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1 Kings

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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

1 Kings

Introduction to 1 Kings

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Kings

David dies and Solomon begins to reign (1:1-2:46)
Solomon reigns (3:1-11:43)
Solomon becomes wise and wealthy (3:1-4:43)
Solomon's temple (5:1-8:66)
Rise and fall of Solomon (9:1-11:43)
The kingdom divides (12:1-14:31)
Rehoboam succeeds Solomon (12:1-24)
Jeroboam rules the northern kingdom of Israel (12:25-33)
Ahijah prophesies against Jeroboam (13:1-14:20)
Rehoboam's end (14:21-31)
Kings and events in Israel and Judah (15:1-22:53)
Abijah and Asa in Judah (15:1-24)
Nadab in Israel (15:25-32)
Baasha in Israel (15:33-16:7)
Elah in Israel (16:8-14)
Zimri in Israel (16:15-22)
Omri in Israel (16:23-28)
Ahab in Israel (16:29-22:40)
Jehoshaphat in Judah (22:41-50)
Ahaziah in Israel (22:51-53)

What are the Books of 1 and 2 Kings about?

These books are about what happened to the people of Israel, from the time of King Solomon to the time both the northern and southern kingdoms were destroyed. These books describe how Israel split into two kingdoms after Solomon died. It also tells about all the kings that ruled over each kingdom after Solomon died.

In the southern kingdom, some kings did what Yahweh judged to be right. For example, King Josiah repaired the temple and reformed the worship of Yahweh. He responded to the high priest finding a copy of the Law of Yahweh in Jerusalem (2 Kings 22-23). However, all of the kings of the northern kingdom were wicked.

The Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. The Babylonians destroyed the southern kingdom in 586 B.C.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Books of 1 and 2 Kings were originally one book in Hebrew. They were separated into two books when translated into Greek. Translators might choose more meaningful titles such as "The First Book about the Kings" and "The Second Book about the Kings." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the purpose of 1 and 2 Kings?

These books were probably finished during the exile, after the Babylonians had destroyed the temple. They show how being faithful to Yahweh results in his blessing and prospering his people. Worshipping idols and not being faithful result in their being punished and destroyed.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why do the Books of 1 and 2 Kings refer to someone being addressed indirectly?

In the Bible, people often referred to themselves as “your servant” when speaking to anyone in a superior position to themselves. Indirectly addressing people in this way was intended to honor the one addressed. English sometimes uses the address “sir” in this way. But a translator should use whatever expressions that are natural in the project language in order to honor someone in a superior position.

What does the king “did what was right (or evil) in the eyes of Yahweh” mean?

The writer repeats this kind of expression throughout the Books of 1 and 2 Kings. Here “in the eyes of Yahweh” represents what Yahweh thinks about someone. If a king was faithful and obeyed the covenant, he did what was right according to Yahweh. If he was not faithful and disobeyed the covenant, he did what was evil according to Yahweh.

What is the meaning of the term “Israel”?

The name “Israel” is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed his name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: [Israel](#), [Israelites](#))

Can I translate the Book of 1 Kings before I translate the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel?

The Books of 1 and 2 Samuel should be translated before 1 Kings, since 1 Kings continues from where 2 Samuel ends.

1 Kings 1

1 Kings 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Kings is a continuation of 2 Samuel.

This chapter records the beginning of the reign of Solomon (chapters 1-11) after the death of David.

Special concepts in this chapter

==The next king== David did not announce who was to succeed him. Because of this, there was fighting between David's sons over who should be king. Adonijah invited guests to a banquet and declared himself king. Then those favoring Solomon told David and he declared Solomon the new king.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Several times in this chapter, the people use the idiom "sit on the throne" to mean "be king." Solomon assures Adonijah that if he behaves himself "not a hair of his will fall to the earth," meaning "he will not be harmed." (See: [Idiom](#))

1 Kings 1:1

covered him with blankets

They put many blankets on King David to try to keep him warm.

old and advanced in years

“very old.” The two phrases are similar in meaning and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Doublet](#).)

ULT

¹ Now the king David was old, coming in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm for him.

1 Kings 1:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² And his servants said to him, "They are seeking for my lord the king a young woman, a virgin, and she will stand before the face of the king. And she may be one who is useful for him, and she will lie in your bosom and it will be warm for my master the king."

1 Kings 1:3

So they searched

“So the king’s servants searched”

within all the borders of Israel

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: “all over the land of Israel” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Abishag

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

Shunammite

a person from the city of Shunem (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

the king

“King David”

ULT

³ And they sought a beautiful young woman in all the territory of Israel. And they found Abishag the Shunammite and they brought her to the king.

1 Kings 1:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ (Now the girl was beautiful as far as abundance. And she became one who is useful for the king and she attended to him, but the king did not know her.)

1 Kings 1:5

Adonijah son of Haggith

Haggith was a wife of David. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

exalted himself

“began to boast”

horsemen

These are men who drive chariots pulled by horses.

fifty men to run ahead of him

These men would go ahead of the chariots to clear the way for them and protect them.

ULT

⁵ And Adonijah the son of Haggith lifted himself up, saying, “I, myself, will reign.” And he made for himself a chariot and horsemen and 50 men who ran before his face.

1 Kings 1:6

had never troubled him, saying

“had never troubled him. He had never even asked him” or “had never wanted to make him angry, so he never even asked him”

Why have you done this or that?

This is a rhetorical question that a father would ask to discipline his son. Alternate translation: “You should know that what you have done is wrong.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

born next after Absalom

David was the father of both Absalom and Adonijah, but they had different mothers. Absalom was born, then Adonijah.

ULT

⁶ And his father did not pain him from his days, saying, “Why have you done so?” And also, he was very good of form and she had borne him after Absalom.

1 Kings 1:7

He conferred with Joab

“Adonijah discussed his plans with Joab”

Joab ... Zeruiah ... Abiathar ... Adonijah

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

followed Adonijah and helped him

“supported and helped Adonijah” or “promised to support and help Adonijah”

ULT

⁷ And his words were with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they helped behind Adonijah.

1 Kings 1:8

Zadok ... Benaiah ... Jehoiada ... Nathan ... Shimei ... Rei

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

ULT

⁸ But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and the mighty men who were for David were not with Adonijah.

1 Kings 1:9

fattened calves

“calves that were given plenty of food so that they would be fat” or “young cows that were specially prepared for sacrifice”

stone of Zoheleth

This is a rocky area near Jerusalem. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

En Rogel

This was the name of a spring where people got water. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

all his brothers ... all the men

This is a generalization. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

all his brothers, the king's sons

These two phrases refer to the same people.

men of Judah, the king's servants

These two phrases refer to the same people.

ULT

⁹ And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and cattle and fatling near the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En Rogel. And he called all of his brothers, the sons of the king, and to all the men of Judah, the servants of the king.

1 Kings 1:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁰ But he did not call Nathan the prophet and Benaiah and the mighty men and his brother Solomon.

1 Kings 1:11

Have you not heard ... it?

The purpose of this question is to introduce the information that Nathan wants to tell Bathsheba. Alternate translation: "You do not seem to have heard ... it." or "Have you heard ... it?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king

"that Haggith's son Adonijah is trying to become king"

Haggith

Adonijah's mother and a wife of David. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

11 And Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith reigns, and our master David does not know?"

1 Kings 1:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

12 And now, come, please let me advise you with advice, and slip away with your life and with the life of your son Solomon.

1 Kings 1:13

General Information:

The prophet Nathan continues to speak to Bathsheba.

did you not swear to your servant ... throne?

The purpose of this question was to remind David of what he had promised Bathsheba. Alternate translation: "you swore to your servant ... throne." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

to your servant

Bathsheba speaks to David as if she were someone else to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "to me, your servant" (See: [Pronouns](#))

he will sit on my throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. Alternate translation: "he will be king just as I was" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Why then is Adonijah reigning?

Bathsheba was to use a question so David would pay attention. Alternate translation: "So then, Adonijah should not be reigning." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

13 Go and come to the king David, and you shall say to him, 'Have you not, my master the king, sworn to your female servant, saying, "Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?" And why does Adonijah reign?'

1 Kings 1:14

confirm your words

“tell him that what you have said is true”

ULT

14 Behold, while you are still speaking there with the king, then I myself will come in behind you and will fill your words.”

1 Kings 1:15

the king's room

“the room in which the king slept”

Abishag the Shunammite

This is the young virgin that King David's servants had brought to care for him. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 1:3](#).

ULT

15 And Bathsheba came to the king at the room. (Now the king was very old and Abishag the Shunammite was attending the king.)

1 Kings 1:16

bowed and prostrated herself before the king

“bowed close to the ground in front of the king”

What do you desire?

“What can I do for you?”

ULT

16 And Bathsheba bowed and prostrated herself to the king. And the king said, “What is for you?”

1 Kings 1:17

you swore to

The form of “you” here is emphatic. Alternate translation: “you yourself swore to”

your servant

Bathsheba speaks as if she were another person to show David that she respects him. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: “me, your servant”

Yahweh

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

he shall sit on my throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: “he will be king just as I was” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

17 And she said to him, “My master, you yourself have sworn to your female servant by Yahweh your God, ‘Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne.’”

1 Kings 1:18

General Information:

Bathsheba continues speaking to King David.

see

“look” or “listen” or “pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

ULT

18 And now, behold, Adonijah reigns,
and now, my master the king, you do
not know.

1 Kings 1:19

oxen, fatted calves, and sheep in abundance

“many oxen, fatted calves, and sheep”

ULT

19 And he has sacrificed ox and fatling and sheep to abundance, and he has called to all the sons of the king and to Abiathar the priest and to Joab the commander of the army, but he has not called to Solomon your servant.

1 Kings 1:20

General Information:

Bathsheba continues to speak to King David.

the eyes of all Israel are on you, waiting

Here “eyes” refers to the people. Here “the eyes ... are on you” is an idiom that means the people are waiting expectantly. Alternate translation: “all the people of Israel are waiting expectantly” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Idiom](#))

will sit on the throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: “will be king”

ULT

²⁰ And you, my master the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who will sit on the throne of my master the king after him.

1 Kings 1:21

when my master the king sleeps with his fathers

Bathsheba speaks to King David as if she were speaking about him to show that she respects him. Alternate translation: “when you sleep with your fathers” (See: [Pronouns](#))

sleeps with his fathers

This is a polite way of saying “dies.” (See: [Euphemism](#))

I and my son Solomon will be regarded as criminals

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “the new king will regard my son Solomon and me as criminals” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²¹ And it will happen, as soon as my master the king lies down with his fathers, that I myself and my son Solomon will be sinners.”

1 Kings 1:22

General Information:

Nathan the prophet speaks to King David.

ULT

²² And behold, while she was still speaking with the king, then Nathan the prophet came.

1 Kings 1:23

prostrated himself

“bowed very low”

ULT

²³ And they told the king, saying, “Behold, Nathan the prophet.” And he came before the face of the king, and he prostrated himself to the king with his nostrils to the ground.

1 Kings 1:24

General Information:

Nathan the prophet continues to speak to King David.

have you said, 'Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?'

This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "have you said that Adonijah will reign after you, and he will sit on your throne?" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

he will sit on my throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: "he will be king just as I was"

ULT

²⁴ And Nathan said, "My master the king, have you yourself said, 'Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?'

1 Kings 1:25

eating and drinking before him

Adonijah probably sat at a table where he could watch all those he had invited as they ate and drank. The main idea is that the people Nathan named were with Adonijah and they were celebrating together. Alternate translation: “eating and drinking with him” or “eating and drinking where he can see them” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²⁵ For he has gone down today and sacrificed ox and fatling and sheep to abundance, and he has called to all of the sons of the king and to the commanders of the army and to Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before his face. And they say, ‘Let the king Adonijah live!’

1 Kings 1:26

General Information:

Nathan the prophet continues to speak to King David.

ULT

²⁶ But as for me, I am your servant, and he has not called to Zadok the priest and to Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and to Solomon your servant.

1 Kings 1:27

Has my master the king done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after him?

Nathan refers to David in the third person. This is a way of showing respect to the king. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "Have you, my master the king, done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after you?" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

who should sit on the throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: "who would be king after him" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁷ Has this matter happened from with my master the king and you have not caused your servants to know who will sit on the throne of my master the king after him?"

1 Kings 1:28

General Information:

King David makes a promise to Bathsheba.

came into the king's presence

"came before the king" or "came back to the king"

ULT

28 And the king David answered and said, "Call to Bathsheba for me." And she came before the face of the king and she stood before the face of the king.

1 Kings 1:29

made an oath

“made a solemn promise”

ULT

²⁹ And the king swore and said, “As Yahweh is alive, who has ransomed my life from every distress.

1 Kings 1:30

he will sit on my throne in my place

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:13](#). Alternate translation: “he will take my place and be king just as I was” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁰ For just as I have sworn to you by Yahweh the God of Israel, saying, ‘Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place,’ surely thus I will do this day.”

1 Kings 1:31

May my master King David live forever

Bathsheba knew David would not live forever; this is a way of saying that he is a good king. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

31 And Bathsheba bowed with nostrils to the ground and she prostrated herself before the king and she said, "May my master the king David live to eternity!"

1 Kings 1:32

General Information:

King David anoints Solomon king.

ULT

³² And the king David said, "Call for me to Zadok the priest and to Nathan the prophet and to Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came before the face of the king.

1 Kings 1:33

the servants of your master

David speaks of himself as if he were speaking of someone else so Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah would remember that David is still king. Alternate translation: “my servants” (See: [Pronouns](#))

Gihon

This is the name of a water spring. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

33 And the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your master, and you shall cause Solomon my son to mount on the female mule that is for me and bring him down to Gihon.”

1 Kings 1:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁴ And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet shall anoint him there as king over Israel. And you shall blow with the horn and you shall say, 'Let the king Solomon live!'

1 Kings 1:35

General Information:

King David continues to speak on behalf of Solomon as the one who will become king.

he will come and sit on my throne

The words “sit on the throne” are used as a metonym for being king in [1 Kings 1:13](#), [1 Kings 1:17](#), and [1 Kings 1:30](#). Here David speaks of Solomon literally sitting on a physical throne.

ULT

³⁵ And you shall go up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne; and he will reign in my place. And I have commanded him to be leader over Israel and over Judah.”

1 Kings 1:36

So let it be!

They agree and will do what King David said.

May Yahweh, the God of my master the king, confirm

Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David.
Alternate translation: "My master and king, may Yahweh your God confirm" (See: [Pronouns](#))

ULT

³⁶ And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Truly! So has Yahweh the God of my master the king spoken."

1 Kings 1:37

has been with my master the king, so

Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David. Alternate translation: “has been with you, my master the king, so” (See: [Pronouns](#))

make his throne greater than the throne of my master King David

The word **throne** is a metonym for either: (1) the person who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: “make the one who sits on the throne greater than my master King David” or (2) the kingdom over which the one who sits on the throne rules. Alternate translation: “make his kingdom greater than the kingdom of my master King David” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the throne of my master King David

Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David. Alternate translation: “your throne, my master King David” (See: [Pronouns](#))

ULT

³⁷ Just as Yahweh has been with my master the king, so may he be with Solomon. And may he make his throne greater than the throne of my master the king David.”

1 Kings 1:38

General Information:

The people of Israel anoint Solomon as king over Israel.

Kerethites ... Pelethites

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

Gihon

This is the name of a spring, where fresh water comes out of the ground. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

38 And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and the Kerethite and the Pelethite went down and they caused Solomon to mount on the female mule of the king David. And they brought him to Gihon.

1 Kings 1:39

took the horn of oil out of the tent

This means the priest took the special animal horn filled with olive oil that was kept in Yahweh's special tent.

took the horn of oil

This could mean: (1) the horn of an animal filled with olive oil or (2) a container that had replaced the original horn, but the people still called it a horn. Alternate translation: "took a container of oil"

all the people

This is a generalization. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

³⁹ And Zadok the priest took the horn of the oil from the tent and he anointed Solomon. And they blew with the horn, and all the people said, "Let the king Solomon live!"

1 Kings 1:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁰ And all the people went up after him.
And the people were playing with the
flutes and were rejoicing with great joy.
And the earth was split by their sound.

1 Kings 1:41

General Information:

Adonijah hears the loud noise and waits for the news.

ULT

41 And Adonijah and all the called ones who were with him heard and they had finished eating. And Joab heard the sound of the horn, and he said, "Why is the sound of the city noisy?"

1 Kings 1:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴² He was still speaking, and behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. And Adonijah said, "Come, for you are a man of strength and you will bring good news."

1 Kings 1:43

General Information:

Adonijah learns that Solomon is the new king.

ULT

⁴³ And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "No, but our master the king David has caused Solomon to reign.

1 Kings 1:44

Kerethites ... Pelethites

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

ULT

44 And the king has sent with him Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and the Kerethite and the Pelethite. And they caused him to mount on the female mule of the king.

1 Kings 1:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁵ And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him as king at Gihon, and they have come up from there rejoicing, and the city is in an uproar. This is the sound that you have heard.

1 Kings 1:46

General Information:

Jonathan continues to speak to Adonijah about Solomon.

is sitting on the throne of the kingdom

This could mean: (1) that these words are a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:35](#). Alternate translation: "is now king" or (2) that Solomon was physically sitting on the physical throne. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴⁶ And also, Solomon sits on the throne of the kingship.

1 Kings 1:47

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁷ And also, the servants of the king came to bless our master the king David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may he make his throne greater than your throne.' And the king bowed down on the bed.

1 Kings 1:48

a person to sit on my throne this day

This could mean: (1) that these words are a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:35](#). Alternate translation: “a person to be king today as I was” or (2) that Solomon was physically sitting on the physical throne. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

48 And also, thus said the king, ‘Blessed be Yahweh the God of Israel, who has given one who sits on my throne today, and my eyes are seeing.’”

1 Kings 1:49

General Information:

Adonijah becomes terrified of King Solomon.

They stood up

Another possible meaning is "They began to act quickly" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁴⁹ And all the called ones who were for Adonijah trembled and rose. And they went, a man to his way.

1 Kings 1:50

Adonijah ... took hold of the horns of the altar

The “horns of the altar” symbolized the strength and protection of Yahweh, but because Adonijah literally went into the area of the physical tent to take literal hold of the physical horns, you should translate this literally.

Adonijah ... rose up, went

Another possible meaning is “Adonijah ... quickly went” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁵⁰ And Adonijah was afraid of the face of Solomon. And he rose and went and grasped the horns of the altar.

1 Kings 1:51

is afraid of King Solomon

The servants speak to King Solomon as if they were speaking of someone else to show that they respected King Solomon. Alternate translation: "is afraid of you, King Solomon" (See: [Pronouns](#))

he will not kill his servant

Adonijah speaks of himself as if he were speaking of another person so people will think that he respects King Solomon. Alternate translation: "he will not kill me" (See: [Pronouns](#))

ULT

51 And it was told to Solomon, saying, "Behold, Adonijah fears Solomon the king. And behold, he has grasped the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let Solomon the king swear to me as soon as today that he will not put to death his servant with the sword.'"

1 Kings 1:52

General Information:

Solomon spares the life of Adonijah.

not a hair of his will fall to the earth

This is an exaggeration to say that Solomon will keep Adonijah safe.

Alternate translation: "not a hair of his head will fall" or "I will keep him safe" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

wickedness is found in him

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be translated as a verb. It is spoken of as if it were an object that could be found in a container. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "he does what is evil" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁵² And Solomon said, "If he will be a son of strength, some of his hair will not fall to the ground. But if evil is found in him, then he will die."

1 Kings 1:53

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵³ And Solomon the king sent, and they brought him down from beside the altar. And he came and bowed down to Solomon the king. And Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

1 Kings 2

1 Kings 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories: David's last advice to Solomon and Solomon's punishment of those who supported Adonijah and also Shimei, who had cursed David when David was fleeing from Absalom. (See: [curse](#), [cursed](#), [cursing](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Exalting oneself

Exalting oneself can lead to disaster as when Adonijah made himself king. (See: [exalt](#), [exalted](#), [exaltation](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Euphemism

David spoke of his impending death using a euphemism: "I am going the way of all the earth." (See: [Euphemism](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Parallelism

David wanted to emphasize the importance of obeying God to his son Solomon. He used parallelism, saying the same thing seven times using different words: "Keep the commands of Yahweh your God to walk in his ways, to obey his statutes, his commandments, his decisions, and his covenant decrees, being careful to do what is written in the law of Moses." Some languages have other ways of emphasizing an idea. (See: [Parallelism](#))

1 Kings 2:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹ And the days of David to die came near, and he commanded Solomon his son, saying,

1 Kings 2:2

I am going the way of all the earth

This is a polite way of saying "I am going to die." (See: [Euphemism](#))

show yourself a man

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "show everyone that you are a man" or "live so that everyone can see you are a good man" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

² "I am about to go in the way of all the earth. And you shall be strong, and you shall become a man."

1 Kings 2:3

walk in his ways

Walking on a path is a metonym for the way a person lives. Alternate translation: "live the way he commands" (See: [Idiom](#))

so you may prosper

"so you may succeed" or "so you may do well"

ULT

³ And you shall keep the keeping of Yahweh your God to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, according to what is written in the law of Moses, so that you may do wisely all that you do and everywhere that you would turn there,

1 Kings 2:4

may fulfill his word

“do everything he promised he would do”

If your sons ... you will never cease

Yahweh is talking to David, so the words “you” and “your” refer to David.

to walk before me faithfully

Yahweh is talking to David, so the word “me” refers to Yahweh.

with all their heart and with all their soul

The idiom “with all ... heart” means “completely” and “with all ... soul” means “with all ... being.” These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: “with all their being” or “with all their energy” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Doublet](#))

you will never cease to have a man on the throne of Israel

The word “throne” is a metonym for the king who sits on the throne. The litotes “will never cease to have” can be stated positively. Alternate translation: “your descendants will never cease to be kings of Israel” or “one of your descendants will always be the king of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Litotes](#))

ULT

⁴ so that Yahweh may cause his word to stand, which he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons will keep their way, to walk before my face in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ saying, ‘a man for you will not be cut off from on the throne of Israel.’

1 Kings 2:5

General Information:

King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.

what Joab ... did to me, and what he did

David is referring to the same thing twice. Alternate translation: “what Joab ... did to me—that is, what he did”

shed the blood of war in peace

This could mean: (1) “killed those men during a time of peace as if he were killing them in war” or (2) “took revenge on those men during a time of peace because they had killed people in war” (See: [Metonymy](#))

put the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the shoes on his feet

This could mean: (1) Joab was close enough to these men when he killed them that their blood spattered on his belt and on his sandals or (2) the word “blood” is a metonym for guilt of murder, and the belt and the shoes are metonyms for Joab’s authority as commander, so David is saying that because Joab is guilty of murder, he should not be commander of the army. Either way, it is best to translate this literally. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁵ And also you yourself know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, what he did to two of the commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and to Amasa the son of Jether: and he slew them. And he put the bloodshed of war in peace and he gave the bloodshed of war on his belt, which was on his loins, and on his sandal, which was on his feet.

