eat food in order to have physical life, people need to trust in Jesus in order to have eternal life. The **Idea** of the metaphor is "life." In this case, Jesus stated the central Idea of the metaphor, but often the Idea is only implied.

Purposes of Metaphor

- One purpose of metaphor is to teach people about something that they do not know (the **Topic**) by showing that it is like something that they already do know (the **Image**).
- Another purpose is to emphasize that something (the **Topic**) has a particular quality (the **Idea**) or to show that it has that quality in an extreme way.
- Another purpose is to lead people to feel the same way about the **Topic** as they would feel about the **Image**.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not recognize that something is a metaphor. In other words, they may mistake a metaphor for a literal statement, and thus, misunderstand it.
- People may not be familiar with the thing that is used as an image, and so, not be able to understand the metaphor.
- If the topic is not stated, people may not know what the topic is.
- People may not know the points of comparison that the speaker wants them to understand. If they fail to think of these points of comparison, they will not understand the metaphor.
- People may think that they understand the metaphor, but they do not. This can happen when they apply points of comparison from their own culture, rather than from the biblical culture.

Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of a metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning of a metaphor more clear to the target audience than you think it was to the original audience.

Examples From the Bible

Listen to this word, **you cows of Bashan**, (Amos 4:1q ULT)

In this metaphor Amos speaks to the upper-class women of Samaria ("you," the Topic) as if they were cows (the Image). Amos does not say what similarity(s) he intends between these women and cows. He wants the reader to think of them, and he fully expects that readers from his culture will easily do so. From the context, we can see that he means that the women are like cows in that they are fat and interested only in feeding themselves. If we were to apply similarities from a different culture, such as that cows are sacred and should be worshiped, we would get the wrong meaning from this verse.

NOTE: Amos does not actually mean that the women are cows. He speaks to them as human beings.

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; **we are the clay. You are our potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

The example above has two related metaphors. The Topic(s) are “we” and “you,” and the Image(s) are “clay” and “potter.” The similarity between a potter and God is the fact that both make what they wish out of their material. The potter makes what he wishes out of the clay, and God makes what he wishes out of his people. The Idea being expressed by the comparison between the potter’s clay and “us” is that **neither the clay nor God’s people have a right to complain about what they are becoming.**

Jesus 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 did not take bread.”
(Matthew 16:6-7 ULT)

Jesus used a metaphor here, but his disciples did not realize it. When he said “yeast,” they thought he was talking about bread, but “yeast” was the Image in his metaphor, and the Topic was the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Since the disciples (the original audience) did not understand what Jesus meant, it would not be good to state clearly here what Jesus meant.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the metaphor in the same way that the original readers would have understood it, go ahead and use it. Be sure to test the translation to make sure that people do understand it in the right way.

If people do not or would not understand it, here are some other strategies.

(1) If the metaphor is a common expression in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, it is a passive metaphor), then express the **Idea** in the simplest way preferred by your language.

(2) If the metaphor seems to be an active metaphor, you can translate it literally **if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible.** If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.

(3) If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.” See Simile.

(4) If the target audience would not know the **Image**, see [Translate Unknowns](#) for ideas on how to translate that image.

(5) If the target audience would not use that **Image** for that meaning, use an image from your own culture instead. Be sure that it is an image that could have been possible in Bible times.

(6) If the target audience would not know what the **Topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the Topic was.)

(7) If the target audience would not know the intended similarity (the **Idea**) between the topic and the image, then state it clearly.

(8) If none of these strategies is satisfactory, then simply state the **Idea** plainly without using a metaphor.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the metaphor is a common expression in the source language or expresses a patterned pair of concepts in a biblical language (that is, a passive metaphor), then express the Idea in the simplest way preferred by your language.

Then, see, one of the leaders of the synagogue, named Jairus, came, and when he saw him, **fell at his feet**. (Mark 5:22 ULT)

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 an active metaphor, you can translate it literally **if you think that the target language also uses this metaphor in the same way to mean the same thing as in the Bible**. If you do this, be sure to test it to make sure that the language community understands it correctly.

But Jesus said to them, “He wrote this commandment to you because of your **hardness of heart**.” (Mark 10:5 ULT)

It was because of your **hard hearts** that he wrote you this law.

We made no change to this one, but it must be tested to make sure that the target audience correctly understands this metaphor.

(3) If the target audience does not realize that it is a metaphor, then change the metaphor to a simile. Some languages do this by adding words such as “like” or “as.”

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we **are the clay**. You **are our potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

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.

(4) If the target audience would not know the **Image**, see [Translate Unknowns](#) for ideas on how to translate that image.

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you **to kick against a goad**. (Acts 26:14b ULT)

Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to **kick against a pointed stick**.

(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.

Yet, Yahweh, you are our father; we are the **clay**. You are our **potter**; and we all are the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ULT)

“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.”

(6) If the target audience would not know what the **Topic** is, then state the topic clearly. (However, do not do this if the original audience did not know what the topic was.)

Yahweh lives; may **my rock** be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted. (Psalm 18:46 ULT)

Yahweh lives; **He is my rock**. May he be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted.

(7) If the target audience would not know the intended similarity between the Topic and the Image, then state it clearly.

Yahweh lives; may **my rock** be praised. May the God of my salvation be exalted. (Psalm 18:46 ULT)

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 against a goad**. (Acts 26:14 ULT)

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**.

(8) If none of these strategies are satisfactory, then simply state the idea plainly without using a metaphor.

I will make you to become **fishers of men**. (Mark 1:17b ULT)

I will make you to become **people who gather men**.
Now you gather fish. I will make you **gather people**.

To learn more about specific metaphors, see Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns.

(Go back to: [Esther 1:12](#); [1:14](#); [1:17](#); [1:21](#); [2:3](#); [2:4](#); [2:8](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#); [2:21](#); [3:1](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [3:11](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [5:2](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#); [5:11](#); [5:13](#); [6:2](#); [6:6](#); [6:9](#); [6:10](#); [6:13](#); [7:4](#); [7:5](#); [7:7](#); [7:10](#); [8:2](#); [8:5](#); [8:8](#); [8:10](#); [8:11](#); [8:16](#); [8:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#); [9:16](#); [9:18](#); [9:22](#); [9:27](#); [9:28](#); [9:31](#); [10:3](#))

Metonymy

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an item (either physical or abstract) is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A metonym is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something that it is associated with.

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

... and **the blood** of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin. (1 John 1:7b ULT)

The blood represents Christ's death.

And he took **the cup** in the same way after supper, saying, "**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20 ULT)

The cup represents the wine that is in the cup.

Metonymy can be used

- as a shorter way of referring to something
- to make an abstract idea more meaningful by referring to it with the name of a physical object associated with it

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible uses metonymy very often. Speakers of some languages are not familiar with 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 to him **the throne** of his father David. (Luke 1:32b ULT)

A throne represents the authority of a king. "Throne" is a metonym for "kingly authority," "kingship," or "reign." This means that God would make him become a king who would follow King David.

Then immediately his **mouth** was opened (Luke 1:64a ULT)

The mouth here represents the power to speak. This means that he was able to talk again.

Who warned you to flee from **the wrath** that is coming? (Luke 3:7b ULT)

The word "wrath" or "anger" is a metonym for "punishment." God was extremely angry with the people and, as a result, he would punish them.

Translation Strategies

If people would easily understand the metonym, consider using it. Otherwise, here are some options.

- (1) Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.
- (2) Use only the name of the thing the metonym represents.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the metonym along with the name of the thing it represents.

And he took the cup in the same way after the supper, saying, “**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” (Luke 22:20 ULT)

He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, “**The wine in this cup** is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

This verse also contains a second metonym: The cup, (representing the wine it contains) also represents the new covenant made with the blood Christ shed for us.

- (2) Use the name of the thing the metonym represents.

The Lord God will give him **the throne** of his father David. (Luke 1:32b ULT)

“The Lord God will give him **the kingly authority** of his father, David.”
or:
“The Lord God will **make him king** like his ancestor, King David.”

Who warned you to flee from **the wrath** that is coming? (Luke 3:7b ULT)

“Who warned you to flee from God’s coming **punishment**?”

To learn about some common metonymies, see [Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies](#).

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2; 1:3; 1:7; 1:10; 1:11; 1:12; 1:13; 1:15; 1:16; 1:17; 1:19; 1:22; 2:9; 2:11; 2:17; 2:18; 2:23; 3:2; 3:7; 3:12; 3:13; 3:15; 4:2; 4:5; 4:6; 4:8; 5:2; 5:14; 6:1; 6:9; 6:11; 6:13; 7:3; 7:6; 7:9; 8:1; 8:2; 8:3; 8:4; 8:5; 8:7; 8:9; 8:10; 8:11; 8:15; 9:2; 9:4; 9:11; 9:25; 9:30; 10:1](#))

Numbers

Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words (“five”) or as numerals (“5”). Some numbers are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), “twenty-two thousand” (22,000), or “one hundred million” (100,000,000). Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate numbers?*

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

[Translate Unknowns](#)

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

▮ Abram was **86** years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

▮ That day about **3,000** of the people died. (Exodus 32:28b ULT)

Here the number three thousand (3,000) is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word “about” shows that it is not an exact number.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

Examples From the Bible

▮ When Jared had lived **162** years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived **962** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULT)

The numbers 162, 800, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

▮ Our sister, may you be the mother of **thousands of ten thousands**. (Genesis 24:60b ULT)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Write numbers using numerals.
- (2) Write numbers using your language’s words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.
- (3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parentheses after them.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14a ULT)

(1) Write numbers using numerals.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **one million** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house one **hundred thousand (100,000)** talents of gold, **one million (1,000,000)** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **a thousand thousand** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **a great amount of gold (100,000 talents), ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents)**, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

Consistency in the ULT and UST

The *unfoldingWord*® *Literal Text* (ULT) and the *unfoldingWord*® *Simplified Text* (UST) use words for the numbers one through ten and use numerals for all numbers above ten.

When Adam had lived **130** years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived **930** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:3-5 ULT)

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Ordinal Numbers](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-fraction]]

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:4](#); [1:5](#); [3:8](#); [3:13](#); [4:11](#); [4:16](#); [8:9](#); [9:6](#); [9:10](#); [9:12](#); [9:13](#); [9:14](#); [9:15](#); [9:16](#); [9:29](#); [9:30](#))

Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

This page answers the question: *Why are some events not listed in the order they happened, and how do I translate them?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples From the Bible

He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

(1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

20 But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison**, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Background Information](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/grammar-connect-words-phrases\]\]](#)

[Introduction of a New Event](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-versebridge\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:12](#); [1:15](#); [6:2](#); [7:8](#); [8:1](#); [8:2](#); [8:7](#); [8:14](#); [8:17](#); [9:23](#); [9:26](#); [9:27](#))

Ordinal Numbers

Description

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

And God has indeed appointed some in the church, **first** apostles, **second** prophets, **third** teachers, then miracles. (1 Corinthians 12:28a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What are ordinal numbers and how can I translate them?*

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

[Numbers](#)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

Ordinal Numbers in English

Most ordinal numbers in English simply have “-th” added to the end.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
4	four	fourth
10	ten	tenth
100	one hundred	one hundredth
1,000	one thousand	one thousandth

Some ordinal numbers in English do not follow that pattern.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
5	five	fifth
12	twelve	twelfth

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have special numbers for showing the order of items in a list. There are different ways to deal with this.

Examples From the Bible

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

The people cast lots and one went to each of these people in the order given.

You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The **first** row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet. The **second** row must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The **third** row must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. The **fourth** row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings. (Exodus 28:17-20 ULT)

This describes four rows of stones. The first row is probably the top row, and the fourth row is probably the bottom row.

Translation Strategies

If your language has ordinal numbers and using them would give the right meaning, consider using them. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.
- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Tell the total number of items, and use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.

The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim ... the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **another** to Jedaiah, **another** to Harim ... **another** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **the next** to Jedaiah, **the next** to Harim ... **the next** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **the first** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the second** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the third** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. **The fourth** river is the Euphrates. (Genesis 2:10-14 ULT)

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **one** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the next** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the next** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. **The last** river is the Euphrates.

- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

They cast **24** lots. The lots went to Jerhoiarib, Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim ... Delaiah, and Maaziah.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-fraction]]

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [1:10](#); [2:14](#); [2:16](#); [3:7](#); [3:13](#); [7:2](#); [8:9](#); [8:12](#); [9:1](#); [9:15](#); [9:17](#); [9:18](#); [9:19](#); [9:21](#))

Parallelism

Description

Parallelism is a poetic device in which two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. The following are some of the different kinds of parallelism.

- The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is called synonymous parallelism.
- The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
- The second completes what is said in the first.
- 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.

This article will only discuss synonymous parallelism, the kind in which the two parallel phrases mean the same thing, because that is the kind that presents a problem for translation. Note that 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.

In the poetry of the original languages, synonymous parallelism 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 raises it 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, since it is in the Bible, they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it would be confusing, rather than beautiful. They would not understand that the repetition of the idea in different words serves to emphasize the idea.

Examples From the Bible

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULT)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live. That is the single idea. The words "lamp" and "light" are similar in meaning because they refer to light. The words "my feet" and "my path" are related because they refer to a person walking. Walking is a metaphor for living.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULT)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything. "To rule over" is the same idea as putting things "under his feet," and "the works of your [God's] hands" is the same idea as "all things."

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Yahweh sees everything a person does
and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

The first phrase and the second phrase mean the same thing. There are three ideas that are the same between these two phrases. “Sees” corresponds to “watches,” “everything...does” corresponds to “all the paths...takes,” and “a person” corresponds to “he.”

Praise Yahweh, all you nations;
exalt him, all you peoples! (Psalm 117:1 ULT)

Both parts of this verse tell people everywhere to praise Yahweh. The words ‘Praise’ and ‘exalt’ mean the same thing. The words ‘Yahweh’ and ‘him’ refer to the same person. The terms ‘all you nations’ and ‘all you peoples’ refer to the same people.

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people,
and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2b ULT)

The two parts of this verse say that Yahweh has a serious disagreement with his people, Israel. These are not two different disagreements or two different groups of people.

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 combine the ideas of both clauses into one and 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 combine the ideas of both clauses into one and 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 dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)

Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.

Until now you have deceived me with your lies.
Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”

Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.
For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2 ULT)

This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.

(2) If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)
Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet
(Psalm 8:6 ULT)

You have certainly made him to rule over everything that you have created.

(3) If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

Until now you have dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)
All you have done is lie to me.

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)
Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Personification](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:12](#); [2:7](#); [2:11](#); [2:17](#); [3:2](#); [3:5](#); [4:5](#); [4:8](#); [5:3](#); [5:6](#); [7:2](#); [7:3](#); [7:5](#); [7:8](#); [8:5](#); [8:6](#); [9:12](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#); [9:26](#); [9:28](#); [9:30](#); [10:3](#))

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 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

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

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

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 6:24b ULT)

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 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were 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 the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
- (2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
- (3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were 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) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

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

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just 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) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-apostrophe]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [Esther 4:14](#); [6:1](#); [8:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:4](#); [9:11](#); [9:25](#))

Rhetorical Question

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

This page answers the question: *What are rhetorical questions and how can I translate them?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes]]

Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all. Or, if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

But those who stood by said, **“Are you insulting the high priest of God?”**(Acts 23:4 ULT)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking if he was insulting God's high priest. Rather, they used this question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. These rhetorical questions might be used for the purposes: of expressing attitudes or feelings, rebuking people, teaching something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, or introducing something they want to talk about.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are different or more limited than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)

Jezebel used the question above to remind King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order to rebuke him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that, since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

God used the question above to remind his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then rebuked his people for forgetting him who is so much greater than those things.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11a ULT)

Job used the question above to show deep emotion. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord would come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULT)

Elizabeth used the question above to show how surprised and happy she was that the mother of her Lord came to her.

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

Jesus used the question above to remind the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on to teach them about God with his next rhetorical question:

Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULT)

Jesus used this question to teach the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden ... (Luke 13:18b-19a ULT)

Jesus used the question above to introduce what he was going to talk about. He was about to compare the kingdom of God to something. In this case, he compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed.

Translation Strategies

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, did the person who asked it expect to receive an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you understand the purpose for the rhetorical question. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Add the answer after the question.
- (2) Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
- (3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
- (4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Add the answer after the question.

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? **Of course not!** Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he 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 13:18-19a ULT)

This is what the kingdom of God is like. It is like a mustard seed ...

Are you insulting the high priest of God? (Acts 23:4b ULT) (Acts 23:4 ULT)

You should not insult God's high priest!

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11a ULT)

I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!

And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULT)

How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!

(3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)

You still rule the kingdom of Israel, **do you not?**

(4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, **would you give him a stone?**

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number

(Go back to: [Esther 4:14](#); [6:6](#); [7:8](#); [8:6](#); [9:12](#); [10:2](#))

Symbolic Action

Description

A symbolic action is something that someone does in order to express a certain idea. For example, in some cultures people nod their heads up and down to mean “yes” or turn their heads from side to side to mean “no.” Symbolic actions do not mean the same things in all cultures. In the Bible, sometimes people perform symbolic actions and sometimes they only refer to the symbolic action.

This page answers the question: *What is a symbolic action and how do I translate it?*

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

[Translate Unknowns](#)

Examples of symbolic actions

- In some cultures people shake hands when they meet to show that they are willing to be friendly.
- In some cultures people bow when they meet to show respect to each other.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

An action may have a meaning in one culture and a different meaning or no meaning at all in another culture. For example, in some cultures raising the eyebrows means “I am surprised” or “What did you say?” In other cultures it means “yes.”