1 Kings 2:6

do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace

Here being old is represented by having gray hair, that is, a “gray head.” Alternate translation: “make sure Joab dies a violent death before he grows old” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁶ And you shall act according to your wisdom, and you shall not let his gray hair go down in peace to Sheol.

1 Kings 2:7

General Information:

King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.

Barzillai

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

let them be among those who eat at your table

The table is a metonym for the home where the table is. Alternate translation: "welcome them to eat at your home" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁷ And to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite do covenant faithfulness, and let them be among those who eat at your table. For so they came near to me when I fled from the face of Absalom your brother.

1 Kings 2:8

General Information:

King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.

Shimei ... Gera

men's names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Benjamite

descendant of Benjamin

Bahurim ... Mahanaim

place names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁸ And behold, with you is Shimei the son of Gera the Benjamite from Bahurim. And he himself cursed me with a grievous curse on the day of my going to Mahanaim. And he himself went down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by Yahweh, saying, 'I will not put you to death by the sword.'

1 Kings 2:9

do not let him go free from punishment

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “be sure to punish him” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

bring his gray head down to the grave with blood

Blood is a metonym for violent death, and the head is synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: “make sure he dies a violent death” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁹ And now, do not leave him unpunished. For you are a wise man, and you know what you shall do to him. And you shall cause his gray hair to go down with blood to Sheol.”

1 Kings 2:10

General Information:

David dies and Solomon takes his place as the new king of Israel.

slept with his ancestors

David dying is spoken of as if he had fallen asleep. Alternate translation: “died” (See: [Euphemism](#))

David ... and was buried

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “David ... and they buried him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

10 And David lay down with his fathers and he was buried in the city of David.

1 Kings 2:11

The days that David reigned over Israel were

“The time that David reigned over Israel was” or “David reigned over Israel for”

ULT

11 And the days that David reigned over Israel were 40 years. In Hebron he reigned seven years and in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years.

1 Kings 2:12

sat on the throne of his father David

The throne represents the authority of the king. Alternate translation: “became king, as his father David had been” (See: [Metonymy](#))

his rule was firmly established

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh firmly established Solomon’s rule” or “Yahweh caused Solomon to take complete control of the kingdom” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

12 And Solomon sat on the throne of David his father. And his kingdom was firmly established.

1 Kings 2:13

General Information:

Adonijah comes to speak to Bathsheba.

peacefully

with no desire to cause harm

ULT

13 And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, "Is your coming peaceful?" And he said, "It is peaceful."

1 Kings 2:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

14 And he said, "A word is for me to you." And she said, "Speak."

1 Kings 2:15

all Israel

This is a generalization. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

things changed

“what we expected to happen did not happen”

the kingdom was given to my brother

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh gave the kingdom to my brother” or “my brother became king” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

15 And he said, “You yourself know that the kingship was for me, and all Israel had set their faces on me to reign. But the kingship turned around and became for my brother, for from Yahweh it was for him.”

1 Kings 2:16

General Information:

Adonijah shares his request with Bathsheba.

do not turn away from my face

Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. Alternate translation: “do not refuse to do what I request” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

16 And now, I am requesting one request from with you, do not turn back my face.” And she said to him, “Speak.”

1 Kings 2:17

he will not turn away from your face

Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. Alternate translation: “he will not refuse to do what you request” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Abishag the Shunammite

See [1 Kings 1:3](#).

ULT

17 And he said, “Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not turn back your face, that he may give to me Abishag the Shunammite for a wife.”

1 Kings 2:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

18 And Bathsheba said, "Good, I myself will speak concerning you to the king."

1 Kings 2:19

General Information:

Bathsheba goes to King Solomon with Adonijah's request.

The king rose

"The king stood up" from where he was sitting on his throne.

had a throne brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "told someone to bring a throne" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the king's mother

Bathsheba

ULT

19 And Bathsheba came to the king Solomon to speak to him concerning Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and he bowed down to her and he sat on his throne. And he set a throne for the mother of the king, and she sat by his right hand.

1 Kings 2:20

you will not turn away from my face ... I will not turn away from your face

Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 2:16](#) and [1 Kings 2:17](#). Alternate translation: “you will not refuse to do what I request ... I will not refuse to do what you request” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁰ And she said, “One small request I am requesting from with you, do not turn back my face.” And the king said to her, “Request, my mother, for I will not turn back your face.”

1 Kings 2:21

Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah ... as his wife

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Allow Adonijah ... to marry Abishag the Shunammite" or "Give Abishag the Shunammite to Adonijah ... as his wife" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²¹ And she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother for a wife."

1 Kings 2:22

General Information:

King Solomon gives an answer to Adonijah's request.

Why do you ask ... Adonijah? Why do you not ask the kingdom for him also ... Zeruah?

King Solomon was angered by his mother's request. Alternate translation: "You are wrong to ask ... Adonijah! This is the same as asking the kingdom for him also ... Zeruah!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²² And the king Solomon answered and said to his mother, "And why are you requesting Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Then request for him the kingship, for he is my brother, older than I, and for him and for Abiathar the priest and for Joab the son of Zeruah!"

1 Kings 2:23

May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “God will have every right to execute me—and to do even worse things to me—if I do not execute Adonijah because he has made this request” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²³ And the king Solomon swore by Yahweh, saying, “Thus may God do to me, and thus may he add, unless by his life Adonijah has spoken this word.”

1 Kings 2:24

General Information:

King Solomon executes Adonijah.

set me on the throne

The word “throne” refers to Solomon’s authority to rule that was given by Yahweh. (See: [Metonymy](#))

who has made me a house

Here “house” refers to descendants that Yahweh gave to King Solomon, who would continue to reign after him. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁴ And now, as Yahweh is alive, who has established me and caused me to sit on the throne of David my father, and who has made for me a house just as he said, surely today Adonijah shall be put to death.”

1 Kings 2:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁵ And the king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And he attacked him and he died.

1 Kings 2:26

General Information:

Solomon dismisses Abiathar from being priest.

suffered in every way my father suffered

Abiathar had suffered alongside King David before David became king.

ULT

²⁶ And with respect to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your fields. For you are a man of death, but I will not put you to death on this day, because you lifted the box of my Lord Yahweh before the face of David my father and because you were afflicted with all that my father was afflicted."

1 Kings 2:27

that he might fulfill

The word “he” refers to King Solomon.

the word of Yahweh

“the things that Yahweh had said”

which he had spoken

The word “he” refers to Yahweh.

ULT

²⁷ And Solomon drove Abiathar out from being a priest to Yahweh, to fulfill the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

1 Kings 2:28

General Information:

King Solomon orders Benaiah to execute Joab.

The news came to Joab

“Joab heard what Solomon did after he had become king”

the horns of the altar

The horns of the altar symbolized Yahweh’s power and protection. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

28 And the report came as far as Joab, for Joab had turned aside after Adonijah, but he had not turned aside after Absalom. And Joab fled to the tent of Yahweh and he took hold of the horns of the altar.

1 Kings 2:29

It was told King Solomon that Joab had fled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation:
"Someone told King Solomon that Joab had fled" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²⁹ And it was told to the king Solomon that Joab had fled to the tent of Yahweh, and behold, he was beside the altar. And Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, attack him."

1 Kings 2:30

General Information:

Benaiah goes to execute Joab.

ULT

³⁰ And Benaiah entered into the tent of Yahweh and he said to him, "Thus says the king, 'Come out!'" And he said, "No, for here I will die." And Benaiah brought back word to the king, saying, "Thus has spoken Joab and thus he answered me."

1 Kings 2:31

bury him so that you may take away from me and from my father's house the blood that Joab shed without cause

Here "house" stands for the descendants of David while "blood" represents guilt. Alternate translation: "bury him and so remove from me and my family the guilt for the murders Joab committed without cause" or "bury him. Do that so Yahweh will not hold me and my father's house guilty because Joab murdered people for no reason" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³¹ And the king said to him, "Do just as he has spoken and attack him and bury him. And you will remove from on me and from on the house of my father the bloodshed without cause that Joab poured out."

1 Kings 2:32

General Information:

King Solomon explains why Joab should die.

May Yahweh return his blood on his own head

The word “his” refers to Joab. “Blood” is a metonym for murder. And, the idiom “his blood on his own head” means the person should be considered guilty for murder. Alternate translation: “Joab has murdered people, and I want Yahweh to hold him guilty for what he has done” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

more righteous and better

These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Abner and Amasa were much better men than Joab. (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

³² And Yahweh will return his blood on his head, because he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself and he slew them with the sword, and my father David did not know: Abner the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah.

1 Kings 2:33

may their blood return on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants

The word “blood” is a metonym for murder. And, the idiom “blood return on the head of” means the person should be considered guilty for murder. Alternate translation: “I want Yahweh to hold Joab and his descendants guilty” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

to his house, and to his throne

The words “house” and “throne” are metonyms for the family and the kingdom. Alternate translation: “to David’s descendants and to David’s kingdom” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³³ And their shed blood will return on the head of Joab and on the head of his seed to eternity. But for David and for his seed and for his house and for his throne will be peace until eternity from with Yahweh.”

1 Kings 2:34

General Information:

Benaiah kills Joab and becomes the commander of King Solomon's army.

He was buried in his own house

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They buried Joab in his own house"

in his own house

The house is a metonym for the land on which the house stood. The Israelites buried people out of doors in graves or tombs. Alternate translation: "where his family lived" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁴ And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and attacked him and put him to death. And he was buried in his house in the wilderness.

1 Kings 2:35

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁵ And the king gave Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army. And Zadok the priest the king gave in place of Abiathar.

1 Kings 2:36

General Information:

King Solomon tells Shimei to stay in Jerusalem or Shimei will die.

ULT

³⁶ And the king sent and called for Shimei, and he said to him, "Build a house for yourself in Jerusalem and dwell there. And do not go out from there here or there."

1 Kings 2:37

Your blood will be on your own head

Here “blood” is a metonym for guilt and the head is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: “You will be responsible for your own death” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁷ And it will happen on the day when you go out and you pass over the wadi of Kidron, know surely that you will surely die. Your blood will be on your head.”

1 Kings 2:38

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁸ And Shimei said to the king, "The word is good. Just as my master the king has spoken, thus your servant will do." And Shimei dwelled in Jerusalem many days.

1 Kings 2:39

General Information:

Shimei leaves Jerusalem.

Achish ... Maacah ... Gath

men's names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Gath

a Philistine city (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

³⁹ And it happened from the end of three years that two of the slaves of Shimei fled to Achish the son of Maacah, the king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, "Behold, your slaves are in Gath."

1 Kings 2:40

Shimei arose

This is an idiom. "Shimei quickly" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

40 And Shimei rose and saddled his donkey and went to Gath, to Achish, to seek his slaves. And Shimei went and brought back his slaves from Gath.

1 Kings 2:41

General Information:

King Solomon judges Shimei for leaving Jerusalem.

Solomon was told

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told Solomon" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

41 And it was told to Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned.

1 Kings 2:42

Did I not make you swear ... saying, 'Know ... die'?

Solomon is reminding Shimei of what Shimei had promised.

Alternate translation: "You know very well that I made you swear ... saying, 'Know ... die!'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁴² And the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Did I not cause you to swear by Yahweh and testify against you, saying, 'On the day when you go out and go here or there, surely know that you will surely die'? And you said to me, 'The word I have heard is good.'

1 Kings 2:43

General Information:

King Solomon pronounces judgment upon Shimei for leaving Jerusalem.

Why then have you not kept your oath ... you?

This could mean: (1) Solomon is asking for an answer or (2) Alternate translation: "You have done wrong by breaking your oath ... you." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁴³ And why did you not keep the oath of Yahweh and the command that I commanded concerning you?"

1 Kings 2:44

will return your wickedness on your own head

Here the head represents the person, and wickedness is spoken of as if it were a solid or liquid that could be put on a person's head.

Alternate translation: "will hold you responsible for all your wickedness" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

44 And the king said to Shimei, "You yourself know all the evil that your heart knows, that you did to David my father. And Yahweh will return your evil on your head."

1 Kings 2:45

General Information:

King Solomon orders Shimei to be put to death.

**the throne of David will be established before
Yahweh forever**

Here “throne of David” represents the authority and rule of David and all his descendants forever. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴⁵ But the king Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David will be established before the face of Yahweh until eternity.”

1 Kings 2:46

in Solomon's hand

This use of "hand" represents Solomon's power and authority. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

46 And the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and attacked him, and he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

1 Kings 3

1 Kings 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories. Verses 1-15 is the story of Solomon's dream when God asked him what he wanted and he said he needed wisdom to be a good and fair ruler. Verses 16-28 is the story of a court case showing Solomon's wisdom. (See: [wise](#), [wisdom](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom

God was very pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom. This is because wisdom was something that he could use to serve other people instead of himself. Because this was a noble request, God promised Solomon wisdom, wealth, and fame. (See: [promise](#), [promised](#))

Putting the needs of others first

There are two additional examples of people putting the needs of others in front of their own needs. God is pleased with people wanting to do their job well more than wanting to be blessed. A mother will put the life of her child above every other concern. (See: [bless](#), [blessed](#), [blessing](#))

1 Kings 3:1

General Information:

Solomon marries an Egyptian.

Solomon allied himself by marriage with Pharaoh king of Egypt

Solomon became the son-in-law of Pharaoh king of Egypt so the two kings would work together and fight together against their enemies.

until he had finished building

She was still in the city of David after he had finished building.

the house of Yahweh

“the temple”

ULT

¹ And Solomon made himself the son-in-law of Pharaoh the king of Egypt. And he took the daughter of Pharaoh and he brought her into the city of David until his completing to build his house and the house of Yahweh and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

1 Kings 3:2

no house had yet been built

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “no one had yet built a house” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

for the name of Yahweh

The word “name” is a metonym for the person, and “for the name” refers to worshiping the person. Alternate translation: “in which people would worship Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

² Only the people were sacrificing at the high places because a house had not been built for the name of Yahweh until those days.

1 Kings 3:3

walking in the statutes of David his father

How one lives one's life is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "obeying the laws that David his father had made" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ And Solomon loved Yahweh by walking in the statutes of David his father, but at the high places he was sacrificing and burning incense.

1 Kings 3:4

General Information:

God asks Solomon what he can do for Solomon.

the great high place

“the most famous place for makings sacrifices” or “the most important altar”

ULT

⁴ And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for it was the great high place. Solomon offered up a thousand burnt up offerings on that altar.

1 Kings 3:5

Ask! What should I give you?

“Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you.” or “What do you want? Ask and I will give it to you.”

ULT

⁵ At Gibeon Yahweh appeared to Solomon in a dream that night. And God said, “Request! What should I give to you?”

1 Kings 3:6

General Information:

Solomon responds to God's question.

You have shown great covenant faithfulness to your servant

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "You have been very faithful to your covenant with your servant" or "You have greatly and faithfully loved your servant" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

because he walked before you in trustworthiness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart

Walking is a metaphor for the way one lives. The abstract nouns "trustworthiness," "righteousness," and "uprightness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because he was trustworthy and righteous, and his heart was upright" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

in uprightness of heart

A sincere person is spoken of as one whose heart is upright. Alternate translation: "he was sincere" or "he spoke the truth and did what was good" (See: [Metaphor](#))

have given him a son

The "son" is Solomon. (See: [Pronouns](#))

to sit on his throne

Sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. Alternate translation: "to rule in his place" (See: [Metonymy](#))

today

Solomon is speaking of the years he had already been ruling, not of the time since the sun had last set.

ULT

⁶ And Solomon said, "You yourself have did great covenant faithfulness with your servant David, my father, because he walked before your face in faithfulness and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with you. And you have kept for him this great covenant faithfulness and you have given to him a son sitting on his throne as it is this day.

1 Kings 3:7

General Information:

Solomon asks for wisdom.

your servant

Solomon speaks as if he is another person to show respect to Yahweh. Alternate translation: “me” (See: [Pronouns](#))

I am only a little child

Solomon is saying that he is like a child who does not know as much as a father. (See: [Metaphor](#))

I do not know how to go out or come in

This is an idiom that means Solomon does not know how to govern as king. Alternate translation: “I do not know how to be the king” or “I do not know the right way to do things as king” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁷ And now, Yahweh my God, you yourself have caused your servant to reign in place of David my father, but I am a young youth. I do not know going out or coming in.

1 Kings 3:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁸ And your servant is in the midst of your people, whom you have chosen, a numerous people who can not be numbered and can not be counted because of abundance.

1 Kings 3:9

For who is able to judge this great people of yours?

Solomon asks a question to emphasize that he knows that no one can judge. Alternate translation: “No one is able to judge this great people of yours.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁹ And may you give to your servant a heart that hears to judge your people, to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge your people, this heavy one?”

1 Kings 3:10

General Information:

God gives Solomon wisdom and more.

ULT

¹⁰ And the thing was good in the eyes of the Lord, that Solomon had requested this thing.

1 Kings 3:11

the life of your enemies

The “life” is a metonym for the power to kill. Alternate translation: “the power to kill your enemies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

11 And God said to him, “Because you have requested this thing and you have not requested for yourself many days, and you have not requested riches for yourself, and you have not requested the life of your enemies, but you requested for yourself discerning to hear justice,

1 Kings 3:12

now I will do all you asked of me when you gave me your request

“I will do what you asked me to do when you spoke with me”

I give you a wise and an understanding heart

The heart is a metonym for what a person thinks and desires.

Alternate translation: “I make you able to be wise and to understand many things” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹² behold, I have done according to your word. Behold, I have given to you a wise and discerning heart, so that one has not been like you before your face, and after you will not rise one like you.

1 Kings 3:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

13 And also what you have not requested I have given to you, both riches and honor, so that there will not be a man like you among the kings all of your days.

1 Kings 3:14

walk in my ways to keep

Living one's life is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "live as I want you to live and obey" (See: [Metaphor](#))

lengthen your days

"make you live a long time"

ULT

14 And if you will walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, just as David your father walked, then I will lengthen your days."

1 Kings 3:15

behold

The word “behold” here shows that Solomon saw something interesting.

ULT

15 And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream! And he entered Jerusalem and he stood before the face of the box of the covenant of the Lord. And he offered up burnt offerings and he made peace offerings. And he made a feast for all his servants.

1 Kings 3:16

General Information:

Two prostitutes ask Solomon to make a decision.

ULT

16 At that time two women, prostitutes, came to the king and they stood before his face.

1 Kings 3:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

17 And the one woman said, "Please, my master, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I gave birth with her in the house.

1 Kings 3:18

General Information:

The two prostitutes tell Solomon their story.

ULT

18 And it happened on the third day of my giving birth that this woman also gave birth. And we were together, there was no stranger with us in the house, only we two were in the house.

1 Kings 3:19

lay on him

It may be helpful to state that this caused the baby to die. Alternate translation: "accidentally rolled on top of her baby and smothered him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

19 And the son of this woman died at night, because she lay on him.

1 Kings 3:20

your servant

The woman speaks as if she were speaking of someone else to show that she respects Solomon. Alternate translation: "I" (See: [Pronouns](#))

ULT

20 And she arose in the middle of the night and she took my son from my side, and your female servant was asleep. And she laid him in her bosom. And her son, the one who died, she laid in my bosom.

1 Kings 3:21

General Information:

Two prostitutes continue to share their story with Solomon.

nurse my child

This means to feed her baby milk from her breast.

ULT

²¹ And I rose in the morning to nurse my son, and behold, he was dead! And I considered diligently with respect to him in the morning, and behold, he was not my son, whom I had borne!”

1 Kings 3:22

before the king

“before Solomon” or “while Solomon could see and hear them”

ULT

²² And the other woman said, “No, but my son is the living one, and your son is the dead one.” And this one was saying, “No, but your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.” And they spoke before the face of the king.

1 Kings 3:23

General Information:

Solomon makes a decision for the two women.

ULT

²³ And the king said, "This one says, 'This is my son, the living one, and your son is the dead one,' but this one says, 'No, but your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"

1 Kings 3:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁴ And the king said, "Take a sword for me." And they brought the sword before the face of the king.

1 Kings 3:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁵ And the king said, "Divide the living child into two pieces, and give the half to one and the half to the other."

1 Kings 3:26

General Information:

The real mother asks the king to spare the child's life.

her heart was full of compassion for her son

This speaks of the woman having a lot of compassion as if her heart were a container and compassion were a solid object. Alternate translation: "she greatly loved her baby" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²⁶ And the woman whose son was the living one said to the king, for her compassionate feelings for her son became warm. And she said, "Please, my master, give to her the living child, and you must certainly not put him to death!" But this one was saying, "Either for me or for you he will not be. Divide!"

1 Kings 3:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁷ And the king answered and said,
“Give to her the living child, and you
must certainly not put him to death. She
is his mother.”

1 Kings 3:28

all Israel

This is a generalization. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

28 And all Israel heard the judgment that the king had judged, and they were afraid from the face of the king, because they saw that the wisdom of God was within him to do justice.

1 Kings 4

1 Kings 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter names the important people in Solomon's government and shows the extent of his kingdom.

1 Kings 4:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a list of Solomon's officials. The list ends in 1 Kings 4:6.

ULT

1 And King Solomon was king over all Israel.

1 Kings 4:2

Azariah ... Zadok

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

ULT

² And these were the officials which were for him: Azariah the son of Zadok was the priest.

1 Kings 4:3

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Solomon's officials.

**Elihoreph ... Ahijah ... Shisha ... Jehoshaphat ...
Ahilud**

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

ULT

³ Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, were scribes. Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder.

1 Kings 4:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Solomon's officials.

Benaiah ... Jehoiada ... Zadok ... Abiathar

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

ULT

⁴ And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the army. And Zadok and Abiathar were priests.

1 Kings 4:5

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Solomon's officials.

Azariah ... Nathan ... Zabud

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

ULT

⁵ And Azariah the son of Nathan was over the stationed ones. And Zabud the son of Nathan was a priest, the friend of the king.

1 Kings 4:6

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of Solomon's officials.

Ahishar ... Adoniram ... Abda

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

the men who were subjected to forced labor

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men whom Solomon forced to work for him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁶ And Ahishar was over the house. And Adoniram the son of Abda was over the forced labor.