In the Bible, people did things that had certain meanings in their culture. When we read the Bible, we might not understand what someone meant if we interpret the action based on what it means in our own culture today.

You (the translator) need to understand what people in the Bible meant when they used symbolic actions. If an action does not mean the same thing in your own culture, then you need to figure out how to translate what the action meant.

Examples From the Bible

And behold, a man came whose name was Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And **falling at the feet of Jesus**, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: He did this to show great respect to Jesus.

Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and will eat with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Meaning of symbolic action: When people wanted someone to welcome them into their home, they stood at the door and knocked on it.

Translation Strategies

If people would correctly understand what a symbolic action meant to the people in the Bible, consider using it. If not, here are some strategies for translating it.

- (1) Tell what the person did and why he did it.
- (2) Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

(3) Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning. Do this only in poetry, parables, and sermons. Do not do this when there actually was a person who did a specific action.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Tell what the person did and why he did it.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Jairus fell down at Jesus' feet in order to show that he greatly respected him.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Look, I stand at the door and knock on it, asking you to let me in.

(2) Do not tell what the person did, but tell what he meant.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT)

Jairus showed Jesus great respect.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT)

Look, I stand at the door and ask you to let me in.

(3) Use an action from your own culture that has the same meaning.

And **falling at the feet of Jesus** (Luke 8:41 ULT) — Since Jairus actually did this, you should not substitute an action from your own culture.

Look, I am **standing at the door and am knocking**. (Revelation 3:20 ULT) — Jesus was not standing at a real door. Rather he was speaking about wanting to have a relationship with people. So in cultures where it is polite to clear one's throat when wanting to be let into a house, you could use that.

Look, I stand at the door and clear my throat.

(Go back to: [Esther 2:17](#); [3:2](#); [3:10](#); [4:1](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:11](#); [4:16](#); [5:2](#); [5:9](#); [5:11](#); [6:12](#); [7:8](#); [8:2](#); [8:3](#); [8:4](#); [9:13](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#))

Synecdoche

Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

■ **My soul** magnifies the Lord. (Luke 1:46b ULT)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

■ So **the Pharisees** said to him, “Look, why are they doing that which is not lawful?” (Mark 2:24a ULT)

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

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some readers may not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example From the Bible

■ Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments. The hands are chosen to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

Translation Strategies

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

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

■ **“My soul** magnifies the Lord.” (Luke 1:46b ULT)

■ **“I** magnify the Lord.”

So **the Pharisees** said to him ... (Mark 2:24a ULT)

■ **A representative of the Pharisees** said to him ...

Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is a synecdoche, and how can I translate such a thing into my language?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Metonymy](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part2]]

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [3:15](#); [4:7](#); [7:1](#); [8:1](#); [9:5](#); [9:17](#))

Translate Unknowns

While working to translate the Bible, you (the translator) might find yourself asking: “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?”

This page answers the question: *How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?*

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

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The unfoldingWord® Translation Words pages and the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes 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.

They said to him, “We have nothing here except five loaves of **bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

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 and do not 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

So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals**. (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

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, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous **wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

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.

They offered him wine mixed with **myrrh**, but he did not drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT)

People may not know what myrrh is and that it was used as a medicine.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

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 1:18b ULT)

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, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are **ravenous wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but **inwardly they are very 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 nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except 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 1:18b ULT) 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 ULT) — 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 nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT) — 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 nothing here except 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 9:11a ULT)

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **wild dogs**

“We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except 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 136:7a ULT)

to him who made **the sun and the moon**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate\]\]](#)

[How to Translate Names](#)

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2; 1:5; 1:6; 1:10; 1:12; 1:15; 2:2; 2:3; 2:5; 2:8; 2:9; 2:12; 2:14; 2:15; 2:16; 2:18; 2:21; 2:23; 3:7; 3:10; 3:12; 3:15; 4:4; 4:5; 4:11; 5:14; 6:2; 6:4; 6:14; 7:9; 7:10; 8:2; 8:4; 8:7; 8:8; 9:13; 9:25](#))

When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate “brother” or “he” when it could refer to anyone, male or female?*

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

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-genericnoun]]

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

A wise son makes **his** father rejoice
but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

Examples From the Bible

Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **his brother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **his brother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

- (1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)

“The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies.”
 “Wise **people** die just like fools die.”

- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.

“For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia.”

- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

“If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”
 (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, “he,” “himself,” and “his” to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, “they,” “themselves,” and “their” in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

>

“If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me.”

(Go back to: [Esther 2:15](#); [5:11](#); [9:30](#); [10:3](#))



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 27

administration, administrator, administering, officer, official, leader

Facts:

The terms “administration” and “administrator” refer to managing or governing of people of a country to help it function in an orderly way.

- Daniel and three other Jewish young men were appointed to be administrators, or government officials, over certain parts of Babylon.
- In the New Testament, administration is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- A person who has the spiritual gift of administration is able to lead and govern people as well as supervise the maintenance of buildings and other property.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “administrator” could include “governor” or “organizer” or “manager” or “ruler” or “government official.”
- The term “administration” could be translated as “governing” or “management” or “leadership.” or “organization.”
- Expressions such as “in charge of” or “taking care of” or “keeping order” could possibly be part of the translation of these terms.

(See also: [Babylon](#), Daniel, gift, [governor](#), Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:14
- Daniel 6:1-3
- Esther 9:3-5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5532, H5608, H5632, H6213, H7860, G29410

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [2:3](#); [5:11](#))

adversary, enemy

Definition:

An “adversary” is a person (or group of people) who is opposed to someone else. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose or harm another person.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- The term “adversary” may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:14
- Isaiah 9:11
- Job 6:23
- Lamentations 4:12
- Luke 12:59
- Matthew 13:25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G04760, G04800, G21890, G21900, G52270

(Go back to: [Esther 3:10](#); [7:6](#); [8:1](#); [8:13](#); [9:1](#); [9:5](#); [9:10](#); [9:16](#); [9:22](#); [9:24](#))

Ahasuerus

Facts:

Ahasuerus was a king who ruled over the ancient kingdom of Persia for twenty years.

- This was during the time the exiled Jews were living in Babylonia, which had come under Persian rule.
- Another name for this king may have been Xerxes.
- After sending away his queen in a fit of anger, King Ahasuerus later chose a Jewish woman named Esther to be his new wife and queen.

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

(See also: [Babylon](#), [Esther](#), [Ethiopia](#), [exile](#), [Persia](#))

Bible References:

- Daniel 9:1
- Esther 10:1-2
- Ezra 4:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0325

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:2](#); [1:9](#); [1:10](#); [1:15](#); [1:16](#); [1:17](#); [1:19](#); [2:1](#); [2:12](#); [2:16](#); [2:21](#); [3:1](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:8](#); [3:12](#); [6:2](#); [7:5](#); [8:1](#); [8:7](#); [8:10](#); [8:12](#); [9:2](#); [9:20](#); [9:30](#); [10:1](#); [10:3](#))

ancestor, father, fathered, forefather, grandfather

Definition:

The term “father” refers to a person’s male parent.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to a male ancestor(s) of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated a “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4 “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader,” depending on the context.
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: God the Father, [son](#), Son of God)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:2
- Acts 7:32
- Acts 7:45
- Acts 22:3
- Genesis 31:30
- Genesis 31:42
- Genesis 31:53
- Hebrews 7:4-6
- John 4:12
- Joshua 24:3-4
- Malachi 3:7
- Mark 10:7-9
- Matthew 1:7
- Matthew 3:9
- Matthew 10:21
- Matthew 18:14
- Romans 4:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0001, H0002, H0025, H0369, H0539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G05400, G10800, G37370, G39620, G39640, G39660, G39670, G39700, G39710, G39950, G42450, G42690, G46130

(Go back to: [Esther 2:7; 4:14](#))

appoint, appointed

Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in “appointed to eternal life.” That people were “appointed to eternal life” means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as “be chosen.”

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:11
- Acts 3:20
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 13:48
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Numbers 3:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0561, H0977, H2163, H2296, H2706, H2708, H2710, H3198, H3245, H3259, H3677, H3983, H4150, H4151, H4152, H4483, H4487, H4662, H5324, H5344, H5414, H5567, H5975, H6310, H6485, H6565, H6635, H6680, H6923, H6942, H6966, H7760, H7896, G03220, G06060, G12990, G13030, G19350, G25250, G27490, G42870, G42960, G43840, G49290, G50210, G50870

(Go back to: [Esther 2:3](#))

assembly, assemble, congregation, meeting, gather, community

Definition:

The term “assembly” usually refers to a group of people who come together for some reason, often to discuss problems, give advice, or 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.

Old Testament

- 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.

New Testament

- 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](#))
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers was sometimes also referred to as an “assembly.” This could be translated as “army.”

(See also: council)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:14
- Acts 7:38
- Ezra 10:12-13
- Hebrews 12:22-24
- Leviticus 4:20-21
- Nehemiah 8:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0622, H1481, H2199, H3259, H4150, H4186, H4744, H5475, H5712, H6116, H6908, H6950, H6951, H6952, G15770, G38310, G48630, G48640, G48710, G49050

(Go back to: [Esther 9:2](#); [9:16](#); [9:18](#))

Babylon, Babylonia, Babylonian

Facts:

The city of Babylon was the capital of the ancient region of Babylonia, which was also part of the Babylonian Empire.

- Babylon was located along the Euphrates River, in the same region where the Tower of Babel had been built hundreds of years before.
- Sometimes the word “Babylon” refers to the entire Babylonian Empire. For example, the “king of Babylon” ruled the entire empire, not just the city.
- The Babylonians were a powerful people group who attacked the kingdom of Judah and kept the people in exile in Babylonia for 70 years.
- Part of this region was called “Chaldea” and the people living there were the “Chaldeans.” As a result, the term “Chaldea” was often used to refer to Babylonia. (See: [synecdoche](#))

(See also: Babel, Chaldea, Judah, [Nebuchadnezzar](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1
- 2 Kings 17:24-26
- Acts 7:43
- Daniel 1:2
- Ezekiel 12:13
- Matthew 1:11
- Matthew 1:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:6** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent Nebuchadnezzar, king of the **Babylonians**, to attack the kingdom of Judah. **Babylon** was a powerful empire.
- **20:7** But after a few years, the king of Judah rebelled against **Babylon**. So, the **Babylonians** came back and attacked the kingdom of Judah. They captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- **20:9** 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.
- **20:11** About seventy years later, Cyrus, the king of the Persians, defeated **Babylon**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3778, H3779, H8152, H0894, H0895, H0896, G08970

(Go back to: [Esther 2:6](#))

banquet

Definition:

A banquet is large, formal meal that usually includes several food courses.

- In ancient times, kings often served banquet meals to entertain political leaders and other important guests.
- This could also be translated as “elaborate meal” or “important feast” or “multi-course meal.”

Bible References:

- Daniel 5:10
- Isaiah 5:11-12
- Jeremiah 16:8
- Luke 5:29-32
- Song of Songs 2:3-4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4960, H4961, H8354, G11730, G14030

(Go back to: [Esther 5:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:8](#); [5:12](#); [5:14](#); [6:14](#); [7:2](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#))

Benjamin, Benjaminite

Facts:

Benjamin was Jacob's twelfth son. He was Rachel's second son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Benjamin" or "Benjamin" or the "Benjaminites."
- In Hebrew, the name Benjamin means "son of my right hand."
- The tribe of Benjamin settled just northwest of the Dead Sea, north of Jerusalem.
- King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin.
- The apostle Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin.

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

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Jacob, Rachel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 2:8
- Acts 13:21-22
- Genesis 35:18
- Genesis 42:4
- Genesis 42:35-36
- Philippians 3:4-5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1144, G09580

(Go back to: [Esther 2:5](#))

bow, bow down, kneel, bend, bend the knee

Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To “bow down” means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include “bow the knee” (meaning to kneel) and “bow the head” (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is “bowed down” has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “bend forward” or “bend the head” or “kneel.”
- The term “bow down” could be translated as “kneel down” or “prostrate oneself.”
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: [humble](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:18
- Exodus 20:5
- Genesis 24:26
- Genesis 44:14
- Isaiah 44:19
- Luke 24:5
- Matthew 2:11
- Revelation 3:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0086, H3721, H3766, H5753, H5791, H6915, H7743, H7812, H7817, G11200, G25780, G28270, G40980

(Go back to: [Esther 3:2](#); [3:5](#))

brother

Definition:

The term “brother” refers to a male sibling who shares at least one biological parent.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives or associates, such as members of the same tribe, clan, occupation, or people group. When used in this way, the term can refer to both men and women.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often use the term “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: [apostle](#), [God the Father](#), [sister](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Genesis 29:10
- Leviticus 19:17
- Nehemiah 3:1
- Philippians 4:21
- Revelation 1:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0251, H0252, H0264, H1730, H2992, H2993, H2994, H7453, G00800, G00810, G23850, G24550, G25000, G46130, G53600, G55690

(Go back to: [Esther 10:3](#))

call, call out

Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out” usually mean to speak loudly, but the term “call” can also mean to name or summon a person. There are also some other meanings.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. 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.”
- When God “calls” people, it means 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 naming someone. For example, “His name 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 has specifically chosen that person.

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 you and have chosen you.”

(See also: pray, cry)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:24
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- Ephesians 4:1
- Galatians 1:15
- Matthew 2:15
- Philippians 3:14

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

(Go back to: [Esther 6:9](#); [6:11](#))

column, pillar

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, false god, image)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:4
- Exodus 13:21
- Exodus 33:9
- Genesis 31:45
- Proverbs 9:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H0547, H2106, H2553, H3730, H4552, H4676, H4678, H4690, H5324, H5333, H5982, H8490, G47690

(Go back to: [Esther 1:6](#))

command, commandment

Definition:

The term “command” means to order someone to do something. The term “commandment” refers to the thing that a person is commanded to do.

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

Translation Suggestions

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

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

Bible References:

- Luke 1:6
- Matthew 1:24
- Matthew 22:38
- Matthew 28:20
- Numbers 1:17-19
- Romans 7:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0560, H0565, H1296, 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, G12630, G12910, G12960, G12970, G12990, G16900, G17780, G17810, G17850, G20030, G20040, G20080, G20360, G27530, G30560, G37260, G38520, G38530, G43670, G44830, G44870, G55060

(Go back to: [Esther 1:15](#); [2:20](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:12](#); [4:5](#); [4:10](#); [8:9](#))

concubine

Definition:

A concubine is a woman who is a secondary wife for a man who already has a wife. Usually a concubine is not legally married to the man.

- In the Old Testament, concubines were often female slaves.
- A concubine could be acquired by purchase, through military conquest, or in payment of a debt.
- For a king, having many concubines was a sign of power.

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 3:7
- Genesis 22:24
- Genesis 25:5-6
- Genesis 35:21-22
- Genesis 36:12
- Judges 19:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3904, H6370

(Go back to: [Esther 2:14](#))

contempt, contemptible, not worth listening to

Facts:

The term “contempt” refers to a deep disrespect and dishonor that is shown toward something or someone. Something that is greatly dishonorable is called “contemptible.”

- A person or behavior that shows open disrespect for God is also called “contemptible” and could be translated as “greatly disrespectful” or “completely dishonorable” or “deserving scorn.”
- To “hold in contempt” means to regard someone as having less value or to judge someone as less worthy than oneself.
- The following expressions have a similar meaning: “have contempt for” or “show contempt for” or “be in contempt of” or “treat with contempt.” These all mean to “strongly disrespect” or “strongly dishonor” something or someone by what is said and done.
- When King David sinned by committing adultery and murder, God said that David had “shown contempt for” God. It means he had greatly disrespected and dishonored God by doing that.

(See also: dishonor)

Bible References:

- Daniel 12:1-2
- Proverbs 15:5-6
- Psalms 31:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0936, H0937, H0959, H0963, H1860, H7043, H7589, H5006, G18480

(Go back to: [Esther 1:18](#))

court, courtyard

Definition:

The terms “courtyard” and “court” refer to an enclosed area that is open to the sky and surrounded by walls. The term “court” also refers to a place where judges decide legal and criminal matters.

- The tabernacle was surrounded by one courtyard which was enclosed by walls made of thick, cloth curtains.
- The temple complex had three inner courtyards: one for the priests, one for Jewish men, and one for Jewish women.
- These inner courtyards were surrounded by a low stone wall that separated them from an outer courtyard where Gentiles were permitted to worship.
- The courtyard of a house was an open area in the middle of the house.
- The phrase “king’s court” can refer to his palace or to a place in his palace where he makes judgments.
- The expression, “courts of Yahweh” is a figurative way of referring to Yahweh’s dwelling place or to the place where people go to worship Yahweh.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “courtyard” could be translated as “enclosed space” or “walled-in land” or “temple grounds” or “temple enclosure.”
- Sometimes the term “temple” may need to be translated as “temple courtyards” or “temple complex” so that it is clear that the courtyards are being referred to, not the temple building.
- The expression, “courts of Yahweh” could be translated as “place where Yahweh lives” or “place where Yahweh is worshiped.”
- The term used for a king’s court could also be used to refer to Yahweh’s court.

(See also: Gentile, judge, [king](#), tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 20:4-5
- Exodus 27:9
- Jeremiah 19:14-15
- Luke 22:55
- Matthew 26:69-70
- Numbers 3:26
- Psalms 65:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1508, H2691, H5835, H7339, H8651, G08330, G42590

(Go back to: [Esther 1:5](#); [2:11](#); [4:11](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [6:4](#); [6:5](#))

crown, crowned

Definition:

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term to “crown” means to put a crown on someone’s head; figuratively it means, to “honor.”

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king’s power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus’ head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, to “crown” means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Pauls calls fellow believers his “joy and crown.” In this expression, “crown” is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, “crown” could be translated as “prize” or “honor” or “reward.”
- The figurative use of to “crown” could be translated as to “honor” or to “decorate.”
- If a person is “crowned” this could be translated as “a crown was put on his head.”
- The expression, “he was crowned with glory and honor” could be translated as “glory and honor were bestowed on him” or “he was given glory and honor” or “he was endowed with glory and honor.”

(See also: [glory](#), [king](#), [olive](#))

Bible References:

- John 19:3
- Lamentations 5:16
- Matthew 27:29
- Philippians 4:1
- Psalms 21:3
- Revelation 3:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3803, H3804, H5145, H5849, H5850, H6936, G12380, G47350, G47370

(Go back to: [Esther 1:11](#); [2:17](#); [6:8](#); [8:15](#))

cry, cry out, outcry

Definition:

The terms “cry” or “cry out” usually mean to say something loudly or urgently. Someone can “cry out” in pain, distress, anger, or fear, often with the intent of asking for help.

- The phrase “cry out” can also mean to shout or to call out with the intent of asking for help.
- It can also mean to pray.
- This term could also be translated as “exclaim loudly” or “urgently ask for help,” depending on the context.
- An expression such as, “I cry out to you” could be translated as “I call to you for help” or “I urgently ask you for help.”

(See also: [call](#), [plead](#), pray)

Bible References:

- Job 27:9
- Mark 5:5-6
- Mark 6:48-50
- Psalm 22:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1058, H2199, H2201, H6030, H6463, H6670, H6682, H6817, H6818, H6873, H6963, H7121, H7123, H7321, H7440, H7442, H7723, H7737, H7768, H7771, H7775, H8663, G03100, G03490, G08630, G09940, G09950, G19160, G20190, G27990, G28050, G28960, G29050, G29060, G29290, G43770, G54550

(Go back to: [Esther 9:31](#))

decree, decreed

Definition:

The term “decree” means to give an order that must be obeyed. The order itself can also be called a “decree.”

- A “decree” is similar to a “law,” but is generally used more often to refer to something spoken rather than written.
- The term “decree” could be translated as to “order” or to “command” or to “formally require” or to “publicly make a law.”
- God’s laws are also called decrees, statutes, or commandments.
- An example of a decree by a human ruler was the proclamation by Caesar Augustus that everyone living in the Roman Empire must go back to their hometown in order to be counted in a census.

(See also: [command](#), declare, [law](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 15:13-15
- 1 Kings 8:57-58
- Acts 17:5-7
- Daniel 2:13
- Esther 1:22
- Luke 2:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0633, H1697, H5715, H1504, H1510, H1881, H1882, H1696, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2711, H2782, H2852, H2940, H2941, H2942, H3791, H3982, H4055, H4406, H4687, H4941, H5407, H5713, H6599, H6680, H7010, H8421, G13780

(Go back to: [Esther 1:19](#); [1:20](#); [2:8](#); [3:15](#); [4:3](#); [8:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:32](#))

delight

Definition:

The term “delight” means great pleasure or great joy.

- To “delight in” something means to “to take pleasure in” or “take joy in” or “be happy about” it. If a person “delights in” something, it means that he enjoys it very much.
- When something is very agreeable or pleasing it is called “delightful.”
- The expression “my delight is in the law of Yahweh” could be translated as “the law of Yahweh gives me great joy” or “I love to obey the laws of Yahweh” or “I am happy when I obey Yahweh’s commands.”
- The phrases “take no delight in” and “have no delight in” could be translated as “not at all pleased by” or “not happy about.”
- The phrase “delight himself in” means “he enjoys doing” something or “he is very happy about” something or someone.
- The term “delights” refers to things that a person enjoys. This could be translated as “pleasures” or “things that give joy.”
- An expression such as “I delight to do your will” could also be translated as “I enjoy doing your will” or “I am very happy when I obey you.”

Bible References:

- Proverbs 8:30
- Psalm 1:2
- Psalms 119:69-70
- Song of Songs 1:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1523, H2530, H2531, H2532, H2654, H2655, H2656, H2836, H4574, H5276, H5727, H5730, H6026, H6027, H7306, H7381, H7521, H7522, H8057, H8173, H8191, H8588, H8597

(Go back to: [Esther 2:14](#); [6:6](#); [6:7](#); [6:9](#); [6:11](#))

deliver, hand over, turn over, release, rescue

Definition:

To “deliver” someone means to rescue that person. The term “deliverer” refers to someone who rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers. The term “deliverance” refers to what happens when someone rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers.

- In the Old Testament, God appointed deliverers to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them.
- These deliverers were also called “judges” and the Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- God is also called a “deliverer.” Throughout the history of Israel, he delivered or rescued his people from their enemies.
- The term “deliver over to” or “deliver up to” has a very different meaning of handing or turning someone over to an enemy, such as when Judas delivered Jesus over to the Jewish leaders.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of helping people escape from their enemies, the term “deliver” can be translated as “rescue” or “liberate” or “save.”
- When it means to deliver someone over to the enemy, “deliver over” can be translated as “betray to” or “hand over” or “give over.”
- The word “deliverer” can also be translated as “rescuer” or “liberator.”
- When the term “deliverer” refers to the judges who led Israel, it could also be translated as “governor” or “judge” or “leader.”

(See also: [judge](#), save)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:10
- Acts 7:35
- Galatians 1:4
- Judges 10:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:3** Then God provided a **deliverer** who rescued them from their enemies and brought peace to the land.
- **16:16** They (Israel) finally asked God for help again, and God sent them another **deliverer**.
- **16:17** Over many years, God sent many **deliverers** who saved the Israelites from their enemies.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H2020, H2502, H3205, H3444, H3467, H4042, H4422, H4672, H5337, H5414, H5462, H6299, H6403, H6413, H6475, H6561, H7725, H7804, H8199, G03250, G05250, G06290, G10800, G13250, G15600, G16590, G18070, G19290, G26730, G30860, G38600, G45060, G49910, G50880, G54830

(Go back to: [Esther 4:14](#))

destroy, destruction, annihilate

Definition:

The term “destroy” means to completely make an end to something, so that it no longer exists.

- The term “destroyer” means “a person who destroys.”
- This term is often used in the Old Testament as a general reference to anyone who destroys other people, such as an invading army.
- When God sent the angel to kill all the firstborn males in Egypt, that angel was referred to as “the destroyer of the firstborn.” This could be translated as “the one (or angel) who killed the firstborn males.”
- In the book of Revelation about the end times, Satan or some other evil spirit is called “the Destroyer.” He is the “one who destroys” because his purpose is to destroy and ruin everything God created.

(See also: angel, Egypt, firstborn, Passover)

Bible References:

- Exodus 12:23
- Hebrews 11:28
- Jeremiah 6:26
- Judges 16:24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0622, H0398, H1104, H1197, H1820, H1826, H1942, H2000, H2015, H2026, H2040, H2254, H2255, H2717, H2718, H2763, H2764, H3238, H3341, H3381, H3423, H3582, H3615, H3617, H3772, H3807, H4191, H4229, H4591, H4658, H4889, H5218, H5221, H5307, H5362, H5420, H5422, H5428, H5595, H5642, H6365, H6789, H6979, H7665, H7667, H7703, H7722, H7760, H7843, H7921, H8045, H8074, H8077, H8316, H8552, G03550, G03960, G06220, G08530, G13110, G18420, G20490, G25060, G25070, G26470, G26730, G27040, G30890, G36450, G41990, G53510, G53560

(Go back to: [Esther 3:6](#); [3:9](#); [3:13](#); [4:7](#); [4:8](#); [7:4](#); [8:5](#); [8:6](#); [8:11](#); [9:5](#); [9:6](#); [9:12](#); [9:24](#))

die, dead, deadly, death

Definition:

The term “death” refers to being physically dead instead of alive.

1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

2. Eternal death

- Eternal death is the separation of a person from God.
- This is the kind of death that happened to Adam when he sinned and disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- This same kind of death happens to every person, because we sin. But God gives us eternal life when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression in the target language that refers to death.
- In some languages, to “die” may be expressed as to “not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
- Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as to “pass away” in English. However, in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
- In the Bible, eternal life and eternal death are often compared to physical life and physical death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and eternal death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “eternal death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)
- The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: believe, faith, [life](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:21
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Acts 10:42
- Acts 14:19
- Colossians 2:15
- Colossians 2:20
- Genesis 2:15-17
- Genesis 34:27
- Matthew 16:28
- Romans 5:10

- Romans 5:12
- Romans 6:10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:11** God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would **die**.
- **2:11** "Then you will **die**, and your body will return to dirt."
- **7:10** Then Isaac **died**, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he **dies**. Everyone who believes in me will never **die**."
- **40:8** Through his **death**, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
- **43:7** "Although Jesus **died**, God raised him from the dead."
- **48:2** Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone **dies**.
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or **death**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0006, H1478, H1826, H1934, H2491, H4191, H4192, H4193, H4194, H4463, H5038, H5315, H6297, H6757, H7496, H7523, H8045, H8546, H8552, G03360, G03370, G05200, G05990, G06150, G06220, G16340, G19350, G20790, G22530, G22860, G22870, G22880, G22890, G23480, G28370, G29660, G34980, G34990, G35000, G44300, G48800, G48810, G50530, G50540

(Go back to: [Esther 2:7; 4:11](#))

Esther, Hadasseh

Facts:

Esther was a Jewish woman who became queen of the Persian kingdom after the Israelites were taken to Babylon as captives. "Esther" was her Persian name, and her Hebrew name was "Hadasseh."

- The book of Esther tells the story of how Esther became the wife of the Persian King Ahasuerus and how God used her to save her people.
- Esther was an orphan who was raised by her godly older cousin, Mordecai.
- Her obedience to her adoptive father helped her to be obedient to God.
- Esther obeyed God and risked her life in order to save her people, the Jews.
- The story of Esther illustrates God's sovereign control over the events of history, especially how he protects his people and works through those who obey him.

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

(See also: [Ahasuerus](#), [Mordecai](#), [Persia](#))

Bible References:

- Esther 2:7
- Esther 2:15
- Esther 7:1
- Esther 8:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0635

(Go back to: [Esther 2:7](#); [2:8](#); [2:10](#); [2:11](#); [2:15](#); [2:16](#); [2:17](#); [2:18](#); [2:20](#); [2:22](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:8](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [4:15](#); [4:17](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#); [5:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:7](#); [5:12](#); [6:14](#); [7:1](#); [7:2](#); [7:3](#); [7:5](#); [7:6](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#); [8:1](#); [8:2](#); [8:3](#); [8:4](#); [8:7](#); [9:12](#); [9:13](#); [9:29](#); [9:31](#); [9:32](#))

Ethiopia, Ethiopian

Facts:

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

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

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

(See also: Cush, Egypt, eunuch, Philip)

Bible References:

- Acts 8:27
- Acts 8:30
- Acts 8:32-33
- Acts 8:36-38
- Isaiah 18:1-2
- Nahum 3:9
- Zephaniah 3:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong's: G01280

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1; 8:9](#))

evil, wicked, unpleasant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: disobey, sin, [good](#), righteous, demon)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:11
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 3 John 1:10
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 6:5-6
- Job 1:1
- Job 8:20
- Judges 9:57
- Luke 6:22-23
- Matthew 7:11-12
- Proverbs 3:7
- Psalms 22:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **4:2** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **8:12** “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:1** 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**.
- **29:8** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.

- **45:2** 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: H0205, H0605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2254, H2617, H3399, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G00920, G01130, G04590, G09320, G09870, G09880, G14260, G25490, G25510, G25540, G25550, G25560, G25570, G25590, G25600, G26350, G26360, G41510, G41890, G41900, G41910, G53370

(Go back to: [Esther 7:6](#); [7:7](#); [8:3](#); [8:6](#); [9:2](#); [9:25](#))

exile, exiled

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 24:14
- Daniel 2:25-26
- Ezekiel 1:1-3
- Isaiah 20:4
- Jeremiah 29:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1541, H1546, H1547, H3212, H3318, H5080, H6808, H7617, H7622, H8689, G39270

(Go back to: [Esther 2:6](#))

face, facial

Definition:

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings in the Bible.

- In the Bible, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean a person’s presence, the front of an object, or the surface of something.
- When referring to a person, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean the action of seeing, which can represent that person’s knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment.
- In a physical sense, to “face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine affecting many people living on earth.
- The figurative expression “do not hide your face from your people” means “do not reject your people” or “do not desert your people” or “do not stop taking care of your people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the expression or use an expression in the project language that has a similar meaning.
- The term to “face” could be translated as to “turn toward” or to “look at directly” or to “look at the face of.”
- The expression “face to face” could be translated as “up close” or “right in front of” or “in the presence of.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “before his face” could be translated as “ahead of him” or “in front of him” or “before him” or “in his presence.”
- The expression “set his face toward” could be translated as “began traveling toward” or “firmly made up his mind to go to.”
- The expression “hide his face from” could be translated as “turn away from” or “stop helping or protecting” or “reject.”
- To “set his face against” a city or people could be translated as “look at with anger and condemn” or “refuse to accept” or “decide to reject” or “condemn and reject” or “pass judgment on.”
- The expression “say it to their face” could be translated as “say it to them directly” or “say it to them in their presence” or “say it to them in person.”
- The expression “on the face of the land” could also be translated as “throughout the land” or “over the whole land” or “living throughout the land.”

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 5:4
- Genesis 33:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0600, H0639, H5869, H6440, H8389, G37990, G43830, G47500

(Go back to: Esther 1:3; 1:10; 1:11; 1:13; 1:14; 1:16; 1:17; 1:19; 2:9; 2:11; 2:17; 2:23; 3:7; 4:2; 4:5; 4:6; 4:8; 5:14; 6:1; 6:9; 6:11; 6:13; 7:6; 7:8; 7:9; 8:1; 8:3; 8:4; 8:5; 8:15; 9:2; 9:11; 9:25)

family, household

Definition:

The term “family” refers to a group of people who are related by blood and usually includes a father, mother, and their children. In the Bible, this term sometimes includes other close relatives such as grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts.

- In biblical times, usually the oldest man was the major authority of a family.
- Family could also include servants, concubines, and even foreigners.
- Some languages may have a broader word such as “clan” or “household” that would fit better in contexts where more than just parents and children are being referred to.
- The New Testament often uses terms related to the concept of “family” to refer to the Church, meaning people who believe in Jesus.

(See also: [clan](#), [ancestor](#), [house](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 1 Samuel 18:18
- Exodus 1:21
- Joshua 2:12-13
- Luke 2:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0251, H0272, H0504, H1004, H1121, H2233, H2859, H2945, H3187, H4138, H4940, H5387, H5712, G10850, G36140, G36240, G39650

(Go back to: [Esther 9:28](#))

fast, fasting

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
- Acts 13:1-3
- Jonah 3:4-5
- Luke 5:34
- Mark 2:19
- Matthew 6:18
- Matthew 9:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:1** Immediately after Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led him out into the wilderness, where he **fasted** for forty days and forty nights.
- **34:8** ““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, G35210, G35220

(Go back to: [Esther 4:3](#); [4:16](#); [9:31](#))

favor, favorable, favoritism

Definition:

The term “favor” generally means approval. Someone who favors another person regards that person positively and approves of them.

- Jesus grew up “in favor with” God and men. This means that both God and others approved of his character and behavior.
- The expression “find favor” with someone means that someone is approved of by that person.
- When a king shows favor to someone, it often means that he approves of that person’s request and grants it.
- A “favor” can also be a gesture or action towards or for another person for their benefit.
- The term “favoritism” means an attitude of acting favorably toward some people but not others. It means the inclination to pick one person over another or one thing over another because the person or item is preferred. Generally, favoritism is considered unfair.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term “favor” could include “approval” or “blessing” or “benefit.”
- The “favorable year of Yahweh” could be translated as “the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing.”
- The term “favoritism” could be translated as “partiality” or “being prejudiced” or “unjust treatment.” This word is related to the word “favorite,” which means to prefer above all others.