1 Kings 4:7

General Information:

This begins a list of Solomon's 12 officers. The list ends in 1 Kings 4:19.

ULT

⁷ And for Solomon were 12 stationed ones over all Israel, and they sustained the king and his house. A month in the year it would be on one to sustain.

1 Kings 4:8

Ben-Hur

This is the name of a man. Note that “Ben” before a name means “son of” so “Ben-Hur” means “the son of Hur.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in the hill country

“who was the officer in charge of the hill country

Ephraim

This is the name of a place. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁸ And these were their names: Ben Hur in the hill country of Ephraim,

1 Kings 4:9

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ben-Deker

This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Deker" means "the son of Deker." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in Makaz

"who was the officer in charge of Makaz"

Makaz ... Shaalbim ... Beth Shemesh ... Elon Beth Hanan

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

ULT

⁹ Ben Deker in Makaz and in Shaalbim and Beth Shemesh and Elon Beth Hanan,

1 Kings 4:10

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ben-Hesed

This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Hesed" means "the son of Hesed." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in Arubboth

"who was the officer in charge of Arubboth"

Arubboth ... Sokoh ... Hopher

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

ULT

¹⁰ Ben Hesed in the Arubboth (for him was Sokoh and all the land of Hopher),

1 Kings 4:11

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ben-Abinadab

This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Abinadab" means "the son of Abinadab." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in all Naphoth Dor

"who was the officer in charge of all Naphoth Dor"

Naphoth Dor

This is the name of a place. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Taphath

This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

11 Ben Abinadab was for all Naphoth Dor (Taphath, the daughter of Solomon, was for him for a wife),

1 Kings 4:12

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Baana ... Ahilud

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

in Taanach

"who was the officer in charge of Taanach"

Taanach ... Megiddo ... Beth Shan ... Zarethan ... Jezreel ... Beth Shan to Abel Meholah ... Jokmeam

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

ULT

¹² Baana the son of Ahilud in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth Shan that is beside Zarethan from below Jezreel, from Beth Shan as far as Abel Meholah, as far as from the other side of Jokmeam,

1 Kings 4:13

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ben-Geber ... Jair ... Manasseh

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

in Ramoth Gilead

"who was the officer in charge of Ramoth Gilead"

Ramoth Gilead ... Argob ... Bashan

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

ULT

¹³ Ben Geber in Ramoth Gilead, for him were the villages of Jair the son of Manasseh that were in Gilead, for him was the region of Argob, which was in the Bashan—60 great cities with a wall and a gate bar of bronze;

1 Kings 4:14

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ahinadab ... Iddo

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

in Mahanaim

"who was the officer in charge of Mahanaim"

Mahanaim

This is the name of place. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹⁴ Ahinadab the son of Iddo in Mahanaim,

1 Kings 4:15

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Ahimaaz

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

in Naphtali

"who was the officer in charge of Naphtali"

Naphtali

This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Basemath

This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹⁵ Ahimaaz in Naphtali (he also took Basemath the daughter of Solomon for a wife),

1 Kings 4:16

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Baana ... Hushai

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

in Asher

"who was the officer in charge of Asher"

Asher

This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Bealoth

This is the name of a piece of land. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹⁶ Baana the son of Hushai in Asher and Bealoth,

1 Kings 4:17

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Jehoshaphat ... Paruah

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

in Issachar

"who was the officer in charge of Issachar"

Issachar

This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹⁷Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah in
Issachar,

1 Kings 4:18

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.

Shimei ... Ela

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

in Benjamin

"who was the officer in charge of Benjamin"

Benjamin

This is a tribal land named for a son of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

18 Shimei the son of Ela in Benjamin,

1 Kings 4:19

Connecting Statement:

The list of Solomon's 12 officers ends.

Geber ... Uri ... Sihon ... Og

These are men's names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in the land of Gilead

"who was the officer in charge of the land of Gilead"

Gilead ... Bashan

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

the country of Sihon

"the land that in earlier years belonged to Sihon"

Amorites

This is the name of a people group. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

in the land

Here "the land" refers to the land of Judah; the previous officials presided over different parts of Israel.

ULT

¹⁹ Geber the son of Uri in the land of Gilead, the land of Sihon, the king of the Amorite and Og, the king of the Bashan, and he was the one stationed one who was in the land.

1 Kings 4:20

Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea

The speaker uses exaggeration to say that there were so many people that it would be impossible to count them all. The words "Judah" and "Israel" are metonyms for the people who lived in Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: "There were as many people in Judah and Israel as there are grains of sand by the sea" or "there were more people in Judah and Israel than a person could count" (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁰ Judah and Israel were numerous as the sand that is on the sea according to abundance. They were eating and drinking and rejoicing.

1 Kings 4:21

the River

“the Euphrates River”

ULT

²¹ And Solomon was ruling over all the kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines and as far as the border of Egypt, bringing tribute near and serving Solomon all the days of his life.

1 Kings 4:22

thirty cors

A cor is a unit of dry measure. (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

ULT

²² And the bread of Solomon for one day was 30 cors of fine flour and 60 cors of flour,

1 Kings 4:23

deer, gazelles, roebucks

four-legged animals that run fast (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

deer

more than one of these animals

fattened fowl

“birds that people fed so they would become fat”

ULT

²³ ten fat cattle and 20 pasture cattle and 100 sheep, apart from deer and gazelle and roebuck and fattened fowl.

1 Kings 4:24

Tiphsah

name of a piece of land

ULT

²⁴ For he had dominion over all beyond the river, from Tiphsah and as far as Gaza, over all the kings of beyond the river. And peace was for him from all his sides, from all around.

1 Kings 4:25

Judah and Israel

The words “Judah” and “Israel” are metonyms for the people of Judah and Israel. (See: [Metonymy](#))

every man under his vine and under his fig tree

“each family had their own garden with grapevines and fig trees,” This showed that the people lived in safety and peace, since they were not at war and had time to grow their gardens.

from Dan to Beersheba

This represents the whole land of Israel from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south. (See: [Merism](#))

ULT

²⁵ And Judah and Israel dwelled in safety, a man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan and as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

1 Kings 4:26

stalls of horses

A stall is a place where an animal such as a horse is kept and cared for.

ULT

²⁶ And there was for Solomon 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariotry and 12,000 horsemen.

1 Kings 4:27

who came to King Solomon's table

“who ate with King Solomon” or “whom King Solomon invited to eat with him”

every man in his month

Solomon had assigned 12 officers in [1 Kings 4:7](#) to bring him food in different months.

They let nothing be lacking

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “They provided everything that Solomon needed” (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

27 And those stationed ones sustained the king Solomon and all the ones who came near to the table of the king Solomon, a man his month. They would not let anything be lacking.

1 Kings 4:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁸ And they brought the barley and the straw for the horses and for the steed to the place there where it should be, a man according to his regulation.

1 Kings 4:29

God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding

The abstract nouns “wisdom” and “understanding” can be translated as verbs. God giving him these things means that God enabled him to have these qualities. Alternate translation: “God enabled Solomon to be wise and to understand many things” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Idiom](#))

ULT

²⁹ And God gave wisdom to Solomon and very much understanding and width of heart like the sand that is on the lip of the sea.

wideness of understanding like the sand on the seashore

Solomon was able to understand many things about many different subjects. The abstract noun “wideness” can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: “Solomon was able to understand many things about a wide range of subjects” (See: [Simile](#))

1 Kings 4:30

Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people

"Solomon was wiser than all the wise people"

the people of the east

This refers to people from countries east of Israel such as Arabia and Mesopotamia.

ULT

³⁰ And the wisdom of Solomon was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the east and than all the wisdom of Egypt.

1 Kings 4:31

Ethan ... Heman ... Kalkol ... Darda ... Mahol

men's names (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

³¹ And he was wiser than every man, than Ethan the Ezrahite and Heman and Kalkol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his name was in all the surrounding nations.

1 Kings 4:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³² And he spoke 3,000 proverbs and his songs were 1,005.

1 Kings 4:33

cedar ... hyssop

These words form a merism that includes all plants. Alternate translation: "cedar tree ... hyssop bush" or "the greatest of trees ... least important of bushes" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#) and [Merism](#))

ULT

³³ And he spoke concerning the trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon and as far as the hyssop that comes out on the wall. And he spoke concerning the beast and concerning the bird and concerning the creeping thing and concerning the fish.

1 Kings 4:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁴ And they came from all the peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from with all the kings of the earth who had heard his wisdom.

1 Kings 5

1 Kings 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of the description of the building of the temple. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Building the temple

Building the temple took a lot of work and cooperation. King Hiram of Tyre provided lumber for building the temple in exchange for wheat and olive oil. Solomon also had many people cutting rocks for the walls of the temple.

1 Kings 5:1

General Information:

Solomon talks with King Hiram about building the Temple.

Hiram had always loved David

“Hiram had always been a close friend of King David”

ULT

¹ And Hiram the king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him as king in place of his father, for Hiram was a one loved by David all the days.

1 Kings 5:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

1 Kings 5:3

Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet

To put an enemy under someone's foot means to conquer them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was helping David to defeat his enemies" or "David was busy since Yahweh was giving him victory over his enemies" (See: [Idiom](#))

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for the name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: "in which people would worship Yahweh" (See: [Metonymy](#))

because of the wars that surrounded him

Another possible meaning is "because of the wars with which his enemies surrounded him" or "because he was fighting enemies on all sides"

Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet

This speaks of Yahweh giving David complete control over his enemies as putting them under his feet. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was enabling David to completely defeat his enemies" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ "You yourself knew David my father, that he was not able to build a house for the name of Yahweh his God because of the face of the warfare that surrounded him, until Yahweh was giving them under the soles of his feet."

1 Kings 5:4

General Information:

Solomon continues to talk with King Hiram about building the Temple.

has given me rest on every side

Before Solomon became king, King David and the people of Israel had been at war, but now King Solomon and the people were at rest and in a time of peace.

There is neither adversary nor disaster

neither humans who cause harm nor natural events that cause harm. This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "We are safe from our enemies and from natural disasters" (See: [Merism](#))

adversary

enemy

disaster

event that causes harm to people and their property

ULT

⁴ But now, Yahweh my God has given rest to me from all around. There is no adversary and there is no evil occurrence.

1 Kings 5:5

So

This is to emphasize the words that follow. "Listen! This is what I am going to do:" or "Because of what Yahweh has done for me, this is what I am going to do:"

for the name of Yahweh my God ... for my name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "where Yahweh my God will live ... where I will live" (See: [Metonymy](#))

set on your throne in your place

Here "throne" refers to ruling as king. Alternate translation: "make to be the king after you" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁵ And behold I am saying to build a house for the name of Yahweh my God, just as Yahweh spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will give in your place on your throne, he will build the house for my name.'

1 Kings 5:6

General Information:

Solomon continues to talk with King Hiram about building the temple.

there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians

“your workers know how to cut timber better than my men”

Sidonians

people of the city of Sidon

ULT

6 And now, command and let them cut for me cedars from the Lebanon and let my servants be with your servants and I will give to you the wage of your servants according to all that you say. For you yourself know that there is no man among us knowing how to cut trees like the Sidonians.”

1 Kings 5:7

General Information:

King Hiram answers Solomon.

the words of Solomon

“what Solomon said”

May Yahweh be blessed today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “I praise Yahweh today” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁷ And it happened as soon as Hiram heard the words of Solomon that he rejoiced exceedingly. And he said, “Blessed be Yahweh today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people.”

1 Kings 5:8

cypress

Cypress is another kind of valuable wood that would be used for building the temple.

ULT

⁸ And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, "I have heard what you sent to me. I myself will do all your desire with the trees of cedar and with the trees of cypress."

1 Kings 5:9

General Information:

King Hiram continues to answer Solomon.

make them into rafts

“tie them together so they will float in groups”

them broken up there

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “my workers untie the logs from each other” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

You will do what I desire

“You can do what I want” or “You can pay me”

ULT

⁹ And my servants will bring down from the Lebanon to the sea, and I myself will set rafts on the sea as far as the place where you send for me. And I will break them up there and you yourself will lift. And you yourself will do my desire by giving the bread of my house.”

1 Kings 5:10

fir

The word “fir” refers to many kinds of trees, including cypress trees.

ULT

10 And Hiram was giving to Solomon trees of cedar and trees of cypress, all of his desire.

1 Kings 5:11

measures of wheat

This was a dry measurement whereas the oil was a liquid measurement. It was not clear which measure was intended. The measurement in the UST is an educated guess. (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

year by year

“every year”

ULT

11 And Solomon gave to Hiram 20,000 kors of wheat as food for his house and 20 kors of beaten oil. Thus Solomon would give to Hiram year by year.

1 Kings 5:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹² And Yahweh gave wisdom to Solomon, just as he spoke to him. And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon and the two of them cut a covenant.

1 Kings 5:13

General Information:

Solomon forces men to build the Temple.

conscripted labor out of all Israel

“forced men from all over Israel to work”

ULT

13 And the king Solomon brought up forced labor from all Israel. And the forced labor was 30,000 men.

1 Kings 5:14

in shifts

That is, there were three groups that took turns spending one month in Lebanon and two months at home.

One month they were in Lebanon and two months at home

Each of the three groups spent one month working in Lebanon and then two months at home in Israel.

the men who were subjected to forced labor

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “the men whom Solomon was forcing to work for him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

14 And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 by the month in shifts. They were a month in the Lebanon, two months in his house. And Adoniram was over the forced labor.

1 Kings 5:15

General Information:

Solomon continues to force men to build the Temple.

seventy thousand

“70,000” (See: [Numbers](#))

burdens

heavy things that people have to work hard to carry

eighty thousand

“80,000” (See: [Numbers](#))

stonecutters

men who dig stones out of the ground and cut them to the proper shape

ULT

15 And there was for Solomon 70,000 who lift a burden and 80,000 who hew in the hill country,

1 Kings 5:16

3,300 chief officers

“three thousand three hundred chief officers” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

¹⁶ apart from the officials of the stationed ones of Solomon who were over the work, 3,300 were the ones having dominion over the people, the ones who were doing the work.

1 Kings 5:17

General Information:

Solomon continues to force men to build the temple.

quarried large stones of high quality

“dug large, good stones out of the mountain and cut them to be the right shape”

ULT

17 And the king commanded and they removed large stones, precious stones to found the house, stones of hewing.

1 Kings 5:18

Gebalites

men from the city of Gebal (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

18 And the builders of Solomon and the builders of Hiram and the Gebalites hewed and they prepared the trees and the stones to build the house.

1 Kings 6

1 Kings 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The building of the temple continues in this chapter. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Building the temple

Solomon built the temple in seven years. The outside walls were made of rock. Solomon shaped the rocks for the wall in the quarry and then assembled them at the temple site. The inside was covered with wood. Inside the temple was a room covered by gold, which was the Most Holy Place where the ark was housed under statues of angels. It represented the presence of God.

1 Kings 6:1

General Information:

The narrator describes the temple and its dimensions. This description continues through 1 Kings 6:38.

Solomon began to build

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "Solomon commanded his workers to begin building" (See: [Metonymy](#))

480th ... fourth

These are the ordinal forms of 480 and 4. (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

in the month of Ziv, which is the second month

"Ziv" is the name of the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#) and [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹ And it happened in year 480 of the going out of the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of the reigning of Solomon over Israel, in the month of Ziv (that is the second month), that he began to build the house of Yahweh.

1 Kings 6:2

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high

“60 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high.” A cubit is 46 centimeters. This can be written used modern measures. Alternate translation: “27.6 meters long, 9.2 meters wide, and 13.8 meters high” (See: [Numbers](#) and [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

² As for the house that the king Solomon built for Yahweh, 60 cubits was its length, and 20 its width, and 30 cubits its height.

1 Kings 6:3

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

portico

an area of a building made of columns and a roof that leads to and connects with the building's entrance door. This portico was probably attached to the front part of the wall that surrounded the temple.

twenty cubits ... ten cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters...4.6 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

³ As for the porch on the face of the temple of the house, 20 cubits was its length, in accordance with the face of the width of the house; ten by the cubit was its width in accordance with the face of the house.

1 Kings 6:4

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

he made windows

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: “they made windows”
(See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴ And he made for the house windows with narrowed frames.

1 Kings 6:5

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

he built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "they built" (See: [Metonymy](#))

he built rooms around it

He built rooms on the outside of the outside wall around the main chamber.

ULT

⁵ And he built against the wall of the house a spread out place all around, the walls of the house all around, for the temple and for the inner room. And he made side rooms all around.

1 Kings 6:6

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

he made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "they made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

The lowest story ... the middle ... the third

This refers to the rooms in each story of the building.

five cubits ... six cubits ... seven cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 2.3 meters ... about 2.8 meters ... about 3.2 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

he made offsets in the wall of the house

They made ledges all around the main building to support the beams of the small rooms.

beams

A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building.

ULT

⁶ The spread out place of the lowest level, five by the cubit was its width, and the middle level, six by the cubit was its width, and the third level, seven by the cubit was its width. For he gave ledges for the house all around the outside, so not to hold on to the walls of the house.

1 Kings 6:7

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple.

the house

Here “house” refers to God’s house, the temple.

stones prepared at the quarry

A quarry is where people cut large stones from a mountain and shape them with tools so they are smooth. After they prepared the stones at the quarry, they brought them to the temple.

ULT

⁷ As for the house while it was being built, it was built of finished stone of a quarry. And a hammer or the ax, any implement of iron, was not heard in the house while it was being built.

1 Kings 6:8

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple.

ground level ... middle level ... third level

There were a total of three floors. Some languages call these "ground floor," "first floor," and "second floor."

ULT

⁸ The opening of the middle side room was to the shoulder of the house at the south, and by stairs they went up on the middle level, and from the middle level to the third level.

1 Kings 6:9

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple.

Solomon built ... he covered

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers built ... they covered" (See: [Metonymy](#))

beams ... of cedar

A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:6](#).

planks ... of cedar

A plank is a flat wooden board used for floors and walls.

ULT

⁹ And he built the house and he finished it. And he covered the house with beams and rows with the cedars.

1 Kings 6:10

Connecting Statement:

The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.

He built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "They built" (See: [Metonymy](#))

He built the side rooms

These are the same rooms that are referred to in [1 Kings 6:5](#).

inner chambers

This phrase is a metonym for the walls that enclosed the chambers. Alternate translation: "exterior walls that enclosed the inner chambers" (See: [Metonymy](#))

five cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

timbers of cedar

The word "timbers" is a general term that refers to wood used for building, such as beams and planks.

ULT

10 And he built the spread out place against all the house, five cubits was its height, and it held on to the house with the wood of cedar.

1 Kings 6:11

The word of Yahweh came to Solomon, saying,

The idiom "The word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Solomon. He said," or "Yahweh spoke this message to Solomon:" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

11 And the word of Yahweh was to Solomon, saying,

1 Kings 6:12

which you are building

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "which you are having your workers build"
(See: [Metonymy](#))

walk in my statutes

The word "walk" is a metaphor for "live" or "obey." Alternate translation: "continually obey all my statutes" (See: [Metaphor](#))

do justice

This could mean: (1) "carry out all of my laws" or (2) "treat the people whom you are ruling justly."

keep all my commandments and walk in them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the importance of obeying God's commandments. AT "carefully obey all I tell you to do" (See: [Parallelism](#))

I will confirm my promise with you that I had made to David your father

"I will do everything I promised David your father that I would do for you"

ULT

12 "This house that you are building, if you walk in my statutes and you do my judgments, and you keep all my commandments by walking in them, then I will cause my word to stand with you that I spoke to David your father."

1 Kings 6:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

13 And I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel and I will not forsake my people Israel.”

1 Kings 6:14

Solomon

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

14 And Solomon built the house and he finished it.

1 Kings 6:15

he built ... he covered them ... he covered the floor

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "they built ... they covered them ... they covered the floor" (See: [Metonymy](#))

interior walls

walls between the rooms on the inside

cypress

Cypress is a kind of wood that was used for building the temple. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

¹⁵ And he built the walls of the house on the inside with sides of cedar. From the floor of the house up to the walls of the ceiling, he overlaid wood on the inside, and he overlaid the floor of the house with sides of cypress.

1 Kings 6:16

He built twenty cubits ... He built this room

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building.
Alternate translation: "He commanded them to build twenty cubits ...
He had them build this room" (See: [Metonymy](#))

He built twenty cubits

"He built a room twenty cubits long"

twenty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

16 And he built 20 cubits from the rear of the house with sides of cedar from the floor up to the walls. And he built for it on the inside as an inner room, as the holiest holy place.

1 Kings 6:17

forty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "18.4 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

main hall

"main room"

ULT

17 And 40 by the cubit was the house (that is the temple) before the face of it.

1 Kings 6:18

gourds

a type of hard, round vegetable that grows on a vine on the ground

open flowers

“blooming flowers” or “flowers that were open”

ULT

18 And cedar was into inside the house, carving of gourds and opened ones of flowers. The whole was cedar, there was no stone seen.

1 Kings 6:19

Solomon prepared

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They prepared" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

19 And he set up the inner room in the midst of the house on the inside for giving there the box of the covenant of Yahweh.

1 Kings 6:20

Solomon overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They overlaid" (See: [Metonymy](#))

twenty cubits

"9.2 meters"

covered the altar with cedar wood

This altar would be used for burning incense.

ULT

20 And before the face of the inner room, it was 20 cubits in length, and 20 cubits in width, and 20 cubits its height. And he overlaid it with pure gold and he overlaid an altar with cedar.

1 Kings 6:21

Solomon overlaid ... he placed

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.

Alternate translation: "They overlaid ... they placed" (See: [Metonymy](#))

overlaid

"covered"

ULT

21 And Solomon overlaid the house on the inside with pure gold. And he crossed chains of gold over the face of the inner room, and he overlaid it with gold.

1 Kings 6:22

He overlaid ... He also overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They overlaid ... They also overlaid" (See: [Metonymy](#))

altar that belonged to the inner room

"altar of incense at the entrance to the inner room"

ULT

²² And he overlaid all the house with gold until finishing all the house. And the whole of the altar that was for the inner room he overlaid with gold.

1 Kings 6:23

Solomon made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Solomon commanded them to make" (See: [Metonymy](#))

olivewood

wood from an olive tree

ten cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "4.6 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

²³ And he made in the inner room two cherubs of wood of oil; ten cubits was its height.

1 Kings 6:24

five cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

²⁴ And five cubits was the wing of the one cherub and five cubits was the wing of the second cherub. It was ten cubits from the ends of its wings and as far as the ends of its wings.

1 Kings 6:25

wingspan

the distance from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other wing

same dimensions

“same size”

ULT

²⁵ And ten by the cubit was the second cherub, one size and one shape were for the two cherubs.