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:25-26
- 2 Chronicles 19:7
- 2 Corinthians 1:11
- Acts 24:27
- Genesis 41:16
- Genesis 47:25
- Genesis 50:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H1156, H1293, H1779, H1921, H2580, H2603, H2896, H5278, H5375, H5414, H5922, H6213, H6437, H6440, H7521, H7522, H7965, G11840, G36850, G43800, G43820, G54850, G54860

(Go back to: [Esther 2:15](#); [2:17](#); [5:2](#); [5:8](#); [7:3](#); [8:5](#))

fear, afraid, frighten

Definition:

The terms “fear” refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term “fear” can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “fear” can be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “be afraid;” “deeply respect;” or “deep respect;” “revere;” or “reverence;” or perhaps “be in awe of.”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God;” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply;” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”

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

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 6:14
- Jonah 1:9
- Luke 12:5
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0367, H0926, 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, G08700, G11670, G11680, G11690, G16300, G17190, G21240, G21250, G29620, G53980, G53990, G54000, G54010

(Go back to: [Esther 8:17](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#))

feast, feasting

Definition:

The term “feast” is a very general term that refers to an event where people gather to celebrate something by eating a large meal together. In biblical times, a feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In biblical times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- The term to “feast” could also be translated as to “eat lavishly” or to “celebrate by eating lots of food” or to “eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: festival, [banquet](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Genesis 26:30
- Genesis 29:22
- Genesis 40:20
- Jude 1:12-13
- Luke 2:43
- Luke 14:7-9
- Matthew 22:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H2077, H2282, H3899, H3900, H4150, H4797, H4960, H7646, H8057, H8354, G00260, G10620, G11730, G18590, G21650, G49100

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [1:5](#); [1:9](#); [2:18](#); [8:17](#); [9:17](#); [9:18](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#))

gate, gate bars, gatekeeper, gateposts, gateway

Definition:

The term “gate” refers to an access point in a fence, wall, or other kind of barrier that surrounds a house, property, city, etc.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A “bar” for a gate refers to a wood or metal bar that can be moved into place so that the doors of the gate cannot be opened from the outside.
- In Bible times, a city gate was often the social center for that town or city. It was a place where news of current events was exchanged between people, where business transactions occurred, and where civil judgments were made.

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

- Acts 9:24
- Acts 10:18
- Deuteronomy 21:18-19
- Genesis 19:1
- Genesis 24:60
- Matthew 7:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1817, H5592, H6607, H8179, G23740, G44390, G44400

(Go back to: [Esther 2:19](#); [2:21](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [4:2](#); [4:6](#); [5:9](#); [5:13](#); [6:10](#); [6:12](#))

generation

Definition:

The term “generation” generally refers to a group of people who are all alive at the same time. They are all born in the same general time period and are therefore about the same age.

- A generation can also refer to a span of time. In Bible times, a generation was usually considered to be about 40 years.
- Parents and their children are from two different generations.
- In the Bible, the term “generation” is also used figuratively to refer generally to people who share common characteristics.

Translation Suggestions

- The phrase “this generation” or “people of this generation” could be translated as “the people living now” or “you people.”
- “This wicked generation” could also be translated as “these wicked people living now.”
- The expression “from generation to generation” or “from one generation to the next” could be translated as “people living now, as well as their children and grandchildren” or “people in every time period” or “people in this time period and future time periods” or “all people and their descendants.”
- “A generation to come will serve him; they will tell the next generation about Yahweh” could also be translated as “Many people in the future will serve Yahweh and will tell their children and grandchildren about him.”

(See also: descendant, [evil](#), [ancestor](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 15:19-21
- Exodus 3:13-15
- Genesis 15:16
- Genesis 17:7
- Mark 8:12
- Matthew 11:16
- Matthew 23:34-36
- Matthew 24:34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1755, H1859, H8435, G10740

(Go back to: [Esther 9:28](#))

glory, glorious, glorify

Definition:

The term “glory” is a general term for a family of concepts including value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, or majesty. The term “glorify” means to ascribe glory to someone or something, or to show or tell how glorious something or someone is.

- In the Bible, the term “glory” is especially used to describe God, who is more valuable, more worthy, more important, more honorable, more splendid, and more majestic than anyone or anything in the universe. Everything about his character reveals his glory.
- People can glorify God by telling about the wonderful things he has done. They can also glorify God by living in accordance with God’s character, because doing so shows to others his value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, and majesty.
- The expression to “glory in” means to boast about or take pride in something.

Old Testament

- The specific phrase “the glory of Yahweh” in the Old Testament usually refers to some perceptible manifestation of Yahweh’s presence in a particular location.

New Testament

- God the Father will glorify God the Son by revealing to all people the full extent of how glorious Jesus is.
- Everyone who believes in Christ will be glorified with him. This use of the term “glorify” carries a unique meaning. It means that when people who believe in Christ are raised to life, they will be changed physically to be like Jesus as he appeared after his resurrection.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “glory” could include “splendor” or “majesty” or “awesome greatness” or “extreme value.”
- The term “glorious” could be translated as “full of glory” or “extremely valuable” or “brightly shining” or “awesomely majestic.”
- The expression “give glory to God” could be translated as “honor God’s greatness” or “praise God because of his splendor” or “tell others how great God is.”
- The expression “glory in” could also be translated as “praise” or “take pride in” or “boast about” or “take pleasure in.”
- “Glorify” could also be translated as “give glory to” or “bring glory to” or “cause to appear great.”
- The phrase “glorify God” could also be translated as “praise God” or “talk about God’s greatness” or “show how great God is” or “honor God (by obeying him).”
- The term “be glorified” could also be translated as “be shown to be very great” or “be praised” or “be exalted.”

(See also: [honor](#), majesty, exalt, [obey](#), praise)

Bible References:

- Exodus 24:17
- Numbers 14:9-10
- Isaiah 35:2

- Luke 18:43
- Luke 2:9
- John 12:28
- Acts 3:13-14
- Acts 7:1-3
- Romans 8:17
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- Philippians 2:14-16
- Philippians 4:19
- Colossians 3:1-4
- 1 Thessalonians 2:5
- James 2:1-4
- 1 Peter 4:15-16
- Revelation 15:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “**Glory** to God in heaven and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- **25:6** Then Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their **glory** and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- **37:1** When Jesus heard this news, he said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the **glory** of God.”
- **37:8** Jesus responded, “Did I not tell you that you would see God’s **glory** if you believe in me?”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0117, H0142, H0155, H0215, H1342, H1921, H1926, H1935, H1984, H3367, H3513, H3519, H3520, H6286, H6643, H7623, H8597, G13910, G13920, G17400, G17410, G27440, G48880

(Go back to: [Esther 1:4](#); [5:11](#))

gold, golden

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 1:7
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- 2 Chronicles 1:15
- Acts 3:6
- Daniel 2:32

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1220, H1722, H2091, H2742, H3800, H5458, H6884, H6885, G55520, G55530, G55540, G55570

(Go back to: [Esther 1:6](#); [1:7](#); [4:11](#); [5:2](#); [8:4](#); [8:15](#))

good, right, pleasant, better, best

Definition:

The term “good” generally refers to a positive evaluation of the quality of something or someone, often in a moral or emotional sense. However, the term conveys various nuances throughout the Bible depending on the context.

- Something that is “good” could be emotionally pleasant, morally right, excellent, helpful, suitable, or profitable.
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone or “cause someone to prosper.”
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: righteous, prosper, [evil](#))

Bible References:

- Galatians 5:22-24
- Genesis 1:12
- Genesis 2:9
- Genesis 2:17
- James 3:13
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:4** God saw that what he had created was **good**.
- **1:11** God planted the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.
- **1:12** Then God said, “It is not **good** for man to be alone.”
- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does.”
- **8:12** “You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good!**”
- **14:15** Joshua was a **good** leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- **18:13** Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- **28:1** “**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me ‘**good**?’ There is only one who is **good**, and that is God.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0145, H0155, H0202, H0239, H0410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G00140, G00150, G00180, G00190, G05150, G07440, G08650, G09790, G13800, G20950, G20970, G21060, G21070, G21080, G21090, G21140, G21150, G21330, G21400, G21620, G21630, G21740, G22930, G25650, G25670, G25700, G25730, G28870, G29860, G31400, G36170, G37760, G41470, G46320, G46740, G48510, G52230, G52240, G53580, G55420, G55430, G55440

(Go back to: [Esther 1:10](#); [1:11](#); [1:19](#); [1:21](#); [2:2](#); [2:3](#); [2:7](#); [2:9](#); [3:9](#); [3:11](#); [5:4](#); [5:8](#); [5:9](#); [7:3](#); [7:9](#); [8:5](#); [8:8](#); [8:17](#); [9:13](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#); [10:3](#))

govern, governor, proconsul, Tirshatha

Definition:

A “governor” is a person who rules over a large area of land (such as a territory, region, or province) within a nation or empire.

- In the Old Testament, the term “Tirshatha” is a more specific title for a governor who ruled over a Persian province.
- In the New Testament, the term “proconsul” is a more specific title for a governor who ruled over a Roman province.
- In Bible times, governors were appointed by a king or emperor and were under his authority.
- A “government” consists of all the rulers who govern a certain country or empire. These rulers make laws that guide the behavior of their citizens so that there is peace, safety, and prosperity for all the people of that nation.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “governor” can also be translated as “ruler” or “overseer” or “regional leader” or “one who rules over a small territory.”
- Depending on the context, the term “govern” could also be translated as “rule over” or “lead” or “manage” or “supervise.”
- The term “governor” should be translated differently than the terms for “king” or “emperor”, since a governor was a less powerful ruler who was under their authority.
- The term “proconsul” could also be translated as “Roman governor” or “Roman provincial ruler.”

(See also: [authority](#), [king](#), [power](#), [province](#), Rome, [ruler](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 23:22
- Acts 26:30
- Mark 13:9-10
- Matthew 10:18
- Matthew 27:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0324, H1777, H2280, H4951, H5148, H5460, H6346, H6347, H6486, H7989, H8269, H8660, G04450, G04460, G07460, G14810, G22320, G22330, G22300, G42320

(Go back to: [Esther 3:12](#); [8:9](#); [9:3](#))

hand

Definition:

The word “hand” refers to the part of the body at the end of the arm. This term is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s power, control, or action, whether it be in reference to God or in reference to a human person.

Some of the various uses of the term “hand” include the following:

- The term “hand” can be used figuratively to refer to the position of being “beside” a person, an object, or a location.
- To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.” To “save from the hand of” means to prevent someone from being harmed by another person.
- The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
- The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, the phrase “by the hand of the Lord” means that God caused something to happen.
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- The term “laying on of hands” can refer to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God’s service, to pray for healing, or to ask God to bless that person.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that he himself wrote that part of the letter rather than speaking it to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: [power](#), right hand, [honor](#), bless)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:25
- Acts 8:17
- Acts 11:21
- Genesis 9:5
- Genesis 14:20
- John 3:35
- Mark 7:32
- Matthew 6:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2026, H2651, H2947, H2948, H3027, H3028, H3225, H3231, H3233, H3709, H7126, H7138, H8040, H8042, H8168, G07100, G11880, G14480, G14510, G21760, G29020, G40840, G44740, G54950, G54960, G54970

(Go back to: [Esther 1:15](#); [2:3](#); [2:8](#); [2:14](#); [2:18](#); [2:21](#); [3:6](#); [3:9](#); [3:10](#); [3:13](#); [5:2](#); [6:2](#); [6:9](#); [8:7](#); [8:10](#); [9:2](#); [9:10](#); [9:15](#); [9:16](#))

hang, hung

Definition:

The term “hang” means to suspend something or someone above the ground.

- In modern times, death by hanging is usually done by tying a rope around a person’s neck and suspending him from an elevated object until he dies. This elevated object can be any number of things, such as a tree or a gallows, that is, a platform built specifically for the purpose of hanging a person in order to kill him.
- In biblical times, however, ancient cultures may not have killed people by hanging in precisely the same way. For example, Jesus died while hanging on a wooden cross (sometimes called a “tree”), but there was nothing around his neck. The soldiers suspended him by nailing his hands (or wrists) and his feet to the cross.
- Some ancient cultures “hung” a person by impaling him on a wooden pole in such a way that he was suspended above the ground so that he could not escape. The person would be left there until he died.
- For many references to death by “hanging” in the Bible, the specific means of death is unknown.

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 17:23
- Acts 10:39
- Galatians 3:13
- Genesis 40:22
- Matthew 27:3-5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2614, H3363, H8518, G05190

(Go back to: [Esther 2:23](#); [5:14](#); [6:4](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [8:7](#); [9:13](#); [9:14](#); [9:25](#))

head

Definition:

The word “head” refers to the uppermost body part of a human body, above the neck. This term is often used figuratively to mean many different things, including “top,” “first,” “beginning,” “source,” and other concepts.

Some examples of various uses of the term “head” include:

- The expression “no razor will ever touch his head” means that he should never cut or shave his hair.
- 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.
- The expression “heads of grain” refers to the top part of wheat or barley plants that contains the seeds. Similarly, the expression “head of a mountain” refers to the top part of the mountain.
- The term “head” can also refer to the beginning or source of something, or the first in a series of things (can be objects or people).
- Often the term “head” refers to the most important person in a group or to a person who is in authority over others. For example, the phrase “You have made me the head over nations” means “You have made me the ruler...” or “You have given me authority over....”

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “head” could be translated as “authority” or “ruler” or “the one who is responsible for.”
- 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, some other ways to translate this term might include “top” or “beginning” or “source” or “leader.”

(See also: chief, grain)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:51-54
- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 1 Samuel 9:22
- Colossians 2:10
- Colossians 2:19
- Numbers 1:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0441, H1270, H1538, H3852, H4425, H4761, H4763, H5110, H5324, H6285, H6287, H6797, H6915, H6936, H7139, H7144, H7146, H7217, H7226, H7218, H7541, H7636, H7641, H7872, G03460, G07550, G27750, G27760, G47190

(Go back to: [Esther 5:2](#); [6:12](#); [9:25](#))

heart

Definition:

The term “heart” refers to the internal bodily organ that pumps blood throughout the body in people and animals. However, in the Bible the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with complete sincerity, commitment, or willingness, holding nothing back.
- The expression “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. That person has been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

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

(See also: hard)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4
- 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15
- Acts 8:22
- Acts 15:9
- Luke 8:15
- Mark 2:6
- Matthew 5:8
- Matthew 22:37

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1079, H2436, H2504, H2910, H3519, H3629, H3820, H3821, H3823, H3824, H3825, H3826, H4578, H5315, H5640, H7130, H7307, H7356, H7907, G06740, G12820, G12710, G21330, G25880, G25890, G46410, G46980, G55900

(Go back to: [Esther 1:10](#); [5:9](#); [6:6](#); [7:5](#))

honor

Definition:

The terms “honor” and to “honor” refer to giving someone respect, esteem, or reverence.

- Honor is usually given to someone who is of higher status and importance, such as a king or God.
- God instructs Christians to honor others.
- Children are instructed to honor their parents in ways that include respecting them and obeying them.
- The terms “honor” and “glory” are often used together, especially when referring to Jesus. These may be two different ways of referring to the same thing.
- Ways of honoring God include thanking and praising him, and showing him respect by obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “honor” could include “respect” or “esteem” or “high regard.”
- The term to “honor” could be translated as to “show special respect to” or to “cause to be praised” or to “show high regard for” or to “highly value.”

(See also: dishonor, [glory](#), [glory](#), praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:8
- Acts 19:17
- John 4:44
- John 12:26
- Mark 6:4
- Matthew 15:6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1420, H1921, H1922, H1923, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2082, H2142, H3366, H3367, H3368, H3372, H3373, H3374, H3444, H3513, H3519, H3655, H3678, H5081, H5375, H5457, H6213, H6286, H6437, H6942, H6944, H6965, H7236, H7613, H7812, H8597, H8416, G08200, G13910, G13920, G17840, G21510, G25700, G31700, G44110, G45860, G50910, G50920, G50930, G53990

(Go back to: [Esther 1:20](#); [6:3](#); [6:6](#); [6:7](#); [6:9](#); [6:11](#); [8:16](#))

horse, warhorse, horseback

Definition:

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

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

(See also: chariot, donkey, Solomon)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:4
- 2 Kings 2:11
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Ezekiel 23:5-7
- Zechariah 6:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H5483, H5484, H6571, H7409, G24620

(Go back to: [Esther 6:8](#); [6:9](#); [6:10](#); [6:11](#); [8:10](#))

house, household

Definition:

The term “house” refers to a small building, shelter, or tent, usually the place where a family sleeps. The term is often used figuratively in the Bible to mean various concepts such as “household” or “descendants,” etc.

- Sometimes the term “house” means “household,” referring to all the people who live together in one house or multi-structure home compound (whether buildings or tents), including family members and all their servants.
- Sometimes the term “house” means “family” or “descendants,” referring to all the people related to or descended from a particular person. For example, the phrase “house of David” refers to all the descendants of King David.
- The terms “house of God” and “house of Yahweh” refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to a central place where Yahweh was worshipped.
- The phrase “house of Israel” can refer generally to the entire nation of Israel or more specifically to the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “house” could be translated as “household” or “people” or “family” or “descendants” or “temple” or “dwelling place.”
- The phrase “house of David” could be translated as “clan of David” or “family of David” or “descendants of David.” Related expressions could be translated in a similar way.
- Different ways to translate “house of Israel” could include “people of Israel” or “Israel’s descendants” or “Israelites.”
- The phrase “house of Yahweh” could be translated as “Yahweh’s temple” or “place where Yahweh is worshiped” or “place where Yahweh meets with his people” or “where Yahweh dwells.” The phrase “house of God” could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: descendant, house of God, tabernacle, temple, house of David, kingdom of Israel)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:42
- Acts 7:49
- Genesis 39:4
- Genesis 41:40
- Luke 8:39
- Matthew 10:6
- Matthew 15:24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1005, G36090, G36130, G36140, G36240

(Go back to: [Esther 1:8](#); [1:22](#); [2:3](#); [2:9](#); [2:11](#); [2:13](#); [2:14](#); [4:14](#); [5:1](#); [5:10](#); [6:4](#); [6:12](#); [7:8](#); [7:9](#); [8:1](#); [8:2](#); [8:7](#))

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 4:26-27
- John 2:13
- Luke 4:9-11
- Luke 13:5
- Mark 3:7-8
- Mark 3:20-22
- Matthew 3:6
- Matthew 4:23-25
- Matthew 20:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:5** David conquered **Jerusalem** and made it his capital city.
- **18:2** In **Jerusalem**, Solomon built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- **20:7** 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.
- **38:1** 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.
- **38:2** 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.
- **42:8** "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: H3389, H3390, G24140, G24150, G24190

(Go back to: [Esther 2:6](#))

Jew, Jewish

Facts:

Jews are people who are descendants of Abraham's grandson Jacob. The word "Jew" comes from the word "Judah."