1 Kings 6:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁶ The height of the one cherub was ten by the cubit and so was the second cherub.

1 Kings 6:27

Solomon placed

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They placed" (See: [Metonymy](#))

innermost room

another name for the most holy place

ULT

27 And he gave the cherubs in the midst of the inner house. And they spread out the wings of the cherubs and the wing of the one touched against the wall and the wing of the second cherub was touching against the second wall. And their wings were toward the middle of the house, touching wing to wing.

1 Kings 6:28

Solomon overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They overlaid" (See: [Metonymy](#))

overlaid

"covered." See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:21](#).

ULT

28 And he overlaid the cherubs with gold.

1 Kings 6:29

He carved

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "He commanded them to carve" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁹ And he carved all the walls of the house round about with engravings of carvings of cherubs and palm trees and opened ones of flowers, from inside and to the outside.

1 Kings 6:30

Solomon overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "He had them overlay" (See: [Metonymy](#))

overlaid

covered

ULT

³⁰ And he overlaid the floor of the house with gold, for inside and for the outside.

1 Kings 6:31

Solomon made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

lintel

beam across the top of a door frame

indented sections

toothlike notches on each of five sections

ULT

³¹ Also he made the opening of the inner room with doors of wood of oil; the pillar, doorposts, were a fifth part.

1 Kings 6:32

he made ... he made ... He overlaid ... he spread

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "they made ... they made ... They overlaid ... they spread" (See: [Metonymy](#))

overlaid

"covered." See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:21](#).

ULT

³² And the two of the doors were wood of oil, and he carved on them carvings of cherubs and palm trees and opened ones of flowers, and he overlaid them with gold. And he beat out the gold on the cherubs and on the palm trees.

1 Kings 6:33

In this way, Solomon also made for the temple entrance doorposts of olive wood having four indented sections

“In the same way, Solomon also made doorposts of olive wood for the temple entrance, with four indented sections”

Solomon also made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: “they also made” (See: [Metonymy](#))

indented sections

tooth-like notches

ULT

³³ And so he made for the opening of the temple doorposts of wood of oil from a fourth part.

1 Kings 6:34

The two leaves of the one door

This means each door had two sections connected by hinges so they could fold together.

ULT

³⁴ And the two of the doors were wood of cypress, the two of the one door leaves were folding and the two of the second door curtains were folding.

1 Kings 6:35

He carved ... he evenly overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They carved ... they evenly overlaid" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁵ And he carved cherubs and palm trees and opened ones of flowers. And he overlaid with gold made smooth on the engraving.

1 Kings 6:36

He built the inner courtyard

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They built the inner courtyard" (See: [Metonymy](#))

cedar beams

A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:6](#).

ULT

³⁶ And he built the inner courtyard with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cut beams of cedar.

1 Kings 6:37

the fourth year

The word “fourth” is the ordinal form of “four.” You may need to make explicit the event from which the writer counts the years. Alternate translation: “the fourth year after Solomon became king” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

house of Yahweh

“the temple”

in the month of Ziv

“Ziv” is the name of the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:1](#). (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

³⁷ In the fourth year the house of Yahweh was founded, in the month of Ziv.

1 Kings 6:38

the eleventh year

The word “eleventh” is the ordinal forms of “eleven.” You may need to make explicit the event from which the writer counts the years. Alternate translation: “the eleventh year after Solomon became king” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month

“Bul” is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#) and [How to Translate Names](#))

the house was finished in all its parts and conforming to all its specifications

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: “they finished building every part of the house. They built it exactly the way Solomon had told them to build it”

Solomon took

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: “It took Solomon’s workers” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

38 And in the year 11, in the month of Bul (it is the eighth month), the house was finished according to all his words and according to all his requirements. And he built it seven years.

1 Kings 7

1 Kings 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has a description of the palace Solomon built and the materials used in the temple courtyard. It is the last chapter about the building of the temple. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Bronze

Solomon hired a man from Tyre who was good at casting things out of bronze. The bronze objects were made by hollowing out the shape of the object in clay and then pouring in the hot melted liquid bronze and letting it cool. He made two large pillars and a large water reservoir set on the backs of 12 bronze cows. He made all the instruments for use in the sacrifices outside the temple. He made the furnishing inside the temple out of gold.

The temple and the palace

Solomon spent 13 years building a palace for himself that was much bigger than the temple. It is significant that the house of Solomon was much larger than the house of God. (See: [house of God](#), [Yahweh's house](#))

1 Kings 7:1

General Information:

The author is writing about Solomon's palace.

Solomon took thirteen years to build his own palace

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "It took Solomon's workers thirteen years to build his palace" (See: [Metonymy](#))

palace

If your language does not have a word for "palace," you may translate this as "house" or "big house."

ULT

¹ And Solomon built his house 13 years.
And he finished all of his house.

1 Kings 7:2

General Information:

Some details are given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

He built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to build" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

"the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest"

one hundred cubits ... fifty cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "46 meters...23 meters...13.8 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

beams

A beam is a long piece of strong wood used to support walls and roofs.

ULT

² And he built the house of the forest of the Lebanon: 100 cubits was its length and 50 cubits was its width and 30 cubits was its height, with four rows of pillars of cedar and cut beams of cedar on the pillars.

1 Kings 7:3

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

The house was roofed with cedar that rested on beams

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The carpenters built a roof from cedar planks and attached them to beams” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

beams

long pieces of strong wood usually used to support a roof

ULT

³ And it was covered with cedar from above over the sides that were on the 45 pillars, 15 was the row.

1 Kings 7:4

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

ULT

⁴ And the window frames were three rows, and opening to opening were three occurrences.

1 Kings 7:5

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

were made square

“had rectangular frames”

ULT

⁵ And all the openings and the doorposts were squared framework. And the front of an opening to an opening were three occurrences.

1 Kings 7:6

General Information:

The author writes about the structure of the Hall of Pillars.

colonnade

a series of columns, all the same distance apart

fifty cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "23 meters...13.8 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

portico

an area of a building made of columns and a roof that leads to and connects with the building's entrance door. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:3](#)

ULT

⁶ And he made the porch of the pillars, 50 cubits was its length and 30 cubits was its width. And a porch was on their face and pillars and a roof were on their face.

1 Kings 7:7

General Information:

The author writes about the hall of the throne.

Solomon built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Solomon had them build" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the hall of the throne

This could mean: (1) "the house in which he was going to place his throne" or (2) "a house named The King's Chair House"

It was covered with cedar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers covered the floor with cedar wood" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

from floor to floor

This refers to the entire floor. Alternate translation: "from one wall to the other"

ULT

⁷ And he made the porch of the throne there where he would judge, the porch of judgment. And it was covered with cedar from the floor up to the floor.

1 Kings 7:8

General Information:

The author continues to write about the palace area.

Solomon's house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, was similarly designed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Solomon had someone design the house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, in the same way" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

He also built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He also commanded them to build" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁸ And his house there where he would dwell, the other courtyard, was from the house of the porch; it was like this work. And he would make a house for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this porch.

1 Kings 7:9

General Information:

The writer is writing about the stones used for the buildings.

These buildings were adorned with costly hewn stones

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The workers adorned the buildings with costly, hewn stones” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁹ All of these were precious stones according to the measurement of hewn stones, sawn with the saw from inside and from outside and from the foundation up to the eaves and from outside up to the great courtyard.

hewn stones, precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “hewn stones, that workers had precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

These stones were used

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The workers used these stones” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

from the foundation to the stones on top, and also on the outside to the great court

The author is emphasizing that the workers used expensive stones for the foundations and all the buildings.

1 Kings 7:10

The foundation was constructed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The workers constructed the foundation” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

eight and ten cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: “about 3.7 meters and 4.6 meters” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

10 And it was founded with precious stones, large stones, stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits.

1 Kings 7:11

cedar beams

A beam is a long piece of wood used for structural support.

ULT

11 And from above were precious stones, according to the measurement of hewn stone, and cedar.

1 Kings 7:12

three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams

See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:36](#).

ULT

¹² And a great courtyard was all around, three hewn stone rows and a row of cut beams of cedar, and for the inner courtyard of the house of Yahweh and for the porch of the house.

1 Kings 7:13

brought him from Tyre

Hiram accepted Solomon's invitation to come to Jerusalem. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

13 And the king Solomon sent and took Hiram from Tyre.

1 Kings 7:14

the son of a widow ... his father was a man of Tyre

A widow is a woman whose husband has died, so we know that the father is dead. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Huram was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill

This can be stated in active form. The words “wisdom and understanding” mean basically the same thing and are used together for emphasis. Yahweh giving such things as wisdom is spoken of as if they were liquids that Yahweh had poured into a container, and Hiram is spoken of as if he were that container. Alternate translation: “Yahweh had given Hiram wisdom, understanding, and skill” (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Doublet](#) and [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁴ He was a son of a woman, a widow, from the tribe of Naphtali and his father was a man of Tyre, one who engraves bronze. And he was filled with the wisdom and the understanding and the knowledge in order to do all the work with bronze. And he came to the king Solomon and he did all his work.

1 Kings 7:15

eighteen cubits ... twelve cubits

A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 8.3 meters...5.5 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

in circumference

Circumference is the distance or measurement around a circular object or area.

ULT

15 And he formed the two of the pillars bronze, 18 cubits was the height of the one pillar and a cord of 12 cubits surrounded the second pillar.

1 Kings 7:16

five cubits

A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters"
(See: [Biblical Distance](#))

two capitals

decorations on top of each of the two pillars

polished bronze

They polished the bronze so that it would reflect sunlight. "gleaming bronze"

ULT

16 And he made the two of the capitals to give on the heads of the pillars, casting of bronze. Five cubits was the height of the one capital and five cubits was the height of the second capital.

1 Kings 7:17

Checker latticework and wreaths of chain work

“Crossed metal strips woven together and metal chains twisted together”

ULT

¹⁷ Lattices, a work of lattice, twisted threads, a work of chains, were for the capitals which were on the head of the pillars. Seven were for the one capital and seven were for the second capital.

1 Kings 7:18

Huram made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Huram commanded his workers to make"
(See: [Metonymy](#))

two rows of pomegranates

A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. Hiram did not use real pomegranates to decorate the pillars. He made them out of bronze.

ULT

18 And he made the pillars, and two rows all around on the one lattice to cover the capitals, which were on the head of the pomegranates, and he did so for the second capital.

1 Kings 7:19

The capitals ... were decorated with lilies, four cubits high

Lilies are plants whose flowers are wide at one end and very narrow at the other end. These words can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hiram decorated the capitals ... with bronze lilies, four cubits high" (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹⁹ And the capitals, which were on the head of the pillars, were the work of a lily on the porch, four cubits.

the tops of the portico

Translate "portico" as in [1 Kings 7:6](#).

four cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

1 Kings 7:20

two hundred pomegranates

“200 pomegranates.” A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:18](#) (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

20 And capitals were on the two pillars, also from above. from near the belly, which was to the opposite of the lattice. And the pomegranates were 200, rows all around on the second capital.

1 Kings 7:21

He raised up

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They raised up" (See: [Metonymy](#))

The pillar on the right was named Jakin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The name of the pillar on the right side was Jakin" (See: [How to Translate Names](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

the pillar on the left was named Boaz

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The name of the pillar on the left side was Boaz" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

21 And he raised up the pillars for the porch of the temple. And he raised up the right pillar and he called its name Jakin. And he raised up the left pillar and he called its name Boaz.

1 Kings 7:22

The fashioning of the pillars was done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Hiram fashioned the pillars” or “Hiram’s men fashioned the pillars” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²² And on the head of the pillars was the work of a lily. And the work of the pillars was finished.

1 Kings 7:23

Huram made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Huram also commanded them to make"
(See: [Metonymy](#))

the round sea

This refers to a bronze tank or basin that would hold water.

cast metal

Huram melted the bronze and formed it in a mold.

ten cubits ... five cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "4.6 meters...2.3 meters...13.8 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

from brim to brim

"from one edge to the other"

in circumference

Circumference is the distance or measurement around a circular object or area.

ULT

²³ And he made the sea that was cast. It was ten by the cubit from its lip up to its lip, circular all around. And five by the cubit was its height and a cord of 30 cubits surrounded it all around.

1 Kings 7:24

encircling the sea were gourds

A gourd is a type of hard, round vegetable that grows on a vine on the ground.

when that basin was cast

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “when Hiram cast that basin” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²⁴ And gourds were from underneath to its lip, surrounding it all around, ten by the cubit, encircling the sea all around. The gourds were two rows that were cast when it was cast.

1 Kings 7:25

The Sea

This refers to the bronze tank or basin that held water for sacrifices.

stood on

“was on top of”

“The Sea” was set on top of them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Hiram’s workers set ‘The Sea’ on top of the bronze oxen” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

hindquarters

This is the back quarter of the body of an animal with four feet.

ULT

²⁵ It was standing over 12 cattle, three faces toward the north and three faces toward the west and three faces toward the south and three faces toward the east, and the sea was over them from above. And all their hindquarters were toward the inside.

1 Kings 7:26

its brim was forged like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Hiram forged the brim to look like the brim of a cup, to curve outward like a lily” (See: [Simile](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

two thousand baths

A bath is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: “2,000 baths” or “44,000 liters” (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

ULT

²⁶ And its thickness was a handbreadth and its lip was like the work of the lip of a cup, the blossom of a lily. It contained 2,000 baths.

1 Kings 7:27

Huram made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Huram also commanded them to make" or
"They also made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

four cubits ... three cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters ... about 1.4 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

27 And he made the ten bronze stands. Four by the cubit was the length of the one stand and four by the cubit was its width and three by the cubit was its height.

1 Kings 7:28

The work of the stands was like this

This means the author will describe the stands in the words that follow.

ULT

28 And this was the work of the stand: rims were for them, and rims were between the joints.

1 Kings 7:29

on the panels and on the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim

There were decorative pieces in the shapes of lions, oxen, and cherubim fastened to the sides of the stands.

wreaths of hammered work

Here the word “wreaths” refers to spiral-shaped pieces of bronze.

ULT

²⁹ And on the rims, which were between the joints, were lions, oxen, and cherubs. And on the joints was a pedestal from above and from below to the lions and the cattle were wreaths, work of descent.

1 Kings 7:30

four bronze wheels and axles

There was one axle for each pair of wheels. Alternate translation: “four bronze wheels and two axles” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Numbers](#))

its four corners

“the four corners of each stand”

The supports were cast with wreaths

Each support was cast as one piece with the wreaths. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Hiram cast the supports with spiral-shaped pieces” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³⁰ And four wheels of bronze were for the one stand and axles of bronze and its four feet were shoulders for them, from the under part of the basin; the shoulders were cast from each side with wreaths.

1 Kings 7:31

a cubit and a half ... a cubit

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: “about 70 centimeters ... about 50 centimeters” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

a crown that rose up

Here the word “crown” refers to the circular piece at the top of the stand’s opening that held the basin.

their panels were square

“the panels of the stands were square.” This phrase returns to the description of the panels that began in [1 Kings 7:28](#).

ULT

³¹ And its mouth on the inside of the capital and upward was by the cubit, and its mouth was round, the work of a pedestal, a cubit and a half of the cubit. And also on its mouth were carvings and their rims were squared, not circular.

1 Kings 7:32

their housings

Here the word “their” refers to the axles. The word “housings” refers to the casings into which the axles were inserted.

a cubit and a half

A cubit was 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: “about 70 centimeters” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

32 And the four of the wheels were for the under part of the rims, and the hands of the wheels were with the stand. And the height of the one wheel was a cubit and a half of the cubit.

1 Kings 7:33

The wheels were forged like chariot wheels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Hiram made the wheels like small chariot wheels” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Their housings, rims, spokes, and hubs

Here the word “Their” refers to the wheels.

ULT

³³ And the work of the wheels was like the work of the wheel of the chariot. Their housings and their rims and their spokes and their hubs, the whole thing was cast.

1 Kings 7:34

There were four handles at the four corners of each stand

“There was a handle at each of the four corners of each stand”

ULT

³⁴ And four shoulders were to the four corners of the one stand, its shoulders were part of the stand.

1 Kings 7:35

half a cubit deep

A cubit was 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: “twenty-three centimeters wide” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

on the top of the stand its supports and panels were attached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Huram attached the supports and panels to the top of each stand” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³⁵ And at the top of the stand, a half of the cubit was the height, circular all around. And on the head of the stand was its hands and its rims were part of it.

1 Kings 7:36

Huram engraved

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "they engraved" (See: [Metonymy](#))

they were surrounded

Here the word "they" refers to the cherubim, lions, and palm trees.

they were surrounded by wreaths

The word "wreaths" refers to spiral-shaped pieces of bronze. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there were wreaths all around them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³⁶ And he engraved on the planks of its hands and on its rims cherubs, lions, and palm trees according to the bare space of each, and wreaths were all around.

1 Kings 7:37

He made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "He commanded them to make" (See: [Metonymy](#))

All of them were cast in the same molds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram cast all of the stands in the same mold" or "They cast all of the stand in the same mold" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

they had one size, and the same shape

"all of the stands were the same size and shape"

ULT

³⁷ Like this he made the ten stands, one casting, one size, one shape was for all of them.

1 Kings 7:38

Huram made ten

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.

Alternate translation: "Huram had them make ten" (See: [Metonymy](#))

forty baths

A bath is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "about 88 liters" or "about 90 liters" (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

four cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

ULT

³⁸ And he made ten bronze basins. The one basin contained 40 baths. The one basin was four by the cubit, one basin was on the one base for the ten stands.

1 Kings 7:39

He made five ... He set

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Human had them make five ... Hiram commanded them to set" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the south-facing side ... the north-facing side

"the south side ... the north side"

on the east corner, facing toward the south of the temple

"near the southeast corner of the temple"

ULT

³⁹ And he gave the stands, five on the shoulder of the house from the right and five on the shoulder of the house from its left. And he gave the sea from the south shoulder of the house eastward, from in front of the south.

1 Kings 7:40

Hiram made ... he finished

Hiram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Hiram had them make ... they finished" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

40 And Hiram made the basins and the shovels and the sprinkling bowls. And Hiram finished doing all the work that he did for the king Solomon for the house of Yahweh:

1 Kings 7:41

the bowl-like capitals

The capitals were shaped like bowls. (See: [Simile](#))

decorative latticework

“crossed metal strips woven together”

ULT

41 two pillars, and the bowls of the capitals that were on the head of the two pillars, and the two latticeworks for covering the two bowls of the capitals that were on the head of the pillars,

1 Kings 7:42

He made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

four hundred pomegranates

"400 pomegranates." A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:18](#). (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁴² and the 400 pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for the one latticework to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the faces of the pillars,

1 Kings 7:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴³ and the ten stands, and the ten basins on the stands,

1 Kings 7:44

He made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴⁴ and the one sea and the 12 cattle
under the sea,

1 Kings 7:45

Hiram made

Hiram would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "They made" (See: [Metonymy](#))

all the other implements

"all the other tools"

polished bronze

bronze that was polished so that it would reflect light

ULT

⁴⁵ and the pots and the shovels and the sprinkling bowls and all these vessels that Hiram made for the king Solomon, for the house of Yahweh, were polished bronze.

1 Kings 7:46

The king had cast them

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "The king had his workers cast them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

plain of the Jordan

"flat land near the Jordan River"

Succoth ... Zarethan

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

ULT

⁴⁶ In the circular plain of the Jordan the king cast them in the compactness of the ground between Succoth and between Zarethan.

1 Kings 7:47

Solomon did not weigh

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.
Alternate translation: "Solomon did not have them weigh" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the weight of the bronze could not be measured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could measure the weight of the bronze" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

47 And Solomon caused all the vessels to rest because of very much abundance, the weight of the bronze had not been ascertained.

1 Kings 7:48

Solomon had made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work.

Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers had made" (See:

[Metonymy](#))

on which the bread of the presence was to be placed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on which the priests were to place the bread of the presence" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

48 And Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of Yahweh: the altar of gold and the table, which would have the bread of the face on it, was gold.

1 Kings 7:49

the flowers, the lamps

The “flowers” and “lamps” were part of the lampstands.

ULT

49 And the five lampstands from the south and five from the north, before the face of the inner room, were pure gold. And the blossom and the lamps and the snuffers were gold.

1 Kings 7:50

had made the cups ... all of which were made of pure gold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “had his workers make all the cups ... out of pure gold” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

sockets of gold made for the doors

Here, **sockets** may refer to either: (1) the sockets in which the door pegs turned, or (2) the hinges on which the doors hung.

ULT

⁵⁰ And the cups and the trimmers and the sprinkling bowls and the palms and the firepans were pure gold. And the sockets of the doors of the inner house, for the holiest holy place, for the doors of the house, for the temple, were gold.

1 Kings 7:51

the work that King Solomon directed for the house of Yahweh was finished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “the workers finished the work that King Solomon had them do for the house of Yahweh” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁵¹ And all the work that the king Solomon did for the house of Yahweh was complete. And Solomon brought in the holy things of David, his father, the silver and the gold and the vessels he gave into the storerooms of the house of Yahweh.

1 Kings 8

1 Kings 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ark is placed in the new temple. This is a very significant event in the history of the Israelites. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Celebration of the temple's completion

When the temple was finished, Solomon told all of the people to come to Jerusalem. They took the ark out of the tent and brought it to the temple. Then Solomon prayed that God would hear and answer prayers made to him when they faced towards the temple.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Solomon prayed that God would respond to people's prayers using an idiom: "that your eyes may be open to the request of your servant." (See: [Idiom](#))

1 Kings 8:1

assembled the elders of Israel

“called together the leaders of Israel”

ULT

¹ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, the lifted ones of the fathers of the sons of Israel, to the king Solomon at Jerusalem, to bring up the box of the covenant of Yahweh from the city of David (it is Zion).

1 Kings 8:2

All the men of Israel

This may refer either: (1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in 8:1 or (2) generally to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every male person who lived in Israel. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

at the feast

This is a reference to the Feast of Succoth, also known as the Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Shelters .

in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month

“Ethanim” is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars. (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#) and [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

² And all the men of Israel assembled to the king Solomon in the month of Ethanim at the feast (it is the seventh month).

1 Kings 8:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ And all the elders of Israel came and the priests lifted the box.

1 Kings 8:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ And they brought up the box of Yahweh and the tent of meeting and all the vessels of holiness that were in the tent. And the priests and the Levites brought them up.

1 Kings 8:5

all the assembly of Israel

This is a generalization. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

sheep and oxen that could not be counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “more sheep and oxen than anyone would ever be able to count” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁵ And the king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, the ones who congregated to him, were with him before the face of the box, sacrificing sheep and cattle that could not be counted and could not be numbered because of abundance.

1 Kings 8:6

into the inner room of the house, to the most holy place, under

“into the inner room of the house—that is, to the most holy place—under”

ULT

⁶ And the priests brought the box of the covenant of Yahweh into its place, into the inner room of the house, into the holiest holy place, to beneath the wings of the cherubs.

1 Kings 8:7

poles by which it was carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “poles by which the priests carried it” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁷ For the cherubs were spreading out wings toward the place of the box. And the cherubs covered over the box and over its poles from above.

1 Kings 8:8

their ends were seen ... they could not be seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “people could see their ends ... people could not see them”

this day

This means the day on which the writer wrote.

ULT

⁸ And the poles were made long and the heads of the poles were seen from the holy place on the face of the inner room, and they were not seen on the outside. And they are there until this day.

1 Kings 8:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁹ There was nothing in the box except the two tablets of stone, which Moses caused to rest there at Horeb, where Yahweh cut with the sons of Israel when they went out from the land of Egypt.

1 Kings 8:10

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

ULT

10 And it happened when the priests went out from the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of Yahweh.

1 Kings 8:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

11 And the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the face of the cloud, for the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh.

1 Kings 8:12

Yahweh has said ... darkness

Solomon speaks to Yahweh as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects Yahweh. (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

ULT

12 Then Solomon said, "Yahweh has said he would dwell in the dark cloud.

1 Kings 8:13

lofty residence

beautiful building in which someone very important lives

ULT

¹³ Surely I have built a house of elevation for you, a place for your dwelling forever.”

1 Kings 8:14

all the assembly of Israel

“all the people of Israel who were gathered there”

ULT

14 And the king turned his face around and he blessed all the assembly of Israel, and all the assembly of Israel was standing.

1 Kings 8:15

May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, the God of Israel" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

with his own hands

The hand is a metonym for the power in the hand. Alternate translation: "by his own power" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

15 And he said, "Blessed is Yahweh, the God of Israel, who spoke by his mouth with David my father, and fulfilled by his hand, saying,

1 Kings 8:16

in order for my name to be

The word “name” is a metonym for the person, and “for ... name” refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: “so that people would worship me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

16 ‘From the day when I brought out my people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city from all the tribes of Israel to build a house, so that my name would be there. But I chose David to be over my people Israel.’

1 Kings 8:17

it was in the heart of David my father

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "David my father desired" (See: [Metaphor](#))

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for the name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: "in which people would worship Yahweh" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

17 And it was with the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

1 Kings 8:18

In that it was in your heart

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "Because you desired" (See: [Metaphor](#))

for my name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: "in which people will worship me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

for it to be in your heart

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "to desire to do that" or "by wanting to do that" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

18 But Yahweh said to David my father, 'Because it was with your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart.'

1 Kings 8:19

one who will be born from your loins

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “one who will be your own offspring” or “one whom you yourself will father” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

19 However, you will not build the house, but rather your son, the one who comes out from your loins, he himself will build the house for my name.’

1 Kings 8:20

has carried out the word that he had said

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “has done exactly what he said he would do” (See: [Idiom](#))

I have arisen in the place of David my father

Height is a metaphor for power. Alternate translation: “I have gained the power that David my father had” (See: [Metaphor](#))

I sit on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: “I rule over Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

for the name of Yahweh

The word “name” is a metonym for the person, and “for ... name” refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: “in which people will worship Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

20 And Yahweh has raised up his word that he had spoken. And I have risen up in the place of David my father, and I sit on the throne of Israel, just as Yahweh spoke. And I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

1 Kings 8:21

is Yahweh's covenant, which

The stone tablets on which Yahweh had written the terms of the covenant are spoken of as if they were the covenant itself. Alternate translation: "are the tablets on which Yahweh wrote the terms of the covenant that" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

21 And I have set a place there for the box, where there is the covenant of Yahweh, which he cut with our fathers when he brought them out from the land of Egypt."

1 Kings 8:22

all the assembly of Israel

“all the people of Israel who were gathered there”

ULT

²² And Solomon stood before the face of the altar of Yahweh, in front of all the assembly of Israel. And he spread out his palms to the heavens.

1 Kings 8:23

who keeps his covenant faithfulness with your servants

The abstract noun “faithfulness” can be stated as “faithfully” or “faithful.” Alternate translation: “who faithfully loves your servants” or “who is faithful to your covenant with your servants” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

walk before you with all their heart

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: “live wholeheartedly the way that you want them to” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²³ And he said, “Yahweh, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens from above or on the earth from below, keeping the covenant and the covenant faithfulness to your servants, the ones who walk before your face with all their heart;

1 Kings 8:24

fulfilled it with your hand

The hand is a metonym for the power of the hand. Alternate translation: "by your power fulfilled what you said" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁴ which you have kept for your servant David my father, what you spoke to him. And you spoke with your mouth and with your hand you fulfilled, as this day.

1 Kings 8:25

to sit on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: “to rule over Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

walk before me ... have walked before me

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: “live as I want you to ... have lived as I want you to” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²⁵ And now, Yahweh, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father, what you spoke to him, saying, ‘A man will not be cut off for you from before my face, sitting on the throne of Israel, if only your sons will keep their way, to walk before my face, just as you have walked before my face.’

1 Kings 8:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁶ And now, the God of Israel, please let your word be proven faithful, which you spoke to your servant David my father.

1 Kings 8:27

But will God actually live on the earth?

Possible meanings of this question are: (1) Solomon is asking a real question and expecting an answer or (2) the question is rhetorical and Solomon is emphasizing that God is too big and mighty to live on earth. Alternate translation: "But it surely cannot be that God will actually live on the earth!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²⁷ Indeed, would God really dwell on the earth? Behold, the heavens and the heavens of the heavens can not contain you, how much less this house that I have built!

But will God

Here Solomon speaks about God in the third person. It can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "But will you" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Look

"What I am about to say is important" or "The truth is that"

you—how much less can this temple that I have built

"you, so this temple that I have built certainly cannot contain you"

1 Kings 8:28

respect this prayer of your servant and his request

The words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he makes his request. Solomon refers to himself as “your servant” to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: “respect me, your servant, as I make this request” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Pronouns](#))

ULT

²⁸ Yet you will turn to the prayer of your servant and to his plea for favor, Yahweh my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer that your servant is praying before your face today:

listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you today

The words “cry” and “prayer” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he asks Yahweh to help him. Solomon refers to himself as “your servant” to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: “listen to me, your servant, as I call today for you to help me” (See: [Doublet](#) and [Pronouns](#))

1 Kings 8:29

May your eyes be open toward

The eye is a metonym for what the eye does. Alternate translation: “May you watch over” (See: [Metonymy](#))

night and day

This is a merism. Alternate translation: “all the time” or “continually” (See: [Merism](#))

My name and my presence

These two words together emphasize that Yahweh will dwell in the temple. (See: [Doublet](#))

that your servant will pray

Solomon speaks of himself as “your servant” to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: “that I, your servant, will pray” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

ULT

²⁹ that your eyes be opened to this house night and day, to the place where you have said, ‘My name will be there,’ to listen to the prayer that your servant will pray to this place.

1 Kings 8:30

listen to the request of your servant and of your people Israel

Solomon speaks of himself as “your servant” to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: “listen to my request and the request of your people Israel” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

ULT

³⁰ And you will listen to the plea for favor of your servant and your people Israel that they will pray toward this place. And you, you will listen toward the place of your dwelling to the heavens. And you will hear and forgive

1 Kings 8:31

is required to swear

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone requires him to swear” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

31 a man who sins against his neighbor and lifts up against him a curse to curse him and a curse comes before the face of your altar in this house.

1 Kings 8:32

upon his own head

Here “head” refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: “on him” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

give to him according to his righteousness

“to give him what he deserves because he is righteous”

ULT

³² And you, you will hear in the heavens and act and judge your servants, by declaring as wicked a wicked one, to give his way on his head, and by declaring as righteous a righteous one, to give to him according to his righteousness.

1 Kings 8:33

your people Israel are defeated by an enemy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “an enemy defeats your people Israel” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

confess your name

This could mean: (1) “confess that they have sinned against you” or (2) “praise you” or (3) “say that they will obey you from now on.”

request forgiveness from you

The abstract noun “forgiveness” can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: “ask you to forgive them” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

33 When your people Israel are struck down before the face of an enemy because they have sinned against you, and they turn back to you and they confess your name and they pray and they plead for favor toward you in this house,

1 Kings 8:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁴ then you, you will hear in the heavens and you will forgive for the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the ground that you gave to their fathers.

1 Kings 8:35

the skies are shut up and there is no rain

The sky is spoken of as if it were a building in which God stores the rain. Alternate translation: “you do not allow rain to fall” (See: [Metaphor](#))

confess your name

This could mean: (1) “confess that they have sinned against you” or (2) “praise you” or (3) “say that they will obey you from now on.” See how you translated this in [1 Kings 8:33](#).

ULT

³⁵ When the heavens are restrained and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, and they pray toward this place and they confess your name and they turn back from their sin when you have afflicted them,

1 Kings 8:36

in which they should walk

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "that they should live" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³⁶ then you, you will hear in the heavens and forgive for the sin of your servants and your people Israel, for you direct the good way in which they will walk. And you will give rain on your land, which you have given to your people for an inheritance.

1 Kings 8:37

blight or mildew

These are agricultural terms that refer to the death of crops from either too little or too much rain, respectively.

locusts or caterpillars

A "locust" is a type of grasshopper that causes destruction by eating crops. The word "caterpillar" refers to an early growth stage of the locust.

ULT

37 If famine would be in the land, if there would be pestilence, if there would be blight, mildew, locust, grasshopper, if his enemy would make it narrow for him in the land of his gates, any plague, any sickness,

1 Kings 8:38

prayers and requests

The words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the person is sincere as he makes his request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28](#). Alternate translation: “requests” (See: [Doublet](#))

knowing the plague in his own heart

This could mean: (1) The person’s sin is spoken of as if it were a plague. Alternate translation: “knowing the sin in his own heart” or (2) The “plague” is a metonym for the sins that the disasters are a punishment for. Alternate translation: “knowing in his heart that the plague is the result of his own sin” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁸ any prayer, any plea for favor that would be for any man, for any of your people Israel, who know, a man the plague of his heart, and he would spread out his palms toward this house,

1 Kings 8:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁹ then you, you will hear in the heavens, the place of your dwelling, and you will forgive and act and give to a man according to all his ways, because you know his heart. For you, you know, you alone, the heart of all the sons of mankind,

1 Kings 8:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁰ so that they may fear you all the days
that they are alive on the face of the
ground that you gave to our fathers.

1 Kings 8:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴¹ And also, to the foreigner, he who is not from among your people Israel, and he comes from a distant land on account of your name,

1 Kings 8:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴² for they will hear of your great name
and your strong hand and your
extended arm, and he will come and
pray toward this house,

1 Kings 8:43

this house I have built is called by your name

The phrase "is called by your name" shows that God possesses and owns the house. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you own this house that I have built" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁴³ you, you will hear in the heavens, the place of your dwelling, and you will act according to all that the foreigner has cried out to you, so that all the peoples of the earth will know your name to fear you, like your people Israel, and to know that your name has been called over this house that I have built.

1 Kings 8:44

Suppose that your people go out ... suppose that they pray

When Solomon was speaking, these hypothetical situations had not happened, but Solomon knew that they might happen in the future. Use the form in your language for talking about events that have not happened but might happen in the future. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

for your name

The word “name” is a metonym for the person, and “for ... name” refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: “in which people will worship you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴⁴ If your people go out to battle against his enemy, by the way that you send them, and they pray to Yahweh, in the way of the city, it which you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name,

1 Kings 8:45

their prayer and their request

The words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people are sincere as they make their request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28](#). Alternate translation: “their request” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

⁴⁵ then you will hear in the heavens
their prayer and their plea for favor and
you will do their justice.

1 Kings 8:46

Suppose that they sin ... suppose that you are

When Solomon was speaking, these hypothetical situations had not happened, but Solomon knew that they might happen in the future. Use the form in your language for talking about events that have not happened but might happen in the future. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

ULT

46 If they sin against you (for there is no man who does not sin) and you are angry with them and you give them over before the face of an enemy and they took them captive as their captives to the land of the enemy, distant or near,

1 Kings 8:47

suppose that they realize ... suppose that they repent ... Suppose that they say

When Solomon was speaking, these hypothetical situations had not happened, but Solomon knew that they might happen in the future. Use the form in your language for talking about events that have not happened but might happen in the future. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

where they have been exiled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “where their enemies have taken them as exiles” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

captors

people who keep others as prisoners

We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly

These two sentences mean the same thing. Together they emphasize how bad the people’s actions were. (See: [Parallelism](#))

acted perversely and sinned

The words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the people sinned. (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

⁴⁷ and they bring back to their heart in the land there where they have been taken captive, and they turn back and plead for favor to you in the land of those who took them captive, saying, ‘We have sinned and we have done iniquity, we have acted wickedly,’

1 Kings 8:48

Suppose that they return ... suppose that they pray

When Solomon was speaking, these hypothetical situations had not happened, but Solomon knew that they might happen in the future. Use the form in your language for talking about events that have not happened but might happen in the future. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

with all their heart and with all their soul

The idiom “with all ... heart” means “completely” and “with all ... soul” means “with all ... being.” These two phrases have similar meanings. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:4](#). Alternate translation: “with all their being” or “with all their energy” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Doublet](#))

in the land

“while they are living in the land”

toward their land

“toward the land in which they belong.” This refers to Israel.

for your name

The word “name” is a metonym for the person, and “for ... name” refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2](#). Alternate translation: “in which people will worship you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴⁸ and they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies where they took them captive and they pray to you toward the way of their land, which you gave to their fathers, the city that you chose and the house that I have built for your name,

1 Kings 8:49

their prayer and their request

The two words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that the people were sincere as they made their request to Yahweh. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

⁴⁹ then you will hear their prayer in the heavens, the place of your dwelling, and their plea for favor, and you will do their justice.

1 Kings 8:50

Forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you

Solomon twice requests Yahweh to forgive the people. This emphasizes the earnestness of his request. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

⁵⁰ And you will forgive your people who have sinned against you and all their transgressions that they have transgressed against you. And you will give them compassion before the face of those who took them captive and they will have compassion on them.

1 Kings 8:51

a furnace where iron is forged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “a furnace where people forge iron” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

51 For they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out from Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron,

1 Kings 8:52

May your eyes be open

The eye is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "Please pay attention" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁵² for your eyes to be opened to the plea for favor of your servant and to the plea for favor of your people Israel, to listen to them in all their crying out to you.

1 Kings 8:53

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵³ For you yourself separated them for yourself as an inheritance from all the peoples of the earth, just as you spoke by the hand of Moses your servant when you brought out our fathers from Egypt, my Lord Yahweh.”

1 Kings 8:54

prayer and request

The words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he makes his request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28](#). Alternate translation: “request” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

54 And it happened that as soon as Solomon finishing to pray to Yahweh all this prayer and plea for favor, he rose from before the face of the altar of Yahweh, from bowing on his knees with his palms spread out toward the heavens.

1 Kings 8:55

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵⁵ And he stood and he blessed all the assembly of Israel with a great voice, saying,

1 Kings 8:56

May Yahweh be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Not one word has failed out of all Yahweh's good promises

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has made every word of his good promises come true" (See: [Litotes](#))

ULT

⁵⁶ "Blessed be Yahweh, who has given rest for his people Israel, according to all that he had spoken. One word did not fall from all his good word that he had spoken by the hand of Moses his servant.

1 Kings 8:57

leave us or forsake us

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize Solomon's desire for Yahweh to be present with the people. (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

57 May Yahweh our God be with us, just as he was with our fathers. May he not leave us and may he not forsake us,

1 Kings 8:58

incline our hearts to him

Here their “hearts” refer to the people’s desires and emotions. Desiring to please someone is spoken of as inclining the heart toward that person. Alternate translation: “make us want to please him” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

live in all his ways

Here “in his ways” is an idiom that refers to the way he wants people to live. Alternate translation: “live as he requires us to live” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

58 inclining our heart to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.

1 Kings 8:59

day and night

This merism refers to “all the time” or “continually.” (See: [Merism](#))

ULT

⁵⁹ And may these words of mine, which I have pleaded for favor before the face of Yahweh, be near to Yahweh our God by day and night, to do the justice of his servant and the justice of his people Israel, the word of day by its day,

1 Kings 8:60

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁶⁰ so that all the peoples of the earth
may know that Yahweh, he is the God,
there is none besides!

1 Kings 8:61

let your heart be true

“be wholly devoted”

walk in his statutes

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: “always obey his statutes” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

61 And may your heart be completely with Yahweh our God, by walking in his statutes and by keeping his commandments, as this day.”

1 Kings 8:62

all Israel with him

This generalization may refer either: (1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1](#), or (2) to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every person who lived in Israel. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

⁶² And the king and all Israel with him were sacrificing sacrifices before the face of Yahweh.

1 Kings 8:63

all the people of Israel

This generalization may refer either: (1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1](#), or (2) to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every person who lived in Israel. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

twenty-two thousand oxen

“22,000 oxen” (See: [Numbers](#))

120,000 sheep

“one hundred twenty thousand sheep” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

63 And Solomon sacrificed a sacrifice of peace offerings which he sacrificed to Yahweh: 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. And the king and all the sons of Israel dedicated the house of Yahweh.

1 Kings 8:64

the bronze altar that was before Yahweh

“the bronze altar that was in Yahweh’s presence.” Since the temple is Yahweh’s dwelling place among his people, the altar is described as being in his presence.

ULT

64 On that day the king set apart the middle of the courtyard that was before the face of the house of Yahweh, for he made there the burnt up offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings because the altar of bronze that was before the face of Yahweh was too small to contain the burnt up offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings.

1 Kings 8:65

all Israel with him

This generalization may refer either: (1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1](#), or (2) to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every person who lived in Israel. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:62](#). (See: [Hyperbole](#))

seven days ... seven days ... fourteen days

“7 days...7 days...14 days” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

65 And Solomon performed the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from Lebo Hamath as far as the wadi of Egypt, before the face of Yahweh our God seven days and seven days, 14 days.

1 Kings 8:66

eighth day

The word "eighth" is the ordinal form of "8." (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

joyful and glad

The two words mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

66 On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and they went to their tents rejoicing and good of heart on account of all the goodness that Yahweh had done for David, his servant, and for Israel, his people.

1 Kings 9

1 Kings 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There are two parts to this chapter. Verses 1–9 is a dream in which God warned Solomon that he and his descendants were not to worship idols. If they did this, the temple would be destroyed. Verses 10–28 is about Solomon's extensive building and his partnership with Hiram, king of Tyre. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Worship only Yahweh

Yahweh alone must be worshiped. It is necessary for people to stay faithful to God and not worship idols. (See: [faithful](#), [faithfulness](#), [trustworthy](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

“Walk” is a common image in Scripture. It is said, “if you walk before me as David your father walked.” (See: [walk](#), [walked](#))

1 Kings 9:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹ And it happened as soon as Solomon finished building the house of Yahweh and the house of the king, and every desire of Solomon that he delighted to do,

1 Kings 9:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² that Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time, just as he had appeared to him at Gibeon.

1 Kings 9:3

your prayer and your request

The words “prayer” and “request” mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh recognized that Solomon’s request was sincere. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28](#).
Alternate translation: “your request” (See: [Doublet](#))

to put my name there forever

The name is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: “to dwell there and to claim possession of it forever” (See: [Metonymy](#))

My eyes and my heart will be there

The eyes and heart are synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: “I will protect and care for it” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

³ And Yahweh said to him, “I have heard your prayer and your plea for favor that you plead for favor before my face. I have set apart this house that you built, by setting my name there until eternity. And my eyes and my heart will be there all the days.”

1 Kings 9:4

if you walk before me as David your father walked

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "if you live the way I want you to live, just as David your father did" (See: [Metaphor](#))

in integrity of heart and in uprightness

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how righteous David was. (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

⁴ And as for you, if you will walk before my face just as David your father walked with completeness of heart and with uprightness, by doing according to all that I have commanded you, if you keep my statutes and my judgments,

1 Kings 9:5

the throne of your kingdom

Here “throne” refers to his reign. Alternate translation: “your dynasty” or “your reign” (See: [Metonymy](#))

will never fail to be on the throne of Israel

The action of ruling a kingdom is spoken of as if it were a person sitting on a throne. This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “will always rule over Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Litotes](#))

ULT

⁵ then I will raise up the throne of your kingdom over Israel for eternity, just as I spoke to David your father, saying, ‘A man for you will not be cut off from on the throne of Israel.’

1 Kings 9:6

my commandments and my statutes

Here the words “commandments” and “statutes” mean basically the same thing and emphasize all that Yahweh has commanded. (See: [Doublet](#))

worship other gods and bow down to them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

6 If you ever turn back, you or your sons, from after me and you do not keep my commandments, my statutes that I have given before your face, and you go and serve other gods and you bow down to them,

1 Kings 9:7

set apart to my name

Here the word “name” is a metonym for the person who possesses something. Alternate translation: “set apart for myself” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will cast it out of my sight

The abstract noun “sight” can be expressed with the verb “see.” Looking at something is a metaphor for protecting it. Alternate translation: “I will put it where I no longer have to see it” or “I will get rid of it so I no longer have to protect it” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁷ then I will cut off Israel from on the face of the ground that I have given to them, and the house that I have set apart for my name, I will send away from on my face, and Israel will be for a proverb and for a taunt among all the peoples.

1 Kings 9:8

This temple will become a heap of ruins

“This temple will be destroyed and its remains will be piled into a high mound”

will be shocked and will hiss

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “will express amazement and make a sound of disrespect” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁸ And this house will be elevated, every one who passes by near it will be appalled and will hiss. And they will say, ‘On what account did Yahweh do thus to this land and to this house?’

1 Kings 9:9

bowed down to them and worshiped them

These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase “bowed down to them” describes the posture that people used in worship. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

⁹ And they will say, ‘Because they forsook Yahweh their God, who brought their fathers out from the land of Egypt, and they held on to other gods and bowed down to them and served them. Therefore Yahweh brought on them all this evil.’”

1 Kings 9:10

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way of doing this, you could consider using it here.

at the end of twenty years

“after 20 years”

Solomon had finished building

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

10 And it happened from the end of 20 years that Solomon had built the two houses, the house of Yahweh and the house of the king.