- People began to call the Israelites "Jews" after they returned to Judah from their exile in Babylon.
- Jesus the Messiah was Jewish. However, the Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus and demanded that he be killed.

(See also: Abraham, Jacob, Israel, [Babylon](#), Jewish leaders)

Bible References:

- Acts 2:5
- Acts 10:28
- Acts 14:5-7
- Colossians 3:11
- John 2:14
- Matthew 28:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:11** The Israelites were now called **Jews** and most of them had lived their whole lives in Babylon.
- **20:12** So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of **Jews** returned to the city of Jerusalem in Judah.
- **37:10** Many of the **Jews** believed in Jesus because of this miracle.
- **37:11** But the religious leaders of the **Jews** were jealous, so they gathered together to plan how they could kill Jesus and Lazarus.
- **40:2** Pilate commanded that they write, "King of the **Jews**" on a sign and put it on the cross above Jesus' head.
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began preaching to the **Jews** in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the Son of God!"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3054, H3061, H3062, H3064, H3066, G24500, G24510, G24520, G24530, G24540

(Go back to: [Esther 2:5; 3:4; 3:6; 3:10; 3:13; 4:3; 4:7; 4:13; 4:14; 4:16; 5:13; 6:10; 6:13; 8:1; 8:3; 8:5; 8:7; 8:8; 8:9; 8:11; 8:13; 8:16; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 9:3; 9:5; 9:6; 9:10; 9:12; 9:13; 9:15; 9:16; 9:18; 9:19; 9:20; 9:22; 9:23; 9:24; 9:25; 9:27; 9:28; 9:29; 9:30; 9:31; 10:3](#))

joy, joyful, rejoice, glad

Definition:

joy

The term “joy” refers to a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction. 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.

rejoice

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.”

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](#))

Bible References:

- Nehemiah 8:10
- Psalm 48:2
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 2:9-10
- Luke 15:7
- Luke 19:37-38
- John 3:29
- Acts 16:32-34
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 15:30-32
- Galatians 5:23
- Philippians 4:10-13

- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- Philemon 1:4-7
- James 1:2
- 3 John 1:1-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **33:7** "The rocky ground is a person who hears God's word and accepts it with **joy**."
- **34:4** "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."
- **41:7** 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, H2302, H2304, H2305, H2654, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5965, H5970, H6342, H6670, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H7832, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G00200, G00210, G21650, G21670, G27440, G46400, G47960, G49130, G54630, G54790

(Go back to: [Esther 5:9](#); [5:14](#); [8:15](#); [8:16](#); [8:17](#); [9:17](#); [9:18](#); [9:19](#); [9:22](#))

Judah

Facts:

Judah was Jacob's fourth son. He was Leah's fourth son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Judah" or "Judah."
- His name sounds similar to the Hebrew word meaning "praise."
- The tribe of Judah settled in the southern part of Canaan, including the mountainous area to the south of the city of Jerusalem. When used as the name of a region of land, the term "Judah" refers to the land given to the tribe of Judah.
- In the Old Testament, the name Judah is sometimes used to refer to the whole southern kingdom of Israel (similar to how the name Ephraim is sometimes used to refer to the whole northern kingdom).
- King David, King Solomon, and all the kings of the southern kingdom were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
- The words "Jew" and "Judea" come from the name "Judah."

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

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Judah (kingdom), [Jew](#), Judea, Jacob, Leah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 1:9
- Genesis 29:35
- Genesis 38:2
- Luke 3:33
- Ruth 1:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3063

(Go back to: [Esther 2:6](#))

judge, judgment

Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right. However, these terms can also refer to actions performed by a person as the result of a decision, usually in the context of deciding that something is bad, wrong, or evil.

- The terms “judge” and “judgment” can also mean “to cause harm to” (usually because God has decided a person or nation’s actions are wicked).
- 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 4:17
- 1 Kings 3:9
- Acts 10:42-43
- Isaiah 3:14
- James 2:4
- Luke 6:37
- Micah 3:9-11
- Psalm 54:1

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.
- **21:8** 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.
- **39:4** 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: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G01440, G03500, G09680, G11060, G12520, G13410, G13450, G13480, G13490, G29170, G29190, G29200, G29220, G29230, G42320

(Go back to: [Esther 1:13](#))

king, kingship

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a particular group of people or a particular region of land (or both).

- In biblical times, a king was usually chosen to rule on the basis of family relation to the previous king(s). When a king died, usually his oldest son became the next king.
- The Bible often refers to God as a king who rules over the entire universe (in a general sense) and over his people (in a specific sense).
- The New Testament refers to Jesus as a king in various ways, including: “king of the Jews;” “king of Israel;” and “king of kings.”
- Depending on the context, the term “king” might also be translated as “supreme chief” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” might be translated as “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

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

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 6:15-16
- 2 Kings 5:18
- 2 Samuel 5:3
- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 13:22
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 22:24-25
- Matthew 5:35
- Matthew 14:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:6** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- **16:1** The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- **16:18** Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.
- **17:5** Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- **21:6** God’s prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- **48:14** David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4427, H4428, H4430, G09350, G09360

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2; 1:5; 1:7; 1:8; 1:9; 1:10; 1:11; 1:12; 1:13; 1:14; 1:15; 1:16; 1:17; 1:18; 1:19; 1:20; 1:21; 1:22; 2:1; 2:2; 2:3; 2:4; 2:6; 2:8; 2:9; 2:12; 2:13; 2:14; 2:15; 2:16; 2:17; 2:18; 2:19; 2:21; 2:22; 2:23; 3:1; 3:2; 3:3; 3:7; 3:8; 3:9; 3:10; 3:11; 3:12; 3:13; 3:15; 4:2; 4:3; 4:5; 4:6; 4:7; 4:8; 4:11; 4:13; 4:16; 5:1; 5:2; 5:3; 5:4; 5:5; 5:6; 5:8; 5:9; 5:11; 5:12; 5:13;](#)

5:14; 6:1; 6:2; 6:3; 6:4; 6:5; 6:6; 6:7; 6:8; 6:9; 6:10; 6:11; 6:12; 6:14; 7:1; 7:2; 7:3; 7:4; 7:5; 7:6; 7:7; 7:8; 7:9; 7:10; 8:1; 8:2;
8:3; 8:4; 8:5; 8:7; 8:8; 8:9; 8:10; 8:11; 8:12; 8:14; 8:15; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 9:3; 9:4; 9:11; 9:12; 9:13; 9:14; 9:16; 9:20; 9:25;
10:1; 10:2; 10:3)

kingdom

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:12
- 2 Timothy 4:17-18
- Colossians 1:13-14
- John 18:36
- Mark 3:24
- Matthew 4:7-9
- Matthew 13:19
- Matthew 16:28
- Revelation 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:2** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation.”
- **18:4** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon’s death.
- **18:7** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- **18:8** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.

- **21:8** A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4410, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4474, H4475, G09320

(Go back to: [Esther 1:4](#); [1:14](#); [1:20](#); [2:3](#); [3:6](#); [3:8](#); [5:3](#); [5:6](#); [7:2](#); [9:30](#))

know, knowledge, unknown, distinguish

Definition:

The term “know” and “knowledge” means generally to understand something or someone. It can also mean to be aware of a fact or to be familiar with a person. The expression “to make known” means to tell information.

- The term “knowledge” refers to information that people know. It can apply to knowing physical concepts or abstract concepts.
- To “know about” God means to understand facts about him because of what he has revealed to us.
- To “know” God means to have a relationship with him. This also applies to knowing people.
- To know God’s will means to be aware of what he has commanded, or to understand what he wants a person to do.
- To “know the Law” means to be aware of what God has commanded or to understand what God has instructed in the laws he gave to Moses.
- Sometimes “knowledge” is used as a synonym for “wisdom,” which includes living in a way that is pleasing to God.
- The “knowledge of God” is sometimes used as a synonym for the “fear of Yahweh.”
- When used of a man and a woman to “know” is often an euphemism that refers to having sexual intercourse.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “know” could include “understand” or “be familiar with” or “be aware of” or “be acquainted with” or “be in relationship with.”
- In the context of understanding the difference between two things, the term is usually translated as “distinguish.” When used in this way, the term is often followed by the preposition “between.”
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with him.
- The term “make known” could be translated as “cause people to know” or “reveal” or “tell about” or “explain.”
- To “know about” something could be translated as “be aware of” or “be familiar with.”
- The expression “know how to” means to understand the process or method of getting something done. It could also be translated as “be able to” or “have the skill to.”
- The term “knowledge” could also be translated as “what is known” or “wisdom” or “understanding,” depending on the context.

(See also: law, reveal, understand, wise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 2:12-13
- 1 Samuel 17:46
- 2 Corinthians 2:15
- 2 Peter 1:3-4
- Deuteronomy 4:39-40
- Genesis 19:5
- Luke 1:77

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1843, H1844, H1847, H1875, H3045, H3046, H4093, H4486, H5046, H5234, H5475, H5869, G00500, G00560, G10970, G11070, G11080, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G24670, G25890, G42670, G48940

(Go back to: [Esther 1:13](#); [2:22](#); [4:1](#); [4:11](#); [4:14](#))

law, principle

Definition:

A “law” is a legal rule that is usually written down and enforced by someone in authority. A “principle” is a guideline for decision-making and behavior, and is usually not written down or enforced. However, sometimes the term “law” is used to mean a “principle.”

- A “law” is similar to a “decree,” but the term “law” is generally used to refer to something written rather than spoken.
- Both “law” and “principle” can refer to a general rule or belief that guides a person’s behavior.
- This meaning of “law” is different from its meaning in the term “law of Moses,” where it refers to commands and instructions that God gave the Israelites.
- When a general law is being referred to, “law” could be translated as “principle” or “general rule.”

(See also: law of Moses, [decree](#), [command](#), declare)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 4:2
- Esther 3:8-9
- Exodus 12:12-14
- Genesis 26:5
- John 18:31
- Romans 7:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1285, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2708, H2710, H4687, H4941, H6310, H7560, H8451, G17850, G35480, G35510, G47470

(Go back to: [Esther 1:8](#); [1:13](#); [1:15](#); [1:19](#); [2:8](#); [2:12](#); [3:8](#); [3:15](#); [4:3](#); [4:8](#); [4:11](#); [4:16](#); [8:13](#); [8:14](#); [8:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:13](#); [9:14](#))

life, live, living, alive

Definition:

The term “life” refers to being physically alive as opposed to being physically dead.

1. Physical life

- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Eternal life

- A person has eternal life when he believes in Jesus. God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives” could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about eternal life, the term “life” could be translated in the following ways: “eternal life” or “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: [death](#), everlasting)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 1:3
- Acts 10:42
- Genesis 2:7
- Genesis 7:22
- Hebrews 10:20
- Jeremiah 44:2
- John 1:4
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 12:23
- Matthew 7:14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were *_living_* in the world.
- **8:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- **17:9** However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- **35:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- **44:5** "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G01980, G02220, G02270, G08060, G05900

(Go back to: [Esther 4:11](#); [7:3](#); [7:7](#); [8:11](#); [9:16](#); [9:31](#))

lots, casting lots

Definition:

In the Bible, a “lot” is a marked object(s) used as a way of making a fair and/or random decision, usually for the purpose of selecting a specific person within a group. “Casting lots” refers to the process of using “lots” to make a fair and/or random decision.

- In modern times, 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.
- In biblical times, the objects cast (the “lots”) were probably small marked stones. It is unknown how the “lots” actually indicated a decision, but it probably involved dropping or throwing marked stones on the ground.
- The phrase “casting lots” can be translated as “tossing lots” or “throwing lots” or “rolling lots.” The translation of “cast” should not sound like the lots were being thrown a long distance.
- If a decision is made “by lot,” this could be translated as “by casting lots” or “by throwing lots,” etc.

(See also: Elizabeth, priest, Zechariah (OT), Zechariah (NT))

Bible References:

- Jonah 1:7
- Luke 1:8-10
- Luke 23:34
- Mark 15:22
- Matthew 27:35-37
- Psalms 22:18-19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1486, H5307, G28190, G29750

(Go back to: [Esther 3:7](#); [9:24](#))

love, beloved

Definition:

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

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn’t benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.

- Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
- When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
- In the ULT, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.

Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.

- This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
- The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.

The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: covenant, [death](#), sacrifice, save, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:7
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 Thessalonians 4:10
- Galatians 5:23
- Genesis 29:18
- Isaiah 56:6
- Jeremiah 2:2

- John 3:16
- Matthew 10:37
- Nehemiah 9:32-34
- Philippians 1:9
- Song of Songs 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:2** 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."
- **33:8** "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."
- **36:5** 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."
- **47:1** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:1** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:3** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:4** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:7** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:9** 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: H0157, H0158, H0159, H0160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G00250, G00260, G53600, G53610, G53620, G53630, G53650, G53670, G53680, G53690, G53770, G53810, G53820, G53830, G53880

(Go back to: [Esther 2:17](#))

Mede, Medes, Media

Facts:

Media was an ancient empire located east of Assyria and Babylonia, and north of Elam and Persia. The people who lived in the empire of Media were called "Medes."

- The Media empire covered parts of what are present-day Turkey, Iran, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.
- The Medes were closely associated with the Persians and the two empires joined forces to conquer the Babylonian empire.
- Babylonia was invaded by Darius the Mede during the time that the prophet Daniel was living there.

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

(See also: Assyria, [Babylon](#), Cyrus, Daniel, Darius, Elam, [Persia](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 17:6
- Acts 2:9
- Daniel 5:28
- Esther 1:3-4
- Ezra 6:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4074, H4075, H4076, H4077, G33700

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [1:14](#); [1:18](#); [1:19](#); [10:2](#))

Mordecai

Facts:

Mordecai was a Jewish man living in the country of Persia. He was the guardian of his cousin Esther, who later became the wife of the Persian king, Ahasuerus.

- While working at the royal palace, Mordecai overheard men plotting together to kill King Ahasuerus. He reported this and the king's life was saved.
- Some time later, Mordecai also found out about a plan to kill all the Jews in the kingdom of Persia. He advised Esther to appeal to the king to save her people.

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

(See also: [Ahasuerus](#), [Babylon](#), [Esther](#), [Persia](#))

Bible References:

- Esther 2:6
- Esther 3:6
- Esther 8:2
- Esther 10:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4782

(Go back to: [Esther 2:5](#); [2:7](#); [2:10](#); [2:11](#); [2:15](#); [2:19](#); [2:20](#); [2:21](#); [2:22](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:4](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [4:1](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:6](#); [4:7](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [4:15](#); [4:17](#); [5:9](#); [5:13](#); [5:14](#); [6:2](#); [6:3](#); [6:4](#); [6:10](#); [6:11](#); [6:12](#); [6:13](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [8:1](#); [8:2](#); [8:7](#); [8:9](#); [8:15](#); [9:3](#); [9:4](#); [9:20](#); [9:23](#); [9:29](#); [9:31](#); [10:2](#); [10:3](#))

mourn, mourner, weeping

Facts:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: [sackcloth](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 1:11
- Genesis 23:2
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 11:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0057, H0060, H0205, H0578, H0584, H0585, H1058, H1065, H1068, H1671, H1897, H1899, H4553, H4798, H5092, H5098, H5110, H5594, H6937, H6941, H8386, G23540, G28750, G36020, G39960, G39970

(Go back to: [Esther 6:12](#); [9:22](#))

name

Definition:

The term “name” refers to the word by which a specific person or thing is called. In the Bible, however, the term “name” is used in several different ways to refer to several different concepts.

- In some contexts, “name” could refer to a person’s reputation, as in “let us make a name for ourselves.”
- The term “name” could also refer to the memory of something. For example, “cut off the names of the idols” means to destroy those idols so that they are no longer remembered or worshiped.
- Speaking “in the name of God” meant speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative.
- The “name” of someone could refer to the entire person, as in “there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (See: [metonymy](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- An expression like “his good name” could be translated as “his good reputation.”
- Doing something “in the name of” could be translated as “with the authority of” or “with the permission of” or “as the representative of” that person.
- The expression “make a name for ourselves” could be translated “cause many people to know about us” or “make people think we are very important.”
- The expression “call his name” could be translated as “name him” or “give him the name.”
- The expression “those who love your name” could be translated as “those who love you.”
- The expression “cut off the names of idols” could be translated as “get rid of pagan idols so that they are not even remembered” or “cause people to stop worshiping false gods” or “completely destroy all idols so that people no longer even think about them.”

(See also: [call](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:12
- 2 Timothy 2:19
- Acts 4:7
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 9:27
- Genesis 12:2
- Genesis 35:10
- Matthew 18:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5344, H7121, H7761, H8034, H8036, G25640, G36860, G36870, G51220

(Go back to: [Esther 2:14](#); [2:22](#); [3:12](#); [8:8](#); [8:10](#); [9:26](#))

Nebuchadnezzar

Facts:

Nebuchadnezzar was a king of the Babylonian Empire whose powerful army conquered many people groups and nations.