1 Kings 9:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

11 Hiram, the king of Tyre, had lifted Solomon with trees of cedar and with trees of cypress and with gold, according to all his delight. Then the king Solomon gave to Hiram 20 cities in the land of the Galilee.

1 Kings 9:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹² And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given to him, but they were not right in his eyes.

1 Kings 9:13

What cities are these which you have given me, my brother?

Hiram is rebuking Solomon. This questions can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These cities that you have given me are good for nothing." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

which they are still called today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and people still call them that today" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

¹³ And he said, "What are these cities that you have given to me, my brother?" And he called them the land of Kabul until this day.

1 Kings 9:14

120 talents of gold

“one hundred and twenty talents of gold.” A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: “about 4,000 kilograms of gold” (See: [Numbers](#) and [Biblical Weight](#))

ULT

14 And Hiram sent to the king 120 kikkars of gold.

1 Kings 9:15

the account of the forced labor which King Solomon imposed

“the account of Solomon requiring men to work”

the Millo

This could mean: (1) “the terrace system” or (2) “the landfill.”

ULT

¹⁵ Now this is the matter of the forced labor that the king Solomon brought up to build the house of Yahweh and his house and the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer.

1 Kings 9:16

Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up

The person is a metonym for the army he commands. Alternate translation: "The army of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had gone up" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

16 Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had gone up and seized Gezer and he burned it with fire and he slew the Canaanite, the one who dwelled in the city. And he gave it as sending gifts to his daughter, the wife of Solomon.

1 Kings 9:17

So Solomon rebuilt Gezer

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

17 And Solomon built Gezer and lower
Beth Horon

1 Kings 9:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

18 and Baalath and Tadmor in the wilderness in the land ^[1]

1 Kings 9:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

19 and all the cities of the storehouses that were for Solomon and the cities of the chariotry and the cities of the horsemen and the desire of Solomon, whatever he desired to build in Jerusalem and in the Lebanon and in all the land of his dominion.

1 Kings 9:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁰ All the people, the ones who were left over from the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, they who were not of the sons of Israel,

1 Kings 9:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²¹ their sons who were left over after them in the land, them whom the sons of Israel were not able to utterly destroy, Solomon brought them up for the forced labor of serving until this day.

1 Kings 9:22

Solomon made no forced laborers of the people of Israel

“Solomon did not force the people of Israel to labor”

ULT

²² But from the sons of Israel Solomon did not give a servant, for they were the men of warfare and his servants and his commanders and his third men and the commanders of his chariotry and his horsemen.

1 Kings 9:23

550 of them

“five hundred and fifty of them” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

²³ These were the commanders of the stationed ones who were over the work for Solomon, 550, the ones having dominion over the people, the ones doing the work.

1 Kings 9:24

built the Millo

This could mean: (1) “built the terrace system” or (2) “built the landfill.” See how you translated “the Millo” in [1 Kings 9:15](#).

ULT

²⁴ As soon as the daughter of Pharoah went up from the city of David to her house that he had built for her, then he built the Millo.

1 Kings 9:25

altar that was before Yahweh

See how you translated this phrase in [1 Kings 8:64](#).

So he completed the temple

Solomon is a metonym for the workers he hired to do the work.
Alternate translation: "So his workers completed the temple" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁵ And Solomon offered up three times in the year burnt up offerings and peace offerings on the altar that he built for Yahweh, and he burned incense with it, which was before the face of Yahweh. And he completed the house.

1 Kings 9:26

King Solomon built

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

a fleet of ships

“a large group of ships”

ULT

²⁶ And the king Solomon made a fleet in Ezion Geber, which is near Elath on the lip of the sea of reeds in the land of Edom.

1 Kings 9:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁷ And Hiram sent in the fleet his servants, men of ships who knew the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

1 Kings 9:28

420 talents of gold

“four hundred and twenty talents of gold.” A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: “about 14,000 kilograms of gold” (See: [Numbers](#) and [Biblical Weight](#))

ULT

28 And they came to Ophir and took from there gold, 420 kikkars. And they brought it to the king Solomon.

1 Kings 10

1 Kings 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There are two parts to this chapter: The fame of Solomon's wisdom and the wealth of his kingdom. (See: [wise](#), [wisdom](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

==Queen of Sheba == King Solomon became so famous for his wisdom that the queen of Sheba (modern day Yemen) came all the way to see him and was deeply impressed. God promised him great wealth and he became famously rich. (See: [promise](#), [promised](#))

1 Kings 10:1

Solomon's fame concerning the name of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is represented by his "name." This could mean: (1)
Alternate translation: "Solomon's fame, which glorified Yahweh" or
(2) Alternate translation: "Solomon's fame, which Yahweh had given him" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹ Now the queen of Sheba heard the report of Solomon with respect to the name of Yahweh. And she came to test him with difficult questions.

1 Kings 10:2

all that was in her heart

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: “everything she wanted to know” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

² And she came to Jerusalem with very heavy strength, camels lifting spices and very much gold and precious stone. And she came to Solomon and spoke to him all that was with her heart.

1 Kings 10:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ And Solomon told her all her matters.
There was not a matter hidden from the
king that he did not tell her.

1 Kings 10:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ And the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the house that he had built

1 Kings 10:5

the seating of his servants

This could mean: (1) “how his servants were seated around the table” or (2) “where his servants lived.”

there was no more breath in her

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “she was utterly amazed” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁵ and the food of his table and the seating of his servants and the service of his attendants and their apparel and his cupbearers and his burnt up offerings that he offered up at the house of Yahweh. And there was no more breath in her.

1 Kings 10:6

I heard in my own land

"I heard while I was in my own land"

your words and your wisdom

Here the word "wisdom" can describe the word "words." Alternate translation: "your wise sayings" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

ULT

⁶ And she said to the king, "True is the word that I heard in my land concerning your words and concerning your wisdom."

1 Kings 10:7

my eyes have seen it

The phrase “my eyes” emphasizes that she herself saw it. Alternate translation: “I have seen it for myself” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Not half was told me about your wisdom and wealth

This can be stated without the passive form. Alternate translation: “They did not tell me about even half of your wisdom and wealth” or “You are much more wise and wealthy than what they told me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁷ And I did not believe the words until when I came and my eyes saw, and behold, the half was not told to me! You added wisdom and goodness to the report that I had heard.

1 Kings 10:8

who constantly stand before you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “who are always in your presence waiting to serve you” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁸ Happy are your men! Happy are these servants of yours, the ones who stand continually before your face, the ones who hear your wisdom! ^[1]

1 Kings 10:9

May Yahweh your God be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “May people praise Yahweh your God” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

who placed you on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the king who sits on it. Alternate translation: “who made you king of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁹ May Yahweh your God be blessed, who has delighted in you, to give you on the throne of Israel. Because Yahweh loves Israel for eternity, he set you as king to do justice and righteousness!”

1 Kings 10:10

120 talents of gold

“one hundred and twenty talents of gold.” A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: “about 4,000 kilograms of gold” (See: [Numbers](#) and [Biblical Weight](#))

No greater amount of spices ... was ever given to him again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “No one ever again gave to King Solomon more spices than the queen of Sheba gave to him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

10 And she gave to the king 120 kikkars of gold and very many spices and precious stone. There has not come again like that spice with respect to abundance that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

1 Kings 10:11

almug wood

a type of wood, possibly one with a pleasant scent (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

11 And also the fleet of Hiram, which lifted gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir very many trees of almug and precious stone.

1 Kings 10:12

The king made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: “The king told his people to make” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

or been seen again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “nor has anyone ever seen such a great quantity again” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to this day

This means to the day that the author was writing this.

ULT

12 And the king made the trees of almug a support for the house of Yahweh and for the house of the king, and lyres and harps for the ones who sing. Such trees of almug had not come in and had not been seen until this day.

1 Kings 10:13

everything she wished for, whatever she asked

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

of his royal bounty

“because as king he had so much”

ULT

¹³ And the king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatever she requested apart from what he gave to her according to the hand of the king Solomon. And she turned and went to her land, she and her servants.

1 Kings 10:14

in one year

“each year.” This refers to every year of Solomon’s reign, and not to just one time.

666 talents of gold

“six hundred sixty-six.” A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: “almost 22,000 kilograms of gold” (See: [Numbers](#) and [Biblical Weight](#))

ULT

14 And the weight of the gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 kikkars of gold,

1 Kings 10:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁵ apart from the men of the ones who explore and from the merchandise of the ones who go about, and all the kings of the Arab and the governors of the land.

1 Kings 10:16

King Solomon made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: “King Solomon’s men made” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

two hundred large shields

“200 large shields” (See: [Numbers](#))

Six hundred shekels of gold

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: “About 6.6 kilograms of gold” or “Six and one half kilograms of gold” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

Six hundred shekels

Because the word “shekels” does not appear here in the Hebrew text, some modern versions assume instead the unit of bekah, which was equivalent to only a half shekel. Any version making this assumption would signal a metric equivalent of about three kilograms.

ULT

16 And the king Solomon made 200 large beaten gold shields, 600 gold went up on one large shield,

1 Kings 10:17

He also made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: “The king’s men also made” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

three hundred shields

“300 shields” (See: [Numbers](#))

Three minas of gold

A mina is a unit of weight equal to about 550 grams. Alternate translation: “About 1.7 kilograms of gold” or “One and three-quarters kilograms of gold” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

“the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest.” See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:2](#).

ULT

17 and 300 beaten gold shields, three gold minas went up on one shield. And the king gave them to the house of the forest of the Lebanon.

1 Kings 10:18

the king made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped the king do this. Alternate translation: “the king’s men made” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

throne of ivory

Ivory is the hard, white substance from the tusks or teeth of large animals. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

18 And the king made a great ivory throne and he overlaid it with refined gold.

1 Kings 10:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁹ There were six steps to the throne and a round head for the throne from behind it. And hands were from this side and from that side toward the place of the seat. And two lions were standing beside the hands.

1 Kings 10:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁰ And 12 lions were standing there on the six steps, from this side and from that side. It was not made so for any kingdoms.

1 Kings 10:21

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

“the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest.” See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:2](#).

ULT

21 And all the vessels of the drink of the king Solomon were gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of the Lebanon were beaten gold. There was no silver, it was not thought to be anything in the days of Solomon.

1 Kings 10:22

ivory

Ivory is the hard, white substance from the tusks or teeth of large animals. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 10:18](#). (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

apes and baboons

These animals live wild in Africa. At the ends of their four limbs are what look like human hands and feet, and they have long tails. Some people consider baboons a type of ape. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

22 For the fleet of Tarshish was for the king on the sea with the fleet of Hiram. One of three years the fleet of Tarshish would come lifting gold and silver, ivory pieces and apes and peacocks.

1 Kings 10:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²³ And the king Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth with respect to riches and with respect to wisdom.

1 Kings 10:24

All the earth

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: “People from everywhere” or “People from many different places” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

sought the presence of Solomon

The presence of the person is a metonym for being able to speak and listen to the person. Alternate translation: “sought an audience with Solomon” or “wanted to visit Solomon” (See: [Metonymy](#))

to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart

The heart is a metonym for what a person thinks and is spoken of as if it were a container. The abstract noun “wisdom” is spoken of as if it were an object that could be put in a container and can be translated as an adjective. It can be a metonym for either the person or the words the person speaks. Alternate translation: “to hear his wisdom, which God had given him” or “to hear how wise God had enabled him to be” or “to hear him speak the wise words that God had enabled him to speak” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁴ And all the earth was seeking the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had given in his heart.

1 Kings 10:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁵ And they were bringing, a man his gift, vessels of silver and vessels of gold and garments and weapons and spices, horses and mules, a matter of year by year.

1 Kings 10:26

1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen

“one thousand four hundred chariots and 12,000 horsemen” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

26 And Solomon gathered chariotry and horsemen. And there were for him 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen. And he lead them into the cities of the chariotry and with the king in Jerusalem.

1 Kings 10:27

The king had silver in Jerusalem, as much as the stones on the ground

The narrator uses exaggeration to emphasize the great amount of silver that was in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “The king had so much silver in Jerusalem, it was like there was as much silver as there was stones on the ground” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

²⁷ And the king gave the silver in Jerusalem like the stones, and the cedars he gave like the sycamores that are in the lowlands with respect to abundance.

1 Kings 10:28

were imported from Egypt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “that his merchants had bought from people in Egypt” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Kue

This is the name of a region. Some think that Kue was the same as Cilicia, in Asia Minor. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

28 And the going out of the horses that were for Solomon was from Egypt and from Kue; the ones who go about for the king would take from Kue for a price.

1 Kings 10:29

Chariots were purchased

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “His merchants purchased chariots” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

six hundred shekels of silver...150 shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: “about 6.6 kilograms of silver ... about 1.7 kilograms” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

six hundred shekels of silver

“600 shekels of silver” (See: [Numbers](#))

150 shekels

“one hundred and fifty shekels” (See: [Numbers](#))

Many of these were then sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “His merchants then sold many of these” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²⁹ And a chariot went up and went out from Egypt for 600 silver, and a horse for 150, and thus by their hand they brought out to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Aram.

1 Kings 11

1 Kings 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of Solomon. (Chapters 1-11)

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriage with Gentiles

God had told the people of Israel in Moses's law never to marry women from the Gentile nations. But Solomon married many women from Gentile countries. This was because their religious beliefs would negatively affect Israel. Solomon, the wisest man, became a fool and his wives persuaded him to worship foolish idols. God became angry and warned he would take away 10 tribes from the kingdom of his son. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#), [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#), [wise](#), [wisdom](#) and [fool](#), [foolish](#), [folly](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

1 Kings 11:1

Now King Solomon

The word “Now” is used here to mark a break in the main story line where the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.

Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites

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

ULT

1 Now the king Solomon loved many foreign women, with the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabite women, Ammonite women, Edomite women, Sidonian women, Hittite women,

1 Kings 11:2

turn your heart to their gods

To “turn someone’s heart” is to convince that person to change his affection. Alternate translation: “persuade you to worship the gods that they worship” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

ULT

² from the nations that Yahweh had said to the sons of Israel, “You must not enter into them, and they must not enter into you. They will surely turn your heart after their gods.” Solomon clung to them for love.

1 Kings 11:3

seven hundred royal wives and three hundred concubines

“700 royal wives and 300 concubines” (See: [Numbers](#))

turned his heart away

To “turn someone’s heart” is to convince that person to change his affection. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 11:1](#). Alternate translation: “turned his heart away from Yahweh” or “persuaded him to stop worshiping Yahweh” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³ And there were wives for him, 700 princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned his heart.

1 Kings 11:4

his heart was not fully surrendered ... as was the heart of David

To “surrender” your heart refers to giving total allegiance and affection. Alternate translation: “he was not fully devoted ... as was David” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁴ And it happened that by the time of the old age of Solomon his wives turned his heart after other gods. And his heart was not completely with Yahweh his God like the heart of David his father.

1 Kings 11:5

Ashtoreth ... Molech

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

Sidonians

This is the name of a people group. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

he followed Molech

Some version render this as "Milcom." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁵ And Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the god of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites.

1 Kings 11:6

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, "in the sight of" refers to someone's opinion. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁶ And Solomon did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh and he did not remain fully after Yahweh like David his father.

1 Kings 11:7

Chemosh ... Molech

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

ULT

⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is on the face of Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the sons of Ammon.

1 Kings 11:8

sacrificed to their gods at them

Here the words "at them" refer to the shrines that Solomon built.

ULT

⁸ And thus he did for all his foreign wives, who were burning incense and sacrificing to their gods.

1 Kings 11:9

his heart had turned away from him

The words “his heart had turned” refer to his having changed allegiance and affection. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 11:1](#). Alternate translation: “Solomon had stopped worshipping Yahweh” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Metonymy](#))

he had appeared to him twice

“Yahweh had appeared to Solomon twice”

ULT

⁹ And Yahweh became angry with Solomon, for his heart had turned from with Yahweh, the God of Israel, the one who had appeared to him two times.

1 Kings 11:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹⁰ And had commanded to him concerning this thing, to not go after other gods. But he did not keep what Yahweh had commanded.

1 Kings 11:11

tear the kingdom from you

To “tear from” is to forcefully remove. This is like a person tears apart a piece of cloth. Alternate translation: “forcefully take the kingdom from you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

11 And Yahweh said to Solomon, “Because this is against you, that you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded concerning you. Surely I will tear away the kingdom from with you and I will give it to your servant.”

1 Kings 11:12

the hand of your son

The word “hand” refers to control, authority and power. Alternate translation: “your son’s control” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

12 However, in your days I will not do it for the sake of David, your father. From the hand of your son I will surely tear it away.

1 Kings 11:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

13 Only I will not tear away all the kingdom. I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of David my servant, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.”

1 Kings 11:14

Hadad

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

ULT

14 And Yahweh raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was from the seed of the king in Edom.

1 Kings 11:15

General Information:

This begins three verses of background material that happened long before.

ULT

15 And it had happened when David was with Edom, when Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the pierced ones, that he had struck down every male in Edom.

1 Kings 11:16

Connecting Statement:

This continues background material that happened long before.

Joab and all Israel

The words “all Israel” refer to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: “Joab and all of the Israelite army” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

16 For Joab and all Israel dwelled there six months until he had cut off every male in Edom.

1 Kings 11:17

Connecting Statement:

This concludes background material that happened long before.

But Hadad was taken with other Edomites by his father's servants

This can be stated in active form. "But the servants of Hadad's father took him with other Edomites" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

17 But Adad fled, he and Edomite men from the servants of his father with him, to enter Egypt. And Hadad was a little boy.

1 Kings 11:18

General Information:

This section continues the background information that began in [1 Kings 11:15](#).

They left Midian

Here the word “They” refers to Hadad and the other Edomites mentioned in [1 Kings 11:17](#).

Midian ... Paran ... Egypt

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

ULT

18 And they rose up from Midian and entered Paran. And they took men with them from Paran and entered Egypt, to Pharaoh the king of Egypt. And he gave to him a house and he ordered bread for him and he gave land to him.

1 Kings 11:19

Tahpenes

This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

19 And Hadad found much favor in the eyes of Pharaoh. And he gave to him a wife, the sister of his wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.

1 Kings 11:20

Tahpenes

This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Hadad ... Genubath

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

ULT

20 And the sister of Tahpenes bore for him Genubath, his son, and Tahpenes weaned him in the midst of the house of Pharaoh. And Genubath was in the house of Pharaoh in the midst of the sons of Pharaoh.

1 Kings 11:21

David had lain down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying David was dead. Alternate translation: "David had died" (See: [Euphemism](#))

ULT

21 And Hadad heard in Egypt that David had laid down with his fathers and that Joab, the commander of the army, had died. And Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me away, and I will go to my land."

1 Kings 11:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²² And Pharaoh said to him, "But what are you lacking with me that, behold, you are seeking to go to your land?" And he said, "Nothing, but surely you must send me away."

1 Kings 11:23

Rezon ... Eliada ... Hadadezer

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

Zobah

This is the name of a location. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

²³ And God raised up an adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from with Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, his master.

1 Kings 11:24

Zobah ... Damascus

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

when David defeated

Here “David” refers to David and his army. Alternate translation: “when David’s army overcame” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

²⁴ And he gathered men for himself and he became a commander of a raiding band when David slew them. And they went to Damascus and they dwelled in it and they reigned in Damascus.

1 Kings 11:25

Aram

This is the name of a location. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

all the days of Solomon

“during the time that Solomon was alive” or “all the days of Solomon’s life”

Rezon abhorred Israel

“Rezon hated Israel very much”

ULT

²⁵ And he was an adversary against Israel all the days of Solomon, and the evil that Hadad did. And he felt disgust against Israel and he reigned over Aram.

1 Kings 11:26

Jeroboam ... Nebat

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

Zeredah

This is the name of a location. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Zeruah

This is the name of a woman. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

lifted up his hand against the king

The word “hand” refers to authority, power and control. The phrase “lifted up against” refers to having opposed someone by using authority, power and control. This is a metonym used as a common idiom. Alternate translation: “rebelled against the king” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

ULT

²⁶ And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite from the Zeredah, and the name of his mother was Zeruah, a widow woman, was a servant of Solomon. And he raised a hand against the king.

1 Kings 11:27

Solomon had built up the place located at Millo

Translate “Millo” as in [1 Kings 9:15](#).

ULT

²⁷ Now this is the matter that he raised a hand against the king: Solomon had built the Millo, he had closed up the breach of the city of David his father.

1 Kings 11:28

a mighty man of valor

This could mean: (1) “a great warrior” or (2) “a very capable man” or (3) “a wealthy and influential man.”

he gave him command

“he made him commander”

all the labor

The word “labor” refers to the work that Solomon commanded the people to do for his government. This is a metonym. (See: [Metonymy](#))

the house of Joseph

This refers to the descendants of Joseph who were the people groups of Ephraim and Manasseh. This is a metonym. (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

28 And the man Jeroboam was mighty of strength. And Solomon saw the young man, that he was one who does work, and he appointed him for all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

1 Kings 11:29

Ahijah

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

Shilonite

The Shilonites are a people group. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

²⁹ And it happened at that time that Jeroboam went out from Jerusalem, and the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the road. Now he was covering himself with a new cloak and the two of them were by themselves in the field.

1 Kings 11:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁰ And Ahijah seized the new cloak that was over him and he tore it into 12 pieces.

1 Kings 11:31

He said

Here the word “He” refers to Ahijah.

tear the kingdom out

Here “tear ... out” is a metaphor that refers to the action of forcefully removing. This is like a person tears apart a piece of cloth. See how you translated this phrase in [1 Kings 11:11](#). Alternate translation: “forcefully take the kingdom out” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the hand of Solomon

Here “hand” is a metonym that refers to a person’s authority, control and power. Alternate translation: “Solomon’s control” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

31 And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces. For thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear away the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and I will give the ten tribes to you.’”

1 Kings 11:32

Solomon will have

The name "Solomon" here is a metonym referring to his descendants. Alternate translation: "Solomon's sons will have" or "Solomon's descendants will have" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³² And one tribe will be for him, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem (the city, it which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel),

1 Kings 11:33

Ashtoreth ... Chemosh ... Molech

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

Sidonians ... Moab ... Ammon

These are the names of locations and the people groups that live there. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

what is right in my eyes

“Eyes” here is a metonym for someone’s opinion or idea. This is a commonly used idiom. Alternate translation: “what I consider to be right” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

ULT

³³ because they have forsaken me and they have bowed down to Ashtoreth, the god of the Sidonians, to Chemosh, the god of Moab, and to Milcom, the god of the sons of Ammon. And they do not walk in my ways, to do the upright thing in my eyes, or my statutes or my judgments, like David his father.