- Under Nebuchadnezzar's leadership, the Babylonian army attacked and conquered the kingdom of Judah, and took most of the people of Judah to Babylon as captives. The captives were forced to live there for a period of 70 years known as the "Babylonian Exile."
- One of the exiles, Daniel, interpreted some of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams.
- Three other captured Israelites, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were thrown into a fiery furnace when they refused to bow down to a gigantic gold statue that Nebuchadnezzar had made.
- King Nebuchadnezzar was very arrogant and worshiped false gods. When he conquered Judah, he stole many gold and silver objects from the temple in Jerusalem.
- Because Nebuchadnezzar was proud and refused to turn away from worshiping false gods, Yahweh caused him to be destitute for seven years, living like an animal. After the seven years, God restored Nebuchadnezzar when he humbled himself and praised the one true God, Yahweh.

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

(See also: arrogant, Azariah, [Babylon](#), Hananiah, Mishael)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:15
- 2 Kings 25:1-3
- Daniel 1:2
- Daniel 4:4
- Ezekiel 26:8

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:6** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent **Nebuchadnezzar**, king of the Babylonians, to attack the kingdom of Judah.
- **20:6** The king of Judah agreed to be **Nebuchadnezzar's** servant and pay him a lot of money every year.
- **20:8** To punish the king of Judah for rebelling, **Nebuchadnezzar's** soldiers killed the king's sons in front of him and then made him blind.
- **20:9** **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: H5019, H5020

(Go back to: [Esther 2:6](#))

noble, nobleman, royal official

Definition:

The term “noble” refers to something that is excellent and of high quality. A “nobleman” is a person who belongs to a high political or social class. A man “of noble birth” is one who was born a nobleman.

- A nobleman was often an officer of the state, a close servant to the king.
- The term “nobleman” could also be translated by, “king’s official” or “government officer.”

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 23:20-21
- Daniel 4:36
- Ecclesiastes 10:17
- Luke 19:12
- Psalm 16:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0117, H1419, H2715, H3358, H3513, H5057, H5081, H6440, H6579, H7261, H8282, H8269, G09370, G21040

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [1:11](#); [1:14](#); [1:16](#); [1:18](#); [1:21](#); [2:18](#); [3:1](#); [3:12](#); [5:11](#); [6:9](#); [8:9](#); [9:3](#))

obey, keep

Definition:

The term “obey” means to do what has been commanded by a person or law. The term “obedient” describes someone who obeys. Sometimes a command prohibits doing something, as in “do not steal.” In this case, to “obey” means not to steal. In the Bible, often the term “keep” means “to obey.”

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

(See also: citizen, [command](#), disobey, [kingdom](#), [law](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 5:32
- Acts 6:7
- Genesis 28:6-7
- James 1:25
- James 2:10
- Luke 6:47
- Matthew 7:26
- Matthew 19:20-22
- Matthew 28:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah **obeyed** God. He and his three sons built the boat just the way God had told them.
- **5:6** Again Abraham **obeyed** God and prepared to sacrifice his son.
- **5:10** “Because you (Abraham) have *obeyed* me, all the families of the world will be blessed through your family”
- **5:10** But the Egyptians did not believe God or **obey** his commands.
- **13:7** If the people **obeyed** these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1697, H2388, H3349, H4928, H6213, H7181, H8085, H8086, H8104, G01910, G39800, G39820, G50830, G50840, G52180, G52190, G52550, G52920, G52930, G54420

(Go back to: [Esther 3:8](#))

oversee, overseer, keeper

Definition:

The term “overseer” refers to a person who is in charge of the work and welfare of other people. In the Bible, often the term “keeper” means “overseer.”

- In the Old Testament, an overseer had the job of making sure the workers under him did their work well.
- In the New Testament, this term is used to describe leaders of the early Christian church. Their work was to take care of the spiritual needs of the church, making sure the believers received accurate biblical teaching.
- Paul refers to an overseer as being like a shepherd who takes care of the believers in a local church, who are his “flock.”
- The overseer, like a shepherd, keeps watch over the flock. He guards and protects the believers from false spiritual teaching and other evil influences.
- In the New Testament, the terms “overseers,” “elders,” and “shepherds/pastors” are different ways of referring to the same spiritual leaders.

Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could be “supervisor” or “caretaker” or “manager.”
- When referring to a leader of a local group of God’s people, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “spiritual supervisor” or “someone who takes care of the spiritual needs of a group of believers” or “person who oversees the spiritual needs of the Church.”

(See also: church, elder, pastor, shepherd)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 26:31-32
- 1 Timothy 3:2
- Acts 20:28
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Philippians 1:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5329, H6485, H6496, H7860, H8104, G19830, G19840, G19850

(Go back to: [Esther 1:8](#); [2:3](#); [2:8](#); [2:14](#); [2:15](#))

palace, house

Definition:

The term “palace” refers to the building or house where a king lived, along with his family members and servants.

- The high priest also lived in a palace complex, as mentioned in the New Testament.
- Palaces were very ornate, with beautiful architecture and furnishings.
- The buildings and furnishings of a palace were constructed of stone or wood, and often were overlaid with expensive wood, gold, or ivory.
- Many other people also lived and worked in the palace complex, which usually included several buildings and courtyards.

(See also: [courtyard](#), high priest, [king](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 28:7-8
- 2 Samuel 11:2-3
- Daniel 5:5-6
- Matthew 26:3-5
- Psalms 45:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0759, H1002, H1004, H1055, H1406, H1964, H1965, G08330, G09330, G42320

(Go back to: [Esther 1:5](#); [1:9](#); [2:8](#); [2:9](#); [2:16](#); [4:13](#); [5:1](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#); [9:4](#))

peace, peaceful, peacemakers

Definition:

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

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

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Acts 7:26
- Colossians 1:18-20
- Colossians 3:15
- Galatians 5:23
- Luke 7:50
- Luke 12:51
- Mark 4:39
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 10:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **15:6** God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- **15:12** Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- **16:3** Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- **21:13** He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- **48:14** David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5117, H7961, H7962, H7965, H7999, H8001, H8002, H8003, H8252, G02690, G15140, G15150, G15160, G15170, G15180, G22720

(Go back to: [Esther 2:11](#); [9:30](#); [10:3](#))

people, people group

Definition:

The terms “people” and “people group” refer to some group of people that shares a common language and culture. The term “the people” often refers to a gathering of people in a certain place or at a specific event.

- In Bible times, the members of a people group usually had the same ancestors and lived together in a particular country or area of land.
- Depending on the context, the term “people” can refer to a “people group” or “family” or “relatives” or “army.”
- In plural form, the term “peoples” often refers to all people groups on the earth. Sometimes it refers more specifically to people who are not Israelites or who do not serve Yahweh. In some English Bible translations, the term “nations” is also used in this way.

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: descendant, nation, tribe, world)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:51-53
- 1 Samuel 8:7
- Deuteronomy 28:9
- Genesis 49:16
- Ruth 1:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **14:2** 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.
- **21:2** 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.

- **42:8** "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.
- **50:3** He (Jesus) said, "Go and make disciples of all **people groups!**" and, "The fields are ripe for harvest!"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0249, H0523, H0524, H0776, H1121, H1471, H3816, H5712, H5971, H5972, H6153, G10740, G10850, G12180, G14840, G25600, G29920, G37930

(Go back to: [Esther 1:16](#); [1:22](#); [2:10](#); [2:20](#); [3:6](#); [3:8](#); [3:12](#); [3:14](#); [4:8](#); [7:3](#); [7:4](#); [8:6](#); [8:9](#); [8:11](#); [8:13](#); [8:17](#); [9:2](#); [10:3](#))

perish

Definition:

The term “perish” means to die or be destroyed, usually as the result of violence or disaster. In the New Testament, it often has the spiritual meaning of being lost or separated from the people of God.

Spiritual Meaning of “Perish:”

- People who are “perishing” are those who have refused to trust in Jesus for their salvation.
- Those who “perish” will not live eternally with God in heaven. Instead, they will live eternally in hell under God’s punishment.
- Everyone will die physically, but only those who do not trust in Jesus for their salvation will perish eternally.
- When “perish” is used in a spiritual sense, make sure that your translation expresses this differently than dying physically.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include “be lost from God’s people,” “die eternally,” “be punished in hell,” or “be destroyed.”
- Try to use a term or expression that does not only mean “die physically” or “cease to exist.”

(See also: [death](#), everlasting)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:23
- 2 Corinthians 2:16-17
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Psalms 49:18-20
- Zechariah 9:5-7
- Zechariah 13:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0008, H1478, H1820, H1826, H5486, H5595, H6544, H8045, G05990, G06220, G06840, G08530, G13110, G27040, G48810, G53560

(Go back to: [Esther 4:14](#); [4:16](#))

Persia, Persians

Definition:

Persia was a country that also became a powerful empire founded by Cyrus the Great in 550 BC. The country of Persia was located southeast of Babylonia and Assyria in a region that is now the modern-day country of Iran.

- The people of Persia were called “Persians.”
- Under King Cyrus’ decree, the Jews were freed from their captivity in Babylon and allowed to go home, and the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt, with funds provided by the Persian Empire.
- King Artaxerxes was the ruler of the Persian Empire when Ezra and Nehemiah went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- Esther became a queen of the Persian empire when she married King Ahasuerus.

(See also: [Ahasuerus](#), Artaxerxes, Assyria, [Babylon](#), Cyrus, [Esther](#), Ezra, Nehemiah)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 36:20
- Daniel 10:13
- Esther 1:3-4
- Ezekiel 27:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6539, H6540, H6542, H6543

(Go back to: [Esther 1:3](#); [1:14](#); [1:18](#); [1:19](#); [10:2](#))

plea, plead, please, beg, implore

Facts:

The terms “plead” and “pleading” refer to urgently asking someone to do something. A “plea” is an urgent request.

- Pleading often implies that the person feels in very great need or strongly desires help.
- People can plead or make an urgent appeal to God for mercy or to ask him to grant something, either for themselves or someone else.
- Other ways to translate this could include “beg” or “implore” or “urgently ask.”
- The term “plea” could also be translated as “urgent request” or “strong urging.”
- Make sure it is clear in the context that this term does not refer to begging for money.

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5
- Judges 6:31
- Luke 4:39
- Proverbs 18:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1777, H2603, H3198, H4941, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6664, H6419, H7378, H7379, H7775, H8199, H8467, H8469, G11890, G17930, G20650, G38700

(Go back to: [Esther 4:8](#); [8:3](#))

power, powerful, powerfully

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “power” could also be translated as “ability” or “strength” or “energy” or “ability to do miracles” or “control.”
- Possible ways to translate the term “powers” could include “powerful beings” or “controlling spirits” or “those who control others.”

(See also: strength, Holy Spirit, Jesus, miracle)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:5
- Colossians 1:11-12
- Genesis 31:29
- Jeremiah 18:21
- Jude 1:25
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 1:17
- Luke 4:14
- Matthew 26:64
- Philippians 3:21
- Psalm 80:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:5** The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the **power** of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the Son of God.”
- **26:1** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the **power** of the Holy Spirit to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **32:15** Immediately Jesus realized that **power** had gone out from him.
- **42:11** Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, “Stay in Jerusalem until my Father gives you **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- **43:6** “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the **power** of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- **44:8** Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the **power** of Jesus the Messiah.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0410, H1369, H1370, H2220, H2393, H2428, H2429, H2632, H3027, H3028, H3581, H4475, H4910, H5794, H5797, H5808, H6184, H7786, H7980, H7981, H7983, H7989, H8280, H8592, H8633, G14110, G14150, G17540, G17560, G18490, G18500, G21590, G24780, G24790, G29040, G31680

(Go back to: [Esther 9:29](#); [10:2](#))

prostrate, bow down, worship

Definition:

To “prostrate” oneself means to lie flat on the ground, usually in submission to a person of authority such as a king or some other powerful person. This same term can also mean to “worship,” referring to the actions of honoring, praising, and obeying God.

- This term often means literally “bow down” or “prostrate oneself” to humbly honor someone.
- We worship God when we serve and honor him, by praising him and obeying him.
- When the Israelites worshiped God, it often included sacrificing an animal on an altar.
- This term can be used both of people who worship Yahweh as the One True God and others who worship false gods.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “worship” could be translated as “bow down to” or “honor and serve” or “honor and obey.”
- In some contexts, it could also be translated as “humbly praise” or “give honor and praise.”

(See also: [bow](#), [fear](#), sacrifice, praise, [honor](#))

Bible References:

- Colossians 2:18-19
- Deuteronomy 29:18
- Exodus 3:11-12
- Luke 4:7
- Matthew 2:2
- Matthew 2:8

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:4** Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not **worship** other gods.”
- **14:2** The Canaanites did not **worship** or obey God. They **worshiped** false gods and did many evil things.
- **17:6** David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could **worship** God and offer him sacrifices.
- **18:12** All of the kings and most of the people of the kingdom of Israel **worshiped** idols.
- **25:7** Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, ‘**Worship** only the Lord your God and only serve him.’”
- **26:2** On the Sabbath, he (Jesus) went to the place of **worship**.
- **47:1** There they met a woman named Lydia who was a merchant. She loved and **worshiped** 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: H5457, H5647, H6087, H7812, G13910, G14790, G21510, G23180, G23230, G23560, G30000, G35110, G43520, G43530, G45730, G45740, G45760

(Go back to: [Esther 3:2](#); [3:5](#))

province, provincial

Definition:

The term “province” refers to a large area into which a nation or empire might be divided for the purposes of government. The term “provincial” describes something that is related to a province, such as a provincial governor.

- For example, the ancient Persian Empire was divided up into provinces such as Media, Persia, Syria, and Egypt.
- During the time of the New Testament, the Roman Empire was divided up into provinces such as Macedonia, Asia, Syria, Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Galatia.
- Each province had its own ruling authority, who was subject to the king or ruler of the empire. This ruler was sometimes called a “provincial official” or “provincial governor.”
- The terms “province” and “provincial” could also be translated as “region” and “regional.”

(See also: Asia, Egypt, [Esther](#), Galatia, Galilee, Judea, Macedonia, [Medes](#), Rome, Samaria, Syria)

Bible References:

- Acts 19:30
- Daniel 3:2
- Daniel 6:2
- Ecclesiastes 2:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4082, H4083, H5675, H5676, G18850

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [1:16](#); [1:22](#); [2:3](#); [2:18](#); [3:8](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [3:14](#); [4:3](#); [4:11](#); [8:5](#); [8:9](#); [8:11](#); [8:12](#); [8:13](#); [8:17](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#); [9:4](#); [9:12](#); [9:16](#); [9:20](#); [9:28](#); [9:30](#))

purple

Facts:

The term “purple” is the name of a color that is a mixture of blue and red.

- In ancient times, purple was a rare and highly valuable color of dye that was used to dye the clothing of kings and other high officials.
- Because it was costly and time-consuming to produce this dye, purple clothing was considered a sign of wealth, distinction, and royalty.
- Purple was also one of the colors used for the curtains in the tabernacle and temple, and for the ephod worn by the priests.
- Purple dye was extracted from a kind of sea snail by either crushing or boiling the snails or by causing them to release the dye while still alive. This was an expensive process.
- Roman soldiers put a purple royal robe on Jesus before his crucifixion, to mock him for his claim to be King of the Jews.
- Lydia from the town of Philippi was a woman who made her living by selling purple cloth.

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

(See also: ephod, Philippi, [royal](#), tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 2:13-14
- Daniel 5:7
- Daniel 5:29-31
- Proverbs 31:22-23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0710, H0711, H0713, G42090, G42100, G42110

(Go back to: [Esther 1:6](#); [8:15](#))

queen

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:10
- 1 Kings 11:18-19
- 2 Kings 10:12-14
- Acts 8:27
- Esther 1:17
- Luke 11:31
- Matthew 12:42

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1404, H1377, H4410, H4427, H4433, H4436, H4438, H4446, H7694, H8282, G09380

(Go back to: [Esther 1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:12](#); [1:15](#); [1:16](#); [1:17](#); [1:18](#); [2:17](#); [2:22](#); [4:4](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#); [5:12](#); [7:1](#); [7:2](#); [7:3](#); [7:5](#); [7:6](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#); [8:1](#); [8:7](#); [9:12](#); [9:29](#); [9:31](#))

rage

Facts:

The term “rage” refers to intense anger. Often, the term is used to describe an angry person who is out of control in some way.

- When used as a verb, the term “rage” can mean to move powerfully, such as in descriptions of a “raging” storm or ocean waves that “rage.”
- To be “filled with rage” means to have an overwhelming feeling of extreme anger.

(See also: self-control)

Bible References:

- Acts 4:25
- Daniel 3:13
- Luke 4:28
- Numbers 25:11
- Proverbs 19:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H1348, H1984, H1993, H2121, H2195, H2196, H2197, H2534, H2734, H2740, H3491, H3820, H5590, H5678, H7264, H7265, H7266, H7267, H7283, H7857, G16930, G28300, G37100, G54330

(Go back to: [Esther 1:12](#); [2:1](#); [3:5](#); [7:7](#); [7:10](#))

reign, rule

Definition:

The term to “reign” means to rule over the people of a particular country or kingdom. The reign of a king is the time period during which he is ruling.

- The term “reign” is also used to refer to God reigning as king over the entire world.
- God allowed human kings to reign over Israel after the people rejected him as their king.
- When Jesus Christ returns, he will openly reign as king over the whole world, and Christians will reign with Him.
- This term could also be translated as “absolute rule” or “rule as king.”