1 Kings 11:34

General Information:

Ahijah continues to tell Jeroboam what Yahweh has said.

I will not take

Here the word "I" refers to Yahweh.

out of Solomon's hand

Here the word "hand" is a metonym that refers to a person's authority, control and power. Alternate translation: "out of Solomon's control" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁴ But I will not take all of the kingdom from his hand. Rather, I will put him as a leader all the days of his life, for the sake of David my servant, he whom I have chosen, who kept my commandments and my statutes.

1 Kings 11:35

I will give it to you

Here the word “you” refers to Jeroboam.

ULT

³⁵ But I will take the kingship from the hand of his son and I will give it to you, ten of the tribes.

1 Kings 11:36

may always have a lamp before me

The word “lamp” is a metonym that refers to a person’s influence and guidance. Alternate translation: “will always have a descendant to rule as an influence and a guide for obeying my covenant with David’s family” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁶ But to his son I will give one tribe so that there may be a lamp for David my servant all the days before my face in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen for myself, to set my name there.

1 Kings 11:37

General Information:

Ahijah continues to tell Jeroboam what Yahweh has said.

I will take you

Here the word "I" refers to Yahweh and the word "you" refers to Jeroboam.

ULT

³⁷ And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires. And you shall be king over Israel.

1 Kings 11:38

what is right in my eyes

The word “eyes” here is a metonym for someone’s opinion or idea. This is a commonly used idiom. See how you translated this phrase in [1 Kings 11:33](#). (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

build you a sure house

The clause “build a house” is a metaphor for establishing descendants from that time on. Alternate translation: “establish for you a lasting kingdom” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

38 And it shall be that if you hear all that I command you and you walk in my ways and you do the upright thing in my eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, just as David my servant did, then I will be with you and I will build for you an established house, just as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.

1 Kings 11:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁹ And I will afflict the seed of David on account of this, only not all the days.”

1 Kings 11:40

Shishak

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

ULT

40 And Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death. And Jeroboam rose up and he fled to Egypt, to Shishak, the king of Egypt. And he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

1 Kings 11:41

are they not written in the book of the events of Solomon?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "you can find them in the book of the events of Solomon." (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

the book of the events of Solomon

This book no longer exists.

ULT

⁴¹ And the remainder of the words of Solomon and all that he did and his wisdom are they not written on the book of the words of Solomon?

1 Kings 11:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴² And the days that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel were 40 years.

1 Kings 11:43

He slept with his ancestors and he was buried

The clause “slept with his ancestors” is a metaphor that expresses as a euphemism the death of a person in more gentle words. Alternate translation: “He died and he was buried with his ancestors” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

he was buried

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: “people buried him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

43 And Solomon lay down with his fathers and he was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 12

1 Kings 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Civil war

This chapter explains how the united kingdom of Israel was split into the two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. This is sometimes called a “civil war.”

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel splits

God’s warning to Solomon came true. In spite of his famous wealth, Solomon had over-taxed his own people and forced them to work for free. When the people requested that King Rehoboam reduce taxes and forced labor, he said that he would be harsher than his father. This caused the 10 northern tribes to revolt and appoint Jeroboam as their king. These northern tribes are now called the kingdom of Israel. Only Judah and Benjamin stayed with Rehoboam. They are called Judah. (See: [appoint](#), [appointed](#))

Jeroboam introduces calf worship

Jeroboam made a terrible mistake. He was afraid that if the people continued to go to Jerusalem to worship in the temple, they would want to return to Rehoboam as their king. So he made two shrines with calves made of gold for the people to worship. This eventually caused the destruction of his whole family. The kingdom of Israel continued worshipping the idols until they were taken slaves by the Assyrians. The northern tribes were unable to truly worship Yahweh without going to Jerusalem in the kingdom of Judah.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The people used the metaphor of “yoke” for oppressive government: “Your father made our yoke difficult. Now then, make your father’s hard work easier, and lighten the heavy yoke that he put on us.” But Rehoboam promised to increase their oppression with three metaphors: “My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. So now, although my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [oppress](#), [oppressed](#), [oppression](#), [oppressor](#), [dominate](#) and [promise](#), [promised](#))

1 Kings 12:1

all Israel was coming

Here “Israel” represents all the men of Israel capable of fighting. Here “all Israel” is a generalization which means almost all the men of Israel. Alternate translation: “all the men of Israel were coming” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

¹ And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to cause him to reign.

1 Kings 12:2

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Jeroboam ... Nebat

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

ULT

² And it happened as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard (now he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from the face of the king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelled in Egypt), ^[1]

1 Kings 12:3

called him

Here the word "him" refers to Jeroboam.

ULT

³ that they sent and they called for him.
And Jeroboam and all the assembly of
Israel came and they spoke to
Rehoboam, saying,

1 Kings 12:4

made our yoke heavy

A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and requirements. Alternate translation: "treated us cruelly" or "forced us to work very hard" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

4 "Your father caused our yoke to be heavy. But you now, cause it to be lighter than the hard work of your father and than his heavy yoke that he gave on us, and we will serve you."

1 Kings 12:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ And he said to them, "Go until three days, and return to me." And the people went.

1 Kings 12:6

the old men who had stood before Solomon

To “stand before” is an idiom for serving the king in his presence.
Alternate translation: “the old men who counseled Solomon” or “the old men who attended to Solomon” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁶ And the king Rehoboam consulted with the elders, who had been standing ones with the face of Solomon his father while he was alive, saying, “How are you advising to return this people a word?”

1 Kings 12:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁷ And they spoke to him, saying, "If today you will be a servant to this people and you will serve them, and you will answer them and will speak good words to them, then they will be servants for you all the days."

1 Kings 12:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁸ But he forsook the advice of the elders that they had advised him. And he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, who were the ones standing before his face.

1 Kings 12:9

Lighten the yoke that your father put on us

To “lighten the yoke” is a metaphor to represent lifting of the burden. Alternate translation: “Do not treat us as cruelly as your father did” or “Do not force us to work as hard as your father did” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And he said to them, “What word are you advising that we should return this people who spoke to me saying, ‘Cause it to be lighter than the yoke that your father gave on us’?”

1 Kings 12:10

My little finger is thicker than my father's waist

This metaphor means that Rehoboam is more cruel and intimidating than his father. Alternate translation: "What I will do to make your burden heavier is much more than what my father put on you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁰ And the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you saying, 'Your father caused our yoke to be heavy but you must cause it to be lighter than what is on us.' Thus you shall speak to them, 'My little one is thicker than the loins of my father.

1 Kings 12:11

My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions

This metaphor means that the punishment Rehoboam plans to give will be worse than what his father gave. Alternate translation: "My father used whips to force you to work but I will use even crueler punishment" (See: [Metaphor](#))

punish you with scorpions

The word **scorpions** may refer to: (1) a whip with sharp metal barbs on the end or (2) a spider-like creature that has a poisonous sting.

ULT

11 And now, my father loaded on you a heavy yoke, but as for me, I will add onto your yoke. My father punished you with the whips, but as for me, I will punish you with the scorpions."

1 Kings 12:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹² And Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, just as the king had spoken, saying, "Return to me on the third day."

1 Kings 12:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹³ And the king answered the people harshly. And he forsook the advice of the elders who had advised him.

1 Kings 12:14

burdened you with a heavy yoke

A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and requirements. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 12:4](#). Alternate translation: “treated you cruelly” or “forced you to work very hard” (See: [Metaphor](#))

My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions

This metaphor means that the punishment Rehoboam plans to give will be worse than what his father gave. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 12:11](#). Alternate translation: “My father used whips to force you to work but I will use even crueler punishment” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

14 And he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father caused your yoke to be heavy, but as for me, I will add onto your yoke. My father punished you with the whips, but as for me, I will punish you with the scorpions.”

1 Kings 12:15

it was a turn of events brought about by Yahweh

This is an idiom and can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh caused things to happen like this” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

his word that he had spoken by Ahijah ... to Jeroboam

The idiom “had spoken by” someone refers to giving someone a message to tell others. (See: [Idiom](#))

Ahijah ... Jeroboam ... Nebat

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

Shilonite

This is the name of a people group from the town of Shiloh. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

¹⁵ And the king did not listen to the people, for the turn was from with Yahweh, so that he raised up his word, which Yahweh had spoken by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

1 Kings 12:16

all Israel

Here “Israel” represents all the men of Israel capable of fighting. “All Israel” is a generalization which means almost all the men of Israel. Alternate translation: “all the men of Israel” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

What share do we have in David?

“Share” here is a metonym meaning a part, involvement, or interest. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: “We will have no part in the family of David.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Metonymy](#))

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse

“Son of Jesse” here is a metonym for David, a son of Jesse. “Inheritance” is a metonym for the part left for these people from David’s successes. Alternate translation: “We will have nothing to do with the descendants of Jesse” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Go to your tents, Israel

“Tents” here is a metonym representing a person’s place of residence. Alternate translation: “Go to your homes, people of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Now see to your own house, David

“House” here is a metonym for David’s lineage of power and prestige. Alternate translation: “Now take care of your own kingdom, descendant of David” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

16 And all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them, and the people returned the king a word, saying, “What portion is for us with David? And there is not an inheritance with the son of Jesse! To your tents, Israel! Now see your house, David.” And Israel went to its tents.

1 Kings 12:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

17 But as for the sons of Israel, the ones who dwelled in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

1 Kings 12:18

Adoniram

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

all Israel

Here “Israel” is a metonym for the people of Israel. “All Israel” is a generalization which means almost all the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “all the people of Israel who were there” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

18 And the king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him with stone and he died. And the king Rehoboam strengthened himself to go up in the chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

1 Kings 12:19

the house of David

Here “house” is a metonym that represents family or descendants.
Alternate translation: “the kings descended from David” (See: [Metonymy](#))

to this day

“ever since that time.” This refers to the time that the writer was actually writing this.

ULT

19 And Israel has rebelled against the house of David to this day.

1 Kings 12:20

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when all Israel heard

“All Israel” here is a generalization that means the capable men of Israel who represent the rest of the people by a synecdoche.

Alternate translation: “when all the leaders of Israel heard” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

king over all Israel

“Israel” implicitly means the northern ten tribes that rebelled against Rehoboam. Alternate translation: “king over all of the 10 tribes of Israel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the family of David

“David’s descendants”

ULT

20 And it happened as soon as all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the congregation and they caused him to reign over all Israel. One was not after the house of David, except the tribe of Judah by itself.

1 Kings 12:21

all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin

Here “house” is a metonym that represents a tribe or descendants. And, here “tribe” refers specifically to the soldiers from those tribes. Alternate translation: “all the soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin” (See: [Metonymy](#))

180,000 chosen men

“one hundred eighty thousand chosen men” (See: [Numbers](#))

the house of Israel

Here “house” represents the kingdom made up of the 10 northern tribes of Israel. Alternate translation: “the kingdom of Israel” or “the people of the northern tribes of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²¹ And Rehoboam entered Jerusalem and he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 were chosen who make war, to fight against the house of Israel to return the kingship to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

1 Kings 12:22

the word of God came ... it said

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: “God spoke this message ... and he said” or “God spoke these words ... and he said” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

22 And the word of God was to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

Shemaiah

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

the man of God

The expression “man of God” is a respectful way of referring to a prophet of Yahweh. Alternate translation: “the man who belongs to God” or “the prophet of God”

1 Kings 12:23

all the house of Judah and Benjamin

Here “house” is a metonym that represents a tribe or descendants.
Alternate translation: “all the people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

23 “Say to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and the remainder of the people, saying,

1 Kings 12:24

your brothers the people of Israel

The words “brothers” and “people of Israel” are a doublet that refer to the men of the ten northern tribes and emphasize the family relationship between them and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. (See: [Doublet](#))

for this thing has been made to happen by me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “because I have made this thing happen” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

24 ‘Thus says Yahweh: You shall not go up and you shall not fight against your brothers, the sons of Israel. Return, a man to his house, for from with me this thing has been.’” And they heard the word of Yahweh and they turned back to go according to the word of Yahweh.

1 Kings 12:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁵ And Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and he dwelled in it. And he went out from there and he built Penuel.

1 Kings 12:26

thought in his heart

“Heart” here is a metonym for a person’s inner consciousness, thoughts, motivation, or feelings. Alternate translation: “thought to himself” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the house of David

Here “house” is a metonym representing family or descendants. Alternate translation: “the kings descended from David” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.”

1 Kings 12:27

If these people go up

The words “these people” refer to the people of the northern ten tribes of Israel.

the heart of these people

“Heart” here is a metonym for the people’s allegiance and affection. Alternate translation: “the allegiance of these people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

27 If this people goes up to make sacrifices in the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem, and the heart of this people will return to their master, to Rehoboam, the king of Judah. And they will slay me and will return to Rehoboam, the king of Judah.”

turn again to their master, to Rehoboam king of Judah ... return to Rehoboam king of Judah

These phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize Jeroboam’s fear that the people would turn again to Rehoboam as king. (See: [Parallelism](#))

1 Kings 12:28

brought you up

“You” here is a metonym for the ancestors of the people. Alternate translation: “brought your ancestors up” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

28 And the king consulted and made two calves of gold. And he said to them, “Going up to Jerusalem is too much for you. Behold your gods, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!”

1 Kings 12:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁹ And he set the one in Bethel and the one he gave in Dan.

1 Kings 12:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁰ And this thing became a sin, and the people went before the face of the one as far as Dan.

1 Kings 12:31

Jeroboam made houses on high places

The workers who did this at Jeroboam's commands are represented by the metonym of the name of Jeroboam himself. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam's workers made houses on high places" (See: [Metonymy](#))

houses on high places

The implied information is that these were houses of worship. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "houses of worship on high places" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

made priests

"appointed men to be priests"

ULT

31 And he made the house of high places. And he made priests from the ends of the people, who were not from the sons of Levi.

1 Kings 12:32

in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month

This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of November on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "on the fifteenth day of the eighth month" (See: [Hebrew Months](#) and [Ordinal Numbers](#))

went up to the altar

"Went up" here is an idiom for going to a sacred place to worship since these altars were located on high places. Alternate translation: "offered sacrifices on the altar" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

³² And Jeroboam made a feast in the eighth month, on the 15th day of the month, like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered up on the altar. Thus he did at Bethel to sacrifice to the calves that he had made. And he caused to stand at Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.

1 Kings 12:33

went up to the altar

“Went up” here is an idiom for going to a sacred place to worship since these altars were located on high places. Alternate translation: “offered sacrifices on the altar” (See: [Idiom](#))

in the month he had planned in his own mind

“in the month that he had determined”

ULT

33 And he offered up on the altar that he had made at Bethel, on the 15th day in the eighth month, in the month that he had devised by him alone. And he made a feast for the sons of Israel and he offered up on the altar to burn incense.

1 Kings 13

1 Kings 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two parts: The young prophet's warning to Jeroboam (1-10) and the old prophet's deception (11-34). (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Obeying God

People should do what God tells them to do and not what other people tell them is God's will for them. The story of the young prophet and the old prophet is an example of this. (See: [reward](#), [prize](#), [deserve](#) and [will of God](#))

1 Kings 13:1

A man of God came out of Judah by the word of Yahweh to Bethel

The implied information is that Yahweh sent the man of God to Bethel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sent a man of God from Judah to Bethel" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

A man of God

This is another title for a prophet. Alternate translation: "A prophet"

came out of Judah

"came from Judah"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

ULT

¹ And behold, a man of God came from Judah with the word of Yahweh to Bethel. And Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense.

1 Kings 13:2

He cried against the altar

Here “He” refers to the man of God.

cried against the altar

This means he prophesied toward the altar in a loud and condemning voice. Alternate translation: “prophesied loudly toward the altar” (See: [Idiom](#))

Altar, altar

The prophet spoke to the altar as if it were a person who could hear him. He said this twice for emphasis. (See: [Apostrophe](#) and [Personification](#))

a son named Josiah will be born to the family of David

Here the “family of David” refers to the descendants of David. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “a descendant of David will have a son named Josiah” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

they will burn

Here “they” refers to Josiah and the people with him.

ULT

² And he cried out against the altar with the word of Yahweh and he said: “Altar! Altar! Thus says Yahweh, ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah shall be his name. And he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places, the ones who are burning incense on you. And the bones of a human shall be burned on you.’”

1 Kings 13:3

the altar will be split apart, and the ashes on it will be poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will split the altar apart and the ashes on it will fall to the ground" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³ And he gave a sign on that day, saying, "This is the sign that Yahweh has spoken: 'Behold, the altar shall be torn into pieces, and the ash that is on it shall be poured out.'"

1 Kings 13:4

the hand with which he had reached out against the man dried up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh dried up the hand with which he had reached out against the man" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

dried up

"withered" or "became paralyzed"

ULT

⁴ And it happened as soon as the king heard the word of the man of God that he had cried out against the altar at Bethel, that Jeroboam sent forth his hand from over the altar, saying, "Seize him!" And his hand that he had sent forth against him dried up and he was not able to return it to himself.

1 Kings 13:5

The altar was also split apart

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh also split the altar apart” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

as described by the sign that the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “as the man of God had described by the word of Yahweh as a sign” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh” or “Yahweh’s message”

ULT

⁵ And the altar was torn into pieces and the ash was poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh.

1 Kings 13:6

Plead for the favor of Yahweh your God

The abstract noun “favor” can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: “Plead that Yahweh your God may favor me” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

my hand may be restored to me again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh may restore my hand” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the king’s hand was restored to him again, and it became as it was before

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Yahweh restored the king’s hand and made it as it was before” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁶ And the king answered and said to the man of God, “Appease, please, the face of Yahweh your God and pray for me, so my hand may return to me.” And the man of God appeased the face of Yahweh, and the hand of the king returned to him, and it became like at the first.

1 Kings 13:7

Come home with me and refresh yourself

The word “yourself” is a reflexive pronoun. Alternate translation: “Come home with me and eat some food” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

ULT

⁷ And the king spoke to the man of God, “Come with me to the house and sustain yourself, and I will give to you a gift.”

1 Kings 13:8

half your possessions

“half of your house”

ULT

⁸ And the man of God said to the king, “If you would give to me half of your house, I would not go with you, and I would not eat bread and I would not drink water in this place.

1 Kings 13:9

You will eat no bread nor drink water, nor return by the way that you came

“Do not eat bread, drink water, or return by the way that you came”

ULT

⁹ For thus he has commanded me by the word of Yahweh, saying, ‘You shall not eat bread and you shall not drink water and you shall not return by the road that you went.’”

1 Kings 13:10

left another way

“went a different way”

ULT

10 And he went by another road and he did not return by the road by which he had come to Bethel.

1 Kings 13:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

11 Now one old prophet was dwelling in Bethel, and his son came and he recounted to him all the news that the man of God had done that day in Bethel, the words that he had spoken to the king, and they recounted them to their father.

1 Kings 13:12

his sons had seen the way

The implied information is that the sons also told their father which way the man of God went. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

12 And their father spoke to them, "Where is this, the road he went?" And his sons had seen the road that the man of God had gone when he came from Judah.

1 Kings 13:13

Saddle

This means to place a seat on the back of an animal so a person can ride on it.

ULT

13 And he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled the donkey for him and he mounted on it.

1 Kings 13:14

The old prophet

This refers to the prophet who lived in Bethel.

he said to him

“the old prophet said to the man of God”

He answered

“The man of God answered”

ULT

14 And he went after the man of God and he found him sitting under the oak tree. And he said to him, “Are you the man of God, who came from Judah?” And he said, “I am.”

1 Kings 13:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

15 And he said to him, "Go with me to the house and eat bread."

1 Kings 13:16

go in with you

“go into your house”

in this place

“in Bethel”

ULT

16 And he said, “I am not able to return with you or to come with you. And I will not eat bread and will not drink water with you in this place.”

1 Kings 13:17

it was commanded to me by the word of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh commanded me by his word" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

ULT

¹⁷ For a word was to me by the word of Yahweh, 'You shall not eat bread and you shall not drink water there. You shall not return to go by the road in which you went.'

1 Kings 13:18

an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh

“an angel delivered to me a message from Yahweh”

by the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh” or “Yahweh’s message”

ULT

18 And he said to him, “I also am a prophet like you, and a messenger spoke to me with the word of Yahweh, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, so he may eat bread and he may drink water.’” (He lied to him.)

1 Kings 13:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

19 And he returned with him and he ate bread in his house and he drank water.

1 Kings 13:20

As they sat at the table

The implied information is that they were still eating and drinking at the table. Alternate translation: "As they were eating and drinking at the table" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the word of Yahweh came to the prophet

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to the prophet" or "Yahweh spoke this message to the prophet" (See: [Idiom](#))

brought him back

Here the word "him" refers to the man of God.

ULT

20 And it happened that they were sitting at the table. And the word of Yahweh was to the prophet who had brought him back.

1 Kings 13:21

came from Judah, saying, “Yahweh

The idiom “the word of Yahweh came to” in the previous verse is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “came from Judah. He said, ‘Yahweh’ or “came from Judah: ‘Yahweh” (See: [Idiom](#))

he cried to the man of God

“the prophet spoke loudly to the man of God”

Because you have been disobedient to the word of Yahweh

“Because you have not obeyed the word of Yahweh”

ULT

21 And he cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, saying, “Thus says Yahweh, ‘Because you have been rebellious against the mouth of Yahweh and you have not kept the command that Yahweh your God had commanded you,

1 Kings 13:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²² and you have returned and you have eaten bread and you have drunk water in the place where he spoke to you, "You shall not eat bread and you shall not drink water," your corpse shall not enter into the grave of your fathers."

1 Kings 13:23

the prophet saddled the donkey

This means he placed a seat on the back of the donkey so the man of God could ride on it. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 13:13](#).

ULT

23 And it happened after his eating bread and after his drinking, that he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

1 Kings 13:24

his body was left on the road

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “left his body on the road” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

his body

“his dead body”

ULT

24 And he went and a lion found him in the road and it put him to death. And his corpse was thrown in the road and the donkey was standing beside it and the lion was standing beside the corpse.

1 Kings 13:25

they came and told it

Here “it” refers to what they had seen on the road. Alternate translation: “they came and told about what they had seen”

ULT

²⁵ And behold, men were passing by and they saw the corpse thrown in the road, and the lion standing beside the corpse. And they came and spoke in the city in which the old prophet was dwelling.

1 Kings 13:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁶ And the prophet who had brought him back from the road heard and he said, "He is the man of God who was rebellious against the mouth of Yahweh. And Yahweh gave him to the lion, and it tore him into pieces and put him to death according to the word of Yahweh that he had spoken to him."