(See also: [kingdom](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 2:11-13
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 19:26-27
- Matthew 2:22-23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3427, H4427, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4475, H4791, H4910, H6113, H7287, H7786, G07570, G09360, G22310, G48210

(Go back to: [Esther 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [2:16](#))

rest, rested, restless

Definition:

The term “rest” generally means to stop working in order to relax or regain strength. However, the term can refer to various kinds of rest besides only rest from working. For example, a person might rest from fighting, rest from speaking, or rest from moving, etc.

- An object can be said to be “resting” somewhere, which means it is “standing” or “sitting” there.
- Something that “comes to rest” somewhere has “stopped” there.
- When a person or animals rest, they are sitting or lying down in order to refresh themselves.
- God commanded the Israelites to rest on the seventh day of the week. This day of not working was called the “Sabbath” day.
- To rest an object on something means to “place” or “put” it there.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, to “rest (oneself)” could also be translated as to “stop working” or to “refresh himself” or to “stop carrying burdens.”
- To “rest” an object on something could be translated as to “place” or “put” or “set” that object on something.
- When Jesus said, “I will give you rest,” this could also be translated as “I will cause you to stop carrying your burden” or “I will help you be at peace” or “I will empower you to relax and trust in me.”
- God said, “they will not enter my rest,” and this statement could be translated as “they will not experience my blessings of rest” or “they will not experience the joy and peace that comes from trusting in me.”
- The term “the rest” could be translated as “those that remain” or “all the other people” or “everything that is left.”

(See also: remnant, Sabbath)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:41
- Genesis 2:3
- Jeremiah 6:16-19
- Matthew 11:29
- Revelation 14:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0014, H1824, H1826, H2308, H3498, H3499, H4494, H4496, H4771, H5117, H5118, H5183, H5564, H6314, H7258, H7280, H7599, H7604, H7605, H7606, H7611, H7673, H7677, H7901, H7931, H7954, H8058, H8172, H8252, H8300, G03720, G03730, G04250, G15150, G18790, G19540, G19810, G22700, G26630, G26640, G26810, G28380, G30620, G45200

(Go back to: [Esther 9:16](#); [9:17](#); [9:18](#); [9:22](#))

royal, royalty, king's, queen's

Definition:

The term "royal" describes people and things associated with a king or queen.

- Examples of things that could be called "royal" include a king's (or queen's) position, clothing, palace, throne, and crown.
- A king or queen usually lived in a royal palace.
- A king wore special clothing, sometimes called "royal robes." Often a king's robes were purple, this color could only be produced by a rare and expensive type of dye.
- In the New Testament, believers in Jesus were called a "royal priesthood." Other ways to translate this could include "priests who serve God the King" or "called to be priests for God the King."
- The term "royal" could also be translated as "kingly" or "belonging to a king."

(See also: [king](#), [palace](#), [priest](#), [purple](#), [queen](#), [robe](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:13
- 2 Chronicles 18:28-30
- Amos 7:13
- Genesis 49:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0643, H1921, H1935, H4410, H4428, H4430, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H7985, G09330, G09340, G09370

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2](#); [1:7](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:19](#); [2:16](#); [2:17](#); [4:14](#); [5:1](#); [6:8](#); [8:10](#); [8:14](#); [8:15](#))

rule, reign, ruler, prefect, official, leader

Definition:

The term “ruler” is a general reference to a person who has authority over other people, such as a leader of a country, kingdom, or religious group. A ruler is one who “rules,” and his authority is his “rule.”

- In the Old Testament, a king was sometimes referred to generally as a “ruler,” as in the phrase “appointed him ruler over Israel.”
- God was referred to as the ultimate ruler, who rules over all other rulers.
- In the New Testament, the leader of a synagogue was called a “ruler.”
- Another type of ruler in the New Testament was a “governor.”
- Depending on the context, “ruler” could be translated as “leader” or “person who has authority over.”
- The action to “rule” means to “lead” to “have authority over.” It means the same thing as “reign” when it refers to the ruling of a king.

(See also: authority, [governor](#), [king](#), synagogue)

Bible References:

- Acts 3:17-18
- Acts 7:35-37
- Luke 12:11
- Luke 23:35
- Mark 10:42
- Matthew 9:32-34
- Matthew 20:25
- Titus 3:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H1166, H1167, H1404, H2708, H2710, H3027, H3548, H3920, H4043, H4410, H4427, H4428, H4438, H4467, H4474, H4475, H4623, H4910, H4941, H5057, H5065, H5387, H5401, H5461, H5715, H6113, H6213, H6485, H6957, H7101, H7218, H7287, H7300, H7336, H7786, H7860, H7980, H7981, H7985, H7989, H7990, H8199, H8269, H8323, H8451, G07460, G07520, G07550, G07570, G07580, G09320, G09360, G10180, G12030, G12990, G17780, G17850, G18490, G22320, G22330, G25250, G25830, G28880, G29610, G35450, G38410, G41650, G41730, G42910

(Go back to: [Esther 1:22](#))

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 3:31
- Genesis 37:34
- Joel 1:8-10
- Jonah 3:5
- Luke 10:13
- Matthew 11:21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8242, G45260

(Go back to: [Esther 4:1](#); [4:2](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#))

scepter

Definition:

The term “scepter” refers to an ornamental rod or staff held by a ruler, such as a king.

- Scepters were originally a branch of wood with carved decorations. Later scepters were also made of precious metals such as gold.
- The scepter was a symbol of royalty and authority and also symbolized the honor and dignity associated with a king.
- In the Old Testament, God was described as having a scepter of righteousness because God rules as king over his people.
- An Old Testament prophecy referred to the Messiah as a symbolic scepter that would come from Israel to rule over all nations.
- This could also be translated as “ruling rod” or “ruler’s rod” or “king’s rod.”

(See also: authority, Christ, [king](#), righteous)

Bible References:

- Amos 1:5
- Esther 4:11
- Genesis 49:10
- Hebrews 1:8
- Numbers 21:18
- Psalms 45:6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2710, H4294, H7626, H8275, G44640

(Go back to: [Esther 4:11](#); [5:2](#); [8:4](#))

scribe

Definition:

Scribes were officials who were responsible for writing or copying important government or religious documents by hand. Another name for a Jewish scribe was “expert in Jewish law.”

- Scribes were responsible for copying and preserving the books of the Old Testament.
- They also copied, preserved, and interpreted religious opinions and commentary on the law of God.
- At times, scribes were important government officials.
- Important biblical scribes include Baruch and Ezra.
- In the New Testament, the term translated “scribes” was also translated as “teachers of the Law.”
- In the New Testament, scribes were usually part of the religious group called the “Pharisees,” and the two groups were frequently mentioned together.

(See also: law, Pharisee)

Bible References:

- Acts 4:5
- Luke 7:29-30
- Luke 20:47
- Mark 1:22
- Mark 2:16
- Matthew 5:19-20
- Matthew 7:28
- Matthew 12:38
- Matthew 13:52

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5608, H5613, H7083, G11220

(Go back to: [Esther 3:12](#); [8:9](#))

seal, sealed, unsealed

Definition:

To term “seal” means to close an object with something (usually called a “seal”) that makes the object impossible to open without breaking the seal.

- Often a seal is marked with a design to show who it belongs to.
- Melted wax was used to seal letters or other documents that needed to be protected. When the wax cooled and hardened, the letter could not be opened without breaking the wax seal. The person who received the letter would see the unbroken seal and know that no one had opened it.
- A seal was put on the stone in front of Jesus’ grave in order to keep anyone from moving the stone.
- Paul figuratively refers to the Holy Spirit as a “seal” showing that our salvation is secure.

(See also: Holy Spirit, tomb)

Bible References:

- Exodus 2:3
- Isaiah 29:11
- John 6:27
- Matthew 27:66
- Revelation 5:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2368, H2560, H2856, H2857, H2858, H5640, G26960, G49720, G49730

(Go back to: [Esther 3:12](#); [8:8](#); [8:10](#))

seed, semen

Definition:

A “seed” is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant. However, in the Bible the term “seed” is used figuratively to mean several different things.

- The term “seed” is used figuratively and euphemistically to refer to the tiny cells inside a man that combine with cells of a woman to cause a baby to grow inside her. A collection of these cells is called “semen.”
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a person’s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared his seeds to the Word of God, which is planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- For a literal seed, it is best to use the literal term for “seed” that is used in the target language for what a farmer plants in his field.
- The literal term should also be used in contexts where it refers figuratively to God’s Word.
- For the figurative use that refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of “seed.” Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people. (See: [euphemism](#))

(See also: children, descendant)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:32
- Genesis 1:11
- Jeremiah 2:21
- Matthew 13:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H2233, H3610, H6507, G46150, G46870, G46900, G47010, G47030

(Go back to: [Esther 6:13](#); [9:27](#); [9:28](#); [9:31](#))

seek, search, look for

Definition:

The term “seek” means to look for something or someone. In the past tense, the verb is “sought.” This term is sometimes used figuratively, meaning to “attempt” or “make an effort” to do something or to ask for something.

- To “seek” or “look for” an opportunity to do something can mean to “try to find a time” to do it.
- To “seek Yahweh” means to “spend time and energy getting to know Yahweh and learning to obey him.”
- To “seek protection” means to “try to find a person or place that will protect you from danger.”
- To “seek justice” means to “make an effort to see that people are treated justly or fairly.”
- To “seek the truth” means to “make an effort to find out what the truth is.”
- To “seek favor” means to “urgently ask for favor” or to “do things to cause someone to help you.”

(See also: just, [true](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:14
- Acts 17:26-27
- Hebrews 11:6
- Luke 11:9
- Psalms 27:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0579, H1156, H1239, H1243, H1245, H1556, H1875, H2470, H2603, H2658, H2664, H3289, H7125, H7592, H7836, H8446, G03270, G15670, G19340, G20520, G22120

(Go back to: [Esther 2:2](#); [2:15](#); [2:21](#); [2:23](#); [3:6](#); [4:8](#); [6:2](#); [7:7](#); [9:2](#); [10:3](#))

servant, serve, slave, young man, young women

Definition:

A “servant” or “slave” refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A servant was under his master's control. In the Bible, “servant” and “slave” are mostly interchangeable terms. The term “serve” generally means to do work for someone, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

- 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 cruelly. Other masters treated their slaves well, like a valued member of the household. The term “slavery” means the state of being a slave.
- A person could be a slave temporarily, for instance while working to repay a debt to his owner.
- The words “young man” or “young woman” often mean “servant” or “slave.” This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. “her young women” could be translated as “her servants” or “her slaves.”
- The term “enslave” means “to cause to be a slave” (usually by force).
- The New Testament speaks of human beings as “slaves of sin” until Jesus frees them from its control and power. When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “serve” can also be translated as “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- The term “enslave” could be translated as “cause to not be free” or “force to serve others” or “put under the control of others.”
- The phrase “enslaved to” or “in bondage to” could be translated as “forced to be a slave of” or “forced to serve” or “under the control of.”
- To “serve God” can be translated as to “worship and obey God” or to “do the work that God has commanded.”
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God were often called his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to “distribute food.”
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.” When Jesus told the disciples to “serve” the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute” or “hand out” or “give.”
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they “serve” the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”
- Often, when a person referred to himself as “your servant” he was showing respect to the person addressed. That person may have had higher social status, or the speaker may be showing humility. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.

(See also: [bondage](#), [works](#), [obey](#), [house](#), [lord](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:13
- Genesis 21:10-11
- Genesis 25:23
- Deuteronomy 24:7
- Jeremiah 30:8-9
- Matthew 4:10-11
- Matthew 6:24
- Matthew 10:24-25
- Matthew 13:27-28
- Mark 8:7-10
- Mark 9:33-35
- Luke 4:8
- Luke 12:37-38
- Luke 12:47-48
- Luke 22:26-27
- Acts 4:29-31
- Acts 6:2-4
- Acts 10:7-8
- Galatians 4:3
- Galatians 4:24-25
- Colossians 1:7-8
- Colossians 3:22-25
- 2 Timothy 2:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:1** 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.
- **8:4** The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- **9:13** "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**."
- **29:3** "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.'"
- **35:6** "All my father's **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving."
- **47:4** The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, "These men are servants of the Most High God."
- **50:4** Jesus also said, "A **servant** is not greater than his master."

Word Data:

Servant

- Strong's: H0519, H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G12490, G14010, G14020, G23240, G34070, G34110, G36100, G38160, G49830, G52570
- (Serve) H0327, H3547, H4929, H4931, H5647, H5656, H5673, H5975, H6213, H6399, H6402, H6440, H6633, H6635, H7272, H8104, H8120, H8199, H8278, H8334, G1247, G1248, G1398, G1402, G1438, G1983, G2064, G2212, G2323, G2999, G3000, G3009, G4337, G4342, G4754, G5087, G5256

Enslave

- Strong's: H3533, G26150

(Go back to: [Esther 2:2](#); [2:9](#); [2:18](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:11](#); [6:3](#); [6:5](#))

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 2:36
- 2 Kings 25:13-15
- Acts 3:6
- Matthew 26:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3701, H3702, H7192, G06930, G06940, G06950, G06960, G14060

(Go back to: [Esther 1:6](#); [3:9](#); [3:11](#); [4:7](#))

slaughter, slaughtered

Definition:

The term “slaughter” refers to killing a large number of animals or people, or to killing in a violent way. It can also refer to killing an animal for the purpose of eating it. The act of slaughtering is also called “slaughter.”

- When Abraham received three visitors at his tent in the desert, he ordered his servants to slaughter and cook a calf for his guests.
- The prophet Ezekiel prophesied that God would send his angel to slaughter all those who would not follow His word.
- 1 Samuel records a great slaughter in which 30,000 Israelites were killed by their enemies because of disobedience to God.
- “Weapons of slaughter” could be translated as “weapons for killing.”
- The expression “the slaughter was very great” could be translated as “a large number were killed” or “the number of deaths was very great” or “a terribly high number of people died.”
- Other ways to translate “slaughter” could include “kill” or “slay” or “killing.”

(See also: [angel](#), [cow](#), [disobey](#), [Ezekiel](#), [servant](#), [slay](#))

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 21:10-11
- Hebrews 7:1
- Isaiah 34:2
- Jeremiah 25:34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2026, H2027, H2028, H2076, H2491, H2873, H2874, H2878, H4046, H4293, H4347, H4660, H5221, H6993, H7524, H7819, H7821, G28710, G49670, G49690

(Go back to: [Esther 3:13](#); [7:4](#); [8:11](#); [9:5](#); [9:6](#); [9:10](#); [9:12](#))

son

Definition:

The male offspring of a man and a woman is called their “son” for his entire life. He is also called a son of that man and a son of that woman. An “adopted son” is a male who has been legally placed into the position of being a son.

- The phrase “son of” can be used to identify a person’s father, mother, or an ancestor from some previous generation. This phrase is used in genealogies and many other places.
- The “sons of Israel” are usually the Israelite nation (after Genesis).
- Using “son of” to give the name of the father frequently helps distinguish people who have the same name. For example, “Azariah son of Zadok” and “Azariah son of Nathan” in 1 Kings 4, and “Azariah son of Amaziah” in 2 Kings 15 are three different men.
- The phrase “son of” can be used to associate the person with whatever person or concept comes next. The meaning is then greatly determined by context. It can be positive (eg. 2 Kings 2:16: “sons of ability”), negative (eg. 2 Samuel 7:10: “sons of wickedness”), denote membership in a group, express contempt by not naming the person (eg. “you sons of Zeruiah”), etc.

Translation Suggestions:

- In most occurrences of this term, it is best to translate “son” by the literal term in the language that is used to refer to a son.
- When translating the term “Son of God,” the project language’s common term for “son” should be used.
- Sometimes “sons” can be translated as “children,” when both males and females are being referred to. For example, “sons of God” could be translated as “children of God” since this expression also includes girls and women.

(See also: descendant, [ancestor](#), Son of God, sons of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:15
- 1 Kings 13:2
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5
- Galatians 4:7
- Hosea 11:1
- Isaiah 9:6
- Matthew 3:17
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 8:12
- Nehemiah 10:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and promised again that he would have a **son** and as many descendants as the stars in the sky.
- **4:9** God said, “I will give you a **son** from your own body.”
- **5:5** About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s **son**.
- **5:8** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his **son** Isaac and laid him on an altar. He was about to kill his **son** when God said, “Stop! Do not hurt the boy! Now I know that you fear me because you did not keep your only **son** from me.”

- **9:7** When she saw the baby, she took him as her own **son**.
- **11:6** God killed every one of the Egyptians' firstborn **sons**.
- **18:1** After many years, David died, and his **son** Solomon began to rule.
- **26:4** "Is this the **son** of Joseph?" they said.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1060, H1121, H1123, H1248, H3173, H3206, H3211, H4497, H5209, H5220, G38160, G50430, G52070

(Go back to: [Esther 2:5](#); [3:1](#); [3:10](#); [5:11](#); [8:5](#); [8:10](#); [9:10](#); [9:12](#); [9:13](#); [9:14](#); [9:24](#); [9:25](#))

soul, self, person

Definition:

The term “soul” can either refer generally to the non-physical part of a person or refer specifically to a person’s awareness of themselves as a person distinct from others.

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: spirit)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Acts 2:27-28
- Acts 2:41
- Genesis 49:6
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- James 1:21
- Jeremiah 6:16-19
- Jonah 2:7-8
- Luke 1:47
- Matthew 22:37
- Psalms 19:7
- Revelation 20:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5082, H5315, H5397, G55900

(Go back to: [Esther 4:13](#))

splendor

Definition:

The term “splendor” refers to the extreme beauty and elegance that is often associated with wealth and a magnificent appearance.

- Often splendor is used to describe the wealth that a king has, or how he looks in his expensive, beautiful finery.
- The word “splendor” can also be used to describe the beauty of trees, mountains, and other things that God has created.
- Certain cities are said to have splendor because of o their natural resources, elaborate buildings and roads, and the wealth of their people, which includes rich clothing, gold, and silver.
- Depending on the context, this word could be translated as “magnificent beauty” or “amazing majesty” or “kingly greatness.”

(See also: [glory](#), [king](#), majesty)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:27
- Exodus 28:1-3
- Ezekiel 28:7
- Luke 4:7
- Psalms 89:44-45
- Revelation 21:26-27

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1925, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2091, H2122, H2892, H3314, H3519, H6643, H7613, H8597

(Go back to: [Esther 1:4](#))

stronghold, fortifications, fortress, citadel

Definition:

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

- Often, strongholds and fortresses were manmade structures with defensive walls. They could also have been places with natural protective barriers such as rocky cliffs or high mountains.
- People fortified strongholds by building thick walls or other structures that made it difficult for an enemy to break through.
- “Stronghold” or “fortress” could be translated as “securely strong place” or “strongly protected place.”
- The term “fortified city” could be translated as “securely protected city” or “strongly built city.”
- Another figurative meaning for the term “stronghold” referred to something that someone wrongly trusted in for security, such as a false god or other thing that was worshiped instead of Yahweh. This could be translated as “false strongholds.”
- This term should be translated differently from “refuge,” which emphasizes safety more than the concept of being fortified.

(See also: false god, false god, refuge, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 10:4
- 2 Kings 8:10-12
- 2 Samuel 5:8-10
- Acts 21:35
- Habakkuk 1:10-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0490, H0553, H0759, H1001, H1002, H1003, H1219, H1225, H2388, H4013, H4026, H4581, H4526, H4679, H4685, H4686, H4692, H4694, H4869, H5794, H5797, H5800, H6438, H6877, H7682, G37940, G39250

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2](#); [1:5](#); [2:3](#); [2:5](#); [2:8](#); [3:15](#); [8:14](#); [9:6](#); [9:11](#); [9:12](#))

sword, swordsmen

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 12:2
- Genesis 27:40
- Genesis 34:25
- Luke 2:33-35
- Luke 21:24
- Matthew 10:34
- Matthew 26:55
- Revelation 1:16

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0019, H1300, H2719, H4380, H6609, H7524, H7973, G31620, G45010

(Go back to: [Esther 9:5](#))

Tarshish

Facts:

In biblical times, Tarshish was a port city situated on the Mediterranean Sea. The specific location of the city is unknown. Also, the Old Testament mentions two different men named Tarshish.

- The city of Tarshish was a prosperous port city with ships that carried products to buy, sell, or trade. The Bible states that King Solomon kept a fleet of ships stationed at Tarshish.
- The Old Testament prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for the city of Tarshish instead of obeying God's command to go preach to Nineveh.
- One of Japheth's grandsons was named Tarshish.
- Tarshish was also the name of one of the wise men of King Ahashuerus.

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

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

Bible References:

- Genesis 10:2-5
- Isaiah 2:16
- Jeremiah 10:9
- Jonah 1:3
- Psalms 48:7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8659

(Go back to: [Esther 1:14](#))

threshold, doorway

Definition:

The term “threshold” refers to the bottom part of a doorway or the part of a building that is just inside the door.

- Sometimes a threshold is a strip of wood or stone that must be stepped over in order to enter a room or building.
- Both a gate and the opening to a tent can also have a threshold.
- This term should be translated with a term in the project language that refers to the place at the very entrance to a home that a person steps across.
- If there is no term for this, “threshold” could also be translated as “doorway” or “opening” or “entranceway,” depending on the context.

(See also: [gate](#), tent)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:17-19
- Ezekiel 9:3
- Isaiah 6:4
- Proverbs 17:19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4670, H5592

(Go back to: [Esther 2:21](#); [6:2](#))

throne, enthroned

Definition:

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

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

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

Bible References:

- Colossians 1:15-17
- Genesis 41:40
- Luke 1:32
- Luke 22:30
- Matthew 5:34
- Matthew 19:28
- Revelation 1:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3427, H3676, H3678, H3764, H7675, G09680, G23620

(Go back to: [Esther 1:2; 5:1](#))

time, untimely, date

Facts:

In the Bible the term “time” was often used figuratively to refer to a specific season or period of time when certain events took place. It has a meaning similar to “age” or “epoch” or “season.”

- “Time” can mean “occasion” in a phrase like “third time.” The phrase “many times” can mean “on many occasions.”
- Depending on the context, the term “time” could be translated as, “season” or “time period” or “moment” or “event” or “occurrence.”
- The phrase “times and seasons” is a figurative expression which states the same idea twice. This could also be translated as “certain events happening in certain time periods.” (See: [doublet](#))

(See also: [age](#), [tribulation](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 1:7
- Daniel 12:1-2
- Mark 11:11
- Matthew 8:29
- Psalms 68:28-29
- Revelation 14:15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0116, H0227, H0310, H1697, H1755, H2165, H2166, H2233, H2465, H3027, H3117, H3118, H3119, H3259, H3427, H3967, H4150, H4279, H4489, H4557, H5331, H5703, H5732, H5750, H5769, H6235, H6256, H6440, H6471, H6635, H6924, H7105, H7138, H7223, H7272, H7281, H7637, H7651, H7655, H7659, H7674, H7992, H8027, H8032, H8138, H8145, H8462, H8543, G07440, G05300, G10740, G12080, G14410, G15970, G16260, G19090, G20340, G21190, G21210, G22350, G22500, G25400, G34610, G35680, G37640, G38190, G39560, G39990, G41780, G41810, G41830, G42180, G42870, G43400, G44550, G51190, G51510, G53050, G55500, G55510, G56100

(Go back to: [Esther 1:13](#))

tongue, language

Definition:

The term “tongue” refers to the organ inside a person’s mouth that is used to speak. The term is often used figuratively to mean “language” or “speaking.” There also several other figurative meanings as well.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- In the book of Acts, the expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire, presumably shaped like tongues.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated as “language” or “supernatural language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: gift, Holy Spirit, [joy](#), praise, [rejoice](#), spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 John 3:18
- 2 Samuel 23:2
- Acts 2:26
- Ezekiel 36:3
- Philippians 2:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3956, G11000, G12580, G20840

(Go back to: [Esther 1:22](#); [3:12](#); [8:9](#))

tremble, stagger, shake

Definition:

The term “tremble” means to quiver or to shake slightly and repeatedly, usually from fear or distress. The term can also be used figuratively, meaning “to be very afraid.”

- Sometimes when the ground shakes it is said to “tremble.” It can do this during an earthquake or in response to a very loud noise.
- The Bible says that in the presence of the Lord the earth will tremble. This could mean that the people of the earth will shake out of fear of God or that the earth itself will shake.
- This term could be translated as “be afraid” or “fear God” or “shake,” depending on the context.

(See also: earth, [fear](#), Lord)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 7:15
- 2 Samuel 22:44-46
- Acts 16:29-31
- Jeremiah 5:22
- Luke 8:47

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1674, H2111, H2112, H2151, H2342, H2648, H2729, H2730, H2731, H5128, H5568, H6342, H6426, H6427, H7264, H7268, H7269, H7322, H7460, H7461, H7481, H7493, H7578, H8078, H8653, G17900, G51410, G51560, G54250

(Go back to: [Esther 5:9](#))

trespass

Definition:

The term “trespass” means to cross a line or to violate a boundary. This term is often used figuratively, meaning to break a law or to violate the rights of another person.

- This term is very similar to the word “transgression,” but is generally used more often to describe violations against other people than against God.
- A trespass can be a violation of a moral law or a civil law.
- A trespass can also be a sin committed against another person.
- This term is related to the terms “sin” and “transgress,” especially as it relates to disobeying God. All sins are trespasses against God.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, to “trespass against” could be translated as to “sin against” or to “break the rule.”
- Some languages may have an expression like “cross the line” that could be used to translate “trespass.”
- Consider how this term fits with the meaning of the surrounding Bible text and compare it to other terms that have a similar meaning, such as “transgress” and “sin.”

(See also: disobey, iniquity, sin, transgress)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 25:28
- 2 Chronicles 26:16-18
- Colossians 2:13
- Ephesians 2:1
- Ezekiel 15:7-8
- Romans 5:17
- Romans 5:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0816, H0817, H0819, H2398, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G02640, G39000

(Go back to: [Esther 3:3](#))

tribute, contribution, fined

Definition:

The term “tribute” refers to a gift from one ruler to another ruler, for the purpose of protection and for good relations between their nations. A tribute can also be a payment that a ruler or government requires from the people, such as a toll or tax.

- In Bible times, traveling kings or rulers sometimes paid a tribute to the king of the region they were traveling through to make sure they would be protected and safe.
- Often the tribute would include things besides money, such as foods, spices, rich clothing, and expensive metals such as gold.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “tribute” could be translated as “official gifts” or “special tax” or “required payment.”

(See also: [gold](#), [king](#), [ruler](#), tax)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:1-2
- 2 Chronicles 9:22-24
- 2 Kings 17:3
- Luke 23:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1093, H4061, H4503, H4530, H4853, H6066, H7862, G54110

(Go back to: [Esther 10:1](#))

true, truth

Definition:

The term “truth” refers to facts, events, and statements that correspond with reality. True facts describe the universe as it really exists. True events are events that actually happened. True statements are statements that are not false according to the real world.

- “True” things are real, genuine, actual, rightful, legitimate, and factual.
- “Truth” means understandings, beliefs, facts, or statements that are true.
- To say that a prophecy “came true” or “will come true” mean that it actually happened as predicted or that it will happen that way.
- In the Bible the concept of “truth” includes the concept of acting in a way that is reliable and faithful.
- Jesus revealed God’s truth in the words that he spoke.
- The Bible is truth. It teaches what is true about God and about everything he has made.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context and what is being described, the term “true” could also be translated by “real” or “factual” or “correct” or “right” or “certain” or “genuine.”
- Ways to translate the term “truth” could include “what is true” or “fact” or “certainty” or “principle.”
- The expression “come true” could also be translated as “actually happen” or “be fulfilled” or “happen as predicted.”
- The expression “tell the truth” or “speak the truth” could also be translated as “say what is true” or “tell what really happened” or “say things that are reliable.”
- To “accept the truth” could be translated as “believe what is true about God.”
- In an expression such as “worship God in spirit and in truth,” the expression “in truth” could also be translated by “faithfully obeying what God has taught us.”

(See also: believe, faithful, fulfill, [obey](#), prophet, understand)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- 1 John 1:5-7
- 1 John 2:8
- 3 John 1:8
- Acts 26:24-26
- Colossians 1:6
- Genesis 47:29-31
- James 1:18
- James 3:14
- James 5:19
- Jeremiah 4:2
- John 1:9
- John 1:16-18
- John 1:51
- John 3:31-33
- Joshua 7:19-21
- Lamentations 5:19-22
- Matthew 8:10
- Matthew 12:17
- Psalm 26:1-3

- Revelation 1:19-20
- Revelation 15:3-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** The snake responded to the woman, "That is not **true**! You will not die."
- **14:6** Immediately Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, said, "It is *_true_* that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!"
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the *_true_* God.
- **31:8** They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "**Truly**, you are the Son of God."
- **39:10** "I have come to earth to tell the **truth** about God. Everyone who loves the **truth** listens to me." Pilate said, "What is **truth**?"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0199, H0389, H0403, H0529, H0530, H0543, H0544, H0551, H0571, H0935, H3321, H3330, H6237, H6656, H6965, H7187, H7189, G02250, G02260, G02270, G02280, G02300, G11030, G33030, G34830, G36890, G41030, G41370

(Go back to: [Esther 9:30](#))

Vashti

Facts:

In the Old Testament book of Esther, Vashti was the wife of Ahasuerus, king of Persia.

- King Ahasuerus sent Queen Vashti away when she refused to obey his order to come to his dinner party and show off her beauty to his drunken guests.
- As a result, a search went out for a new queen and eventually Esther was chosen to be the king's new wife.

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

(See also: [Ahasuerus](#), [Esther](#), [Persia](#))

Bible References:

- Esther 1:9-11
- Esther 2:1-2
- Esther 2:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2060

(Go back to: [Esther 1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:12](#); [1:15](#); [1:16](#); [1:17](#); [1:19](#); [2:1](#); [2:4](#); [2:17](#))

virgin, virginity

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 1:27
- Luke 1:35
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 25:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a **virgin**.
- **22:4** She (Mary) was a **virgin** and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.
- **22:5** Mary replied, "How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?"
- **49:1** 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: H1330, H1331, G39320, G39330

(Go back to: [Esther 2:2](#); [2:3](#); [2:17](#); [2:19](#))

watch, guard, keep, take heed, beware

Definition:

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6
- Hebrews 13:17
- Jeremiah 31:4-6
- Mark 8:15
- Mark 13:33-34
- Matthew 25:10-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0821, H2370, H4929, H4931, H5027, H5341, H6486, H6822, H6836, H6974, H7462, H7789, H7919, H8104, H8108, H8245, G00690, G09910, G11270, G14920, G23340, G28920, G35250, G37080, G39060, G43370, G46480, G50830, G54380

(Go back to: [Esther 2:21](#))

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 5:23
- Genesis 9:21
- Genesis 49:12
- John 2:3-5
- John 2:10
- Matthew 9:17
- Matthew 11:18

smashed

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2561, H2562, H3196, H4469, H4997, H5435, H6025, H6071, H8492, G10980, G36310, G38200, G39430

(Go back to: [Esther 1:7](#); [1:10](#); [5:6](#); [7:2](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#))

wise men, advisor

Definition:

The term “wise men” simply means people who are wise. In the Bible, however, the term “wise men” often refers to men with unusual knowledge and abilities who served in a king’s royal court as advisors to the king or other high officials.

Old Testament

- Sometimes the term “wise men” is explained in the text as “prudent men” or “men with understanding.” This refers to men who act wisely and righteously because they obey God.
- The “wise men” who served pharaohs or other kings were often scholars who studied the stars, especially looking for special meanings for the patterns that the stars made in their positions in the sky. Sometimes “wise men” also practiced divination of performed acts of magic, probably by the power of evil spirits.
- Often wise men were expected to explain the meanings of dreams. For example, King Nebuchadnezzar demanded that his wise men describe his dreams and tell him what they meant, but none of them was able to do this, except Daniel who had received this knowledge from God.

New Testament

- The group of men who came from eastern regions to worship Jesus were called “magi,” which is often translated as “wise men,” since this probably refers to scholars who served a ruler of an eastern country.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “wise men” could be translated using the term “wise” or with a phrase such as “gifted men” or “educated men” or some other term that refers to men who have an important job working for a ruler.
- When the term “wise men” simply means people who are wise, the word “wise” should be translated in the same or similar way to how it is translated elsewhere in the Bible.

(See also: [Babylon](#), Daniel, divination, magic, [Nebuchadnezzar](#), [ruler](#), wise)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:32-34
- Daniel 2:1-2
- Daniel 2:10-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2445, H2450, H3778, H3779, G46800

(Go back to: [Esther 1:13](#); [6:13](#))

wrath, fury

Definition:

Wrath is an intense anger that is sometimes long-lasting. The Bible describes both people and God as experiencing intense anger. When speaking about God's "wrath," make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful fit of rage (which might be true of a human person).

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [judge](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- Luke 3:7
- Luke 21:23
- Matthew 3:7
- Revelation 14:10
- Romans 1:18
- Romans 5:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0639, H2197, H2528, H2534, H2740, H3707, H3708, H5678, H7107, H7109, H7110, H7265, H7267, G23720, G37090, G39490, G39500

(Go back to: [Esther 1:12](#); [1:18](#))

wrong, wronged, wrongdoer, mistreat, hurt, hurtful

Definition:

To “wrong” someone means to treat that person unjustly and dishonestly.

- The term “mistreat” means to act badly or roughly toward someone, causing physical or emotional harm to that person.
- The term “hurt” is more general and means to “cause someone harm in some way.” It often has the meaning of “physically injure.”
- Depending on the context, these terms could also be translated as “do wrong to” or “treat unjustly” or “cause harm to” or “treat in a harmful way” or “injure.”

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Exodus 22:21
- Genesis 16:5
- Luke 6:28
- Matthew 20:13-14
- Psalms 71:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H0816, H2248, H2250, H2255, H2257, H2398, H2554, H2555, H3238, H3637, H4834, H5062, H5142, H5230, H5627, H5753, H5766, H5791, H5792, H5916, H6031, H6087, H6127, H6231, H6485, H6565, H6586, H7451, H7489, H7563, H7665, H7667, H7686, H8133, H8267, H8295, G00910, G00920, G00930, G00950, G02640, G08240, G09830, G09840, G15360, G16260, G16510, G17270, G19080, G25560, G25580, G25590, G26070, G30760, G30770, G37620, G41220, G51950, G51960

(Go back to: [Esther 1:16](#))

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