1 Kings 13:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁷ And he spoke to his sons, saying,
“Saddle the donkey for me.” And they
saddled it.

1 Kings 13:28

the body

“the dead body of the man of God”

left in the road

“lying in the road”

ULT

28 And he went and found the corpse thrown in the road and the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse and had not torn the donkey into pieces.

1 Kings 13:29

took up

“lifted up”

the body

“the dead body”

ULT

²⁹ And the prophet lifted up the corpse of the man of God and he rested it on the donkey and he brought it back. And he entered into the city of the old prophet to wail and to bury him.

1 Kings 13:30

they mourned

Here the word “they” refers to the prophet and his sons.

Woe, my brother!

The word “Woe” here is an expression of great sorrow.

ULT

³⁰ And he rested his corpse in his grave.
And they wailed over him, “Alas, my
brother!”

1 Kings 13:31

he had buried him

Here the word “he” refers to the old prophet and the word “him” refers to the man of God.

Lay my bones beside his bones

Here “my bones” represents his entire body. Alternate translation: “Lay my dead body beside his bones” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

31 And it happened after his burying him that he said to his sons, saying, “When I die, then you shall bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried. Beside his bones rest my bones.”

1 Kings 13:32

houses on the high places

The implied information is that these were houses of worship.
Alternate translation: "houses of worship on the high places" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

³² For the word that he cried out by the word of Yahweh against the altar that is in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria will certainly happen."

1 Kings 13:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³³ After this matter Jeroboam did not return from his evil way, but he returned and made from the ends of the people priests of the high places. The desiring one, he would fill his hand, and he would become one of the priests of the high places.

1 Kings 13:34

This matter became sin to the family of Jeroboam

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Jeroboam’s family sinned by doing this thing” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

This matter

This phrase refers to Jeroboam’s setting up shrines and appointing priests.

caused his family to be destroyed and to be exterminated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “because of this God destroyed and exterminated Jeroboam’s family” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to be destroyed and to be exterminated

These mean nearly the same thing. Alternate translation: “to be completely destroyed” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

³⁴ And by this thing it became the sin of the house of Jeroboam, both to efface and to annihilate from on the face of the ground.

1 Kings 14

1 Kings 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories. One is the death of Jeroboam's son (1-18). The other is the reign of Rehoboam (20-31).

Special concepts in this chapter

The death of Jeroboam's son

God knows the truth; it is useless to try to fool God's prophet. Jeroboam's son became sick; so the king sent his wife, disguised as a common woman, to the prophet. The prophet was blind, but when Jeroboam's wife arrived he told her, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam." He also told her that her son would die and that all of Jeroboam's family would be killed, because he had caused Israel to worship the golden calves. (See: [true](#), [truth](#) and [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Rehoboam's reign

When Solomon obeyed God, God made him very rich. When the people of Judah began to worship the fertility goddess, Ashtoreth, and to do many evil things, they had to give all of their wealth to the king of Egypt to persuade him not to attack Jerusalem. (See: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [unpleasant](#))

1 Kings 14:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹ At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick.

1 Kings 14:2

disguise yourself

“change how you appear to others”

you will not be recognized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “no one will recognize you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

² And Jeroboam said to his wife, “Rise now and change yourself, so they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam. And you will go to Shiloh. Behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, he himself spoke concerning me as king over this people.”

1 Kings 14:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ And you will take in your hand ten bread loaves and cakes and a jar of honey and go to him. He himself will tell you what will happen to the boy.”

1 Kings 14:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ And the wife of Jeroboam did so. And she rose and went to Shiloh and she entered the house of Ahijah. (Now Ahijah was not able to see because his eyes stood because of his old age.)

1 Kings 14:5

Look, the wife of Jeroboam

Here the word “Look” means “pay attention.”

coming to seek advice from you

The abstract noun “advice” can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: “coming to ask you to advise her” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Say such and such to her

The words “such and such” mean that Yahweh told Ahijah what to say. Alternate translation: “Speak in this way to her” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁵ And Yahweh said to Ahijah, “Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to seek a word from with you regarding her son, for he is sick. Like this and like that you shall speak to her. And it will happen as soon as she comes that she will be changing herself.”

1 Kings 14:6

Why do you pretend to be someone you are not?

This question shows that Ahijah knew she was disguised. Alternate translation: "Stop pretending to be someone else; I know who you are." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

I have been sent to you with bad news

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told me to give you bad news" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁶ And it happened as soon as Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering in the opening that he said, "Enter, wife of Jeroboam. Why is this, you are changing yourself? Now I have been sent to you with a harsh thing."

1 Kings 14:7

I raised you

“I exalted you”

ULT

⁷ Go, say to Jeroboam, thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Because I raised you up from the midst of the people and I gave you as a leader over my people Israel,

1 Kings 14:8

I tore the kingdom away

God forcefully removed most of the kingdom like a person tears a piece of cloth. (See: [Metaphor](#))

followed me

“obeyed me”

with all his heart

Here the “heart” refers to a person’s will and desire. Alternate translation: “with all his will” or “with complete commitment” (See: [Metonymy](#))

what was right in my eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: “what I judged to be right” or “what I considered to be right” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁸ and I tore the kingdom away from the house of David and I gave it to you, but you are not like my servant David, who kept my commandments and who walked after me with all his heart, to do only the upright thing in my eyes.

1 Kings 14:9

thrust me behind your back

Jeroboam has disrespected Yahweh like a person throws away something that is not wanted. Alternate translation: “completely rejected me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And you have done evil by doing more than all who were before your face. And you went and made for yourself other gods and cast images to provoke me to anger and you have thrown me behind your back.

1 Kings 14:10

look

“pay attention.” This word is added to indicate that what follows is important.

I will cut off ... and will completely remove

These two phrases are very similar in meaning and are repeated for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

cut off from you every male child in Israel

Yahweh speaks of destroying Jeroboam’s family and preventing him from having any descendants as if he were cutting them off as one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: “destroy every one of your male children in Israel” (See: [Metaphor](#))

will completely remove your family, like someone who burns up dung until it is gone

This simile compares the removal of every descendant of Jeroboam with the complete burning up of dung that was mixed with straw, dried, and burned for fuel. (See: [Simile](#))

ULT

10 Therefore, behold, I am about to bring evil to the house of Jeroboam, and I will cut off with respect to Jeroboam one who urinates against a wall, one who is restrained and one who is let free in Israel. And I will burn after the house of Jeroboam just as the dung burns until it is finished.

1 Kings 14:11

Anyone who belongs to your family who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “Dogs will eat anyone who belongs to your family and who dies in the city” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the heavens

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “the birds of the heavens will eat anyone who dies in the field” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 The one who dies with respect to Jeroboam in the city the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the country the birds of the heavens will eat, for Yahweh has spoken.’

1 Kings 14:12

when your feet enter the city

The word “feet” here is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: “when you enter the city” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

12 And you, rise, go to your house.
When your feet enter the city, then the child will die.

1 Kings 14:13

All Israel

This is a generalization that means the people of the northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: “The Israelite people” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

go into a grave

“be buried in a grave”

out of Jeroboam’s house

The word “house” here is a metonym for “family.” Alternate translation: “in all of Jeroboam’s family” (See: [Metonymy](#))

was anything good found in the sight of Yahweh, the God of Israel

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh’s judgment or evaluation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “did Yahweh, the God of Israel, find anything he judged to be good” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

13 And all Israel will wail for him and they will bury him. For this one by himself with respect to Jeroboam will enter into a grave, because in him a good thing was found for Yahweh, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.

1 Kings 14:14

cut off the family of Jeroboam

The writer speaks of the new king of Israel destroying Jeroboam's family and preventing him from having any descendants like one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the descendants of Jeroboam" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

14 And Yahweh will raise up for himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day, and what it will be even now!

1 Kings 14:15

Yahweh will attack Israel as a reed is shaken in the water

The writer here uses a simile to express how Yahweh will bring judgment on the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “Yahweh will attack the people of Israel as a reed is shaken in the water” (See: [Simile](#))

as a reed is shaken in the water

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “like a river of water shakes a reed” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

he will root up Israel out of this good land

Yahweh compares Israel with a plant that he will tear out of the ground by its roots. Alternate translation: “he will remove the people of Israel from this good land” (See: [Metaphor](#))

scatter them

“disperse them”

ULT

¹⁵ And Yahweh will strike Israel just as the reed sways in the waters, and he will uproot Israel from on this good ground that he gave to their fathers. And he will scatter them from the other side of the river, because they made their Asherahs, which provoked Yahweh to anger.

1 Kings 14:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

16 And he will give Israel over on account of the sins of Jeroboam that he sinned and that he caused Israel to sin.”

1 Kings 14:17

Tirzah

This is the name of the city where king Jeroboam lived. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

17 And the wife of Jeroboam rose and went and came to Tirzah. She was entering at the threshold of the house and the boy died.

1 Kings 14:18

All Israel buried him and mourned for him

This is a generalization that means the people of Israel buried him and mourned for him. Alternate translation: "A great number of the people of Israel were present when people buried him, and the people of Israel mourned for him" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

just as it was told to them by the word of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh told them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

by the word of Yahweh

"by the message of Yahweh" or "in Yahweh's message"

ULT

18 And they buried him and all Israel wailed for him, according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

1 Kings 14:19

see

“look” or “see for yourself”

they are written in

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “you can find them written in” or “someone has written about them in” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the book of the events of the kings of Israel

This refers to a book that no longer exists.

ULT

19 And the remainder of the matters of Jeroboam, that he fought and that he reigned, behold, they are written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel.

1 Kings 14:20

twenty-two years

“22 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

slept with his ancestors

Jeroboam dying is spoken of as if he had fallen asleep. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10](#). Alternate translation: “died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

ULT

²⁰ And the days that Jeroboam reigned were 22 years. And he layed down with his fathers and Nadab his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 14:21

forty-one years old ... seventeen years

“41 years old...17 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

in which to put his name

Here “put his name” is a metonym for “dwell” and refers to the temple where Yahweh was to be worshiped. Alternate translation: “in which to dwell” or “in which to be worshiped” (See: [Metonymy](#))

His mother’s name

Here the word “His” refers to Rehoboam.

Naamah

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

ULT

²¹ Now Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was a son of 41 years when he reigned. And he reigned 17 years in Jerusalem, the city there where Yahweh chose to put his name from all the tribes of Israel. And the name of his mother was Naamah the Ammonite woman.

1 Kings 14:22

Judah did

Here “Judah” represents the people of Judah. Alternate translation: “The people of Judah did” (See: [Metonymy](#))

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The “sight” of Yahweh represents Yahweh’s judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:6](#). Alternate translation: “what was evil in Yahweh’s judgment” or “what Yahweh considered to be evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

they provoked him to jealousy

The abstract noun “jealousy” can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: “they made him jealous” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

their fathers

“their ancestors”

ULT

22 And Judah did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh. And they made him jealous more than all that their fathers did with their sins that they sinned.

1 Kings 14:23

For they also built

The word “they” here refers to the people of Judah.

built for themselves

The words “for themselves” are a metonym for what they will do with the high places. Alternate translation: “built for their own use” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

on every high hill and under every green tree

This is likely to be an exaggeration that indicates there were many places like these for false worship all over the country. Alternate translation: “on the high hills and under the green trees” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

²³ And they, even they built for themselves high places and pillars and asherahs on every high hill and under every flourishing tree.

1 Kings 14:24

cultic prostitutes

“religious prostitutes” or “male prostitutes.” This probably refers to male prostitutes who were associated with idol worship.

the same despicable practices as the nations that

Here the word “nations” represents the people in those nations. Alternate translation: “the same disgusting things that the people did, whom” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

24 And also a cultic prostitute was in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that Yahweh had dispossessed from before the face of the sons of Israel.

1 Kings 14:25

in the fifth year of King Rehoboam

This refers to the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign as king. Alternate translation: "in the fifth year that Rehoboam was king" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

in the fifth year

"in year 5" (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem

"Shishak king of Egypt" represents himself along with the Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "Shishak king of Egypt, and his army with him, came up against Jerusalem" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Shishak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:40](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

came up against

This is an idiom that means marched against or attacked. Alternate translation: "came to attack" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²⁵ And it happened that in the fifth year of the king Rehoboam, Shishak the king of Egypt went up against Jerusalem.

1 Kings 14:26

He took everything away

This is a generalization that indicates every valuable thing that could be found was taken away. Alternate translation: "He took away many valuable things" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

He took

The word "He" represents Shishak and the soldiers who were with him. Alternate translation: "Shishak and his army took" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

that Solomon had made

Here "Solomon" refers to the craftsmen who worked for Solomon to make the shields. Alternate translation: "that Solomon had his workers make" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

26 And he took away the treasures of the house of Yahweh and the treasures of the house of the king and the entirety he took. And he took all the shields of gold that Solomon had made.

1 Kings 14:27

King Rehoboam made shields

Here “King Rehoboam” represents the persons who worked for him to make the shields. Alternate translation: “King Rehoboam’s workers made shields” (See: [Metonymy](#))

in their place

“in place of the shields of gold”

entrusted them into the hands of the commanders

Here “hands” represents care or responsibility. Alternate translation: “made them the responsibility of the commanders” (See: [Metonymy](#))

who guarded the doors to the king’s house

Here “doors” represents the entrance. Alternate translation: “who guarded the entrance to the king’s house” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

27 And the king Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place. And he assigned them to the hand of the commanders of the ones who run, the ones who keep the opening of the house of the king.

1 Kings 14:28

the guards would carry them

“the guards would carry the shields of bronze”

ULT

28 And it happened that as often as the king entered the house of Yahweh, the ones who run lifted them up and they brought them back to the chamber of the ones who run.

1 Kings 14:29

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis.

Alternate translation: "they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah." or "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Judah." (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²⁹ And the remainder of the matters of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah?

the book of the events of the kings of Judah

This refers to a book that no longer exists.

1 Kings 14:30

There was constant warfare

“There was continuing war” or “There were constant battles”

warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam

The names of the kings represent themselves and their armies. Alternate translation: “the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam fought in battle again and again” or “Rehoboam and his people and Jeroboam and his people engaged in battle continually” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

³⁰ And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days.

1 Kings 14:31

slept with his ancestors

Rehoboam dying is spoken of as if he had fallen asleep. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10](#). Alternate translation: “died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

was buried with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “people buried him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Naamah

This is the name of a woman. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:21](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Abijah his son

“Abijah the son of Rehoboam”

became king in his place

The phrase “in his place” is a metaphor meaning “instead of him.” Alternate translation: “became king instead of Rehoboam” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

31 And Rehoboam layed down with his fathers and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And the name of his mother was Naamah the Ammonite woman. And Abijam his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15

1 Kings 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah had some bad kings and some good kings. All of the kings in Israel continued to worship the golden calves, so they were all considered to be bad. Judah and Israel continually fought each other.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“But the shrines were not taken away.”

At the shrines, the people worshiped Yahweh. But later, during Hezekiah’s reign, it was decided that all sacrifices must be made only at the temple. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

1 Kings 15:1

In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat

This refers to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam's reign. Alternate translation: "After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost eighteen years" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

In the eighteenth year

"In year 18" (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

¹ Now in year 18 of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam reigned over Judah.

1 Kings 15:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² Three years he reigned in Jerusalem.
And the name of his mother was
Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.

1 Kings 15:3

He walked in all the sins

Walking represents living, and walking in sins represents committing those sins. Alternate translation: “Abijah continued to practice all the sins” (See: [Metaphor](#))

that his father had committed before his time

Since these verses refer to several kings, it may help to include the name of Abijah’s father. This information can be made clear. AT “that his father, Rehoboam, had committed before Abijah’s time” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

his time

This phrase represents the time that he was king. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: “before Abijah was king” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

his heart was not devoted ... as the heart of David

The heart represents the whole person. Alternate translation: “Abijah was not devoted ... as David” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

³ And he walked in all the sins of his father that he had done before his face. And his heart was not completely with Yahweh his God like the heart of David his father.

1 Kings 15:4

gave him a lamp in Jerusalem

The word “lamp” here represents a descendant who would be king as David was. Alternate translation: “gave David a descendant to rule in Jerusalem” (See: [Metaphor](#))

by raising up his son after him

“by raising up Abijah’s son after him” or “by giving Abijah a son”

ULT

⁴ But for the sake of David, Yahweh his God gave to him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up his son after him, and by causing Jerusalem to stand,

1 Kings 15:5

what was right in his eyes

The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: “what Yahweh judges to be right” or “what Yahweh considers to be right” (See: [Metaphor](#))

for all the days of his life

“the whole time that David lived” or “throughout David’s whole life”

he had not turned away from anything that he commanded him

Turning away from a command represents disobeying it. Alternate translation: “David did not disobey anything that God commanded him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite

This is a general way to refer to the situation with Uriah. It can be stated more clearly what this matter was. Alternate translation: “except for what he did to Uriah the Hittite” or “except when he caused Uriah the Hittite to be killed” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

⁵ because David had done the upright thing in the eyes of Yahweh and he had not turned from all that he had commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

1 Kings 15:6

between Rehoboam and Jeroboam

These kings represent themselves and their armies. Rehoboam was Abijah's father. Alternate translation: "between the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

all the days of Abijah's life

"the whole time that Abijah lived"

ULT

⁶ And war was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

1 Kings 15:7

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Abijah is in this other book. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29](#). This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁷ And the remainder of the matters of Abijah and all that he did, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? And war was between Abijah and Jeroboam.

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Judah.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

between Abijah and Jeroboam

The names “Abijah” and “Jeroboam” represent the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: “between the armies of Abijah and Jeroboam” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

1 Kings 15:8

Abijah slept with his ancestors

In this euphemism, sleeping represents dying. Alternate translation: "Abijah died as his ancestors had" or "Like his ancestors, Abaijah died" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Abijah" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁸ Then Abijam laid down with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15:9

In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel

This refers to the twentieth year of Jeroboam's reign. Alternate translation: "After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost twenty years" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

In the twentieth year

"In year 20" (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁹ And in year 20 of Jeroboam the king of Israel, Asa reigned as the king of Judah.

1 Kings 15:10

forty-one years

“41 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

¹⁰ And he reigned 41 years in Jerusalem.
And the name of his mother was
Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.

1 Kings 15:11

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Asa's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judges to be right" or "what Yahweh considers to be right" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

11 And Asa did the upright thing in the eyes of Yahweh like David his father.

1 Kings 15:12

the cultic prostitutes

This probably refers to prostitutes who were associated with idol worship and who were all men. Alternate translation: “religious prostitutes” or “the prostitutes who worked for idols” or “male prostitutes”

ULT

12 And he caused the cultic prostitutes to pass over from the land. And he removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

1 Kings 15:13

Asa cut down the disgusting figure

Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to cut down the figure. Alternate translation: "Asa caused the disgusting figure to be cut down" or "Asa made them cut down the disgusting figure" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

13 And also Maacah his mother he removed her from being queen-mother because she had made a horrid thing for the Asherah. And Asa cut down her horrid thing and he burned it in the wadi of Kidron.

1 Kings 15:14

But the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “But Asa did not command the people to take away the high places” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Asa’s heart was completely devoted

The heart represents the person. Alternate translation: “Asa was completely devoted” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

all his days

“the whole time that he lived” or “throughout his whole life”

ULT

14 But they did not remove the high places. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was completely with Yahweh all his days.

1 Kings 15:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

15 And he brought the holy things of his father and his holy things for the house of Yahweh, silver and gold and vessels.

1 Kings 15:16

all their days

This refers to the entire time they reigned as kings. Alternate translation: "the whole time that they reigned over Judah and Israel" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

16 And war was between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel, all their days.

1 Kings 15:17

acted aggressively against Judah

“attacked Judah”

built up Ramah

It is implied that the army of Baasha first captured Ramah. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “captured and fortified Ramah” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

17 And Baasha the king of Israel went up against Judah and he built up the Ramah, so as not to give going out or coming in to Asa the king of Judah.

1 Kings 15:18

He put it into the hands of his servants

Putting things in their hands represents giving those things to them. It is implied that they would do with it what he wanted them to do. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "He entrusted it to his servants" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

He said

This means he spoke by means of his servants. Asa told his servants what to say to Ben Hadad and they did. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Asa told his servants to say to Ben Hadad" or "Through his servants, Asa said to Ben Hadad" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

18 And Asa took all the silver and the gold that was remaining in the storerooms of the house of Yahweh and the storerooms of the house of the king, and he gave them into the hand of his servants. And the king Asa sent them to Ben Hadad, the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, the king of Aram, the one who dwelled in Damascus, saying,

1 Kings 15:19

Let there be a covenant between me and you

A covenant being between two people represents those two people having a covenant with each other. Alternate translation: "Let us have a covenant with each other" or "Let us make a peace treaty" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Look, I

"As proof that I want a treaty with you, I"

Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel

Breaking a covenant represents canceling it and not doing what one has promised to do. Alternate translation: "Cancel your covenant with Baasha king of Israel" or "Do not be loyal to Baasha king of Israel as you promised in your covenant with him" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel

Asa wanted Ben Hadad to attack Israel. Ben Hadad could only do that if he broke his covenant with the king of Israel. The meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, and attack Israel" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

19 "Let there be a covenant between me and you, between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent to you a present of silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha the king of Israel and he may go up from against me."

1 Kings 15:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁰ And Ben Hadad listened to the king Asa and he sent the commanders of the strong ones who were for him against the cities of Israel. And he struck Ijon and Dan and Abel Beth Maacah and all Kinnereth, with all the land of Naphtali.

1 Kings 15:21

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

he stopped building up Ramah

King Baasha did this by telling his workers to do this. Alternate translation: “he had his workers stop building up Ramah” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

ULT

21 And it happened as soon as Baasha heard, that he ceased from building up the Ramah and he dwelled in Tirzah.

1 Kings 15:22

No one was exempted

This can also be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Every one had to obey King Asa's proclamation"

ULT

22 And the king Asa caused all Judah to hear, There was no one free from obligation. And they lifted up the stones of the Ramah and its trees that Baasha had built. And with them the king Asa built Geba of Benjamin and the Mizpah.

1 Kings 15:23

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Abijah is in this other book. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29](#). This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²³ And the remainder of all the matters of Asa and all his might and all that he did and the cities that he built, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? Only at the time of his old age did he become sick in his feet.

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Judah.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

1 Kings 15:24

Asa slept with his ancestors

Sleeping here is a euphemism which represents dying. Alternate translation: "Asa died as his ancestors had" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

was buried with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him with his ancestors" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

David his father

The word "father" here refers to an ancestor. Alternate translation: "King David, his ancestor"

ULT

²⁴ And Asa laid down with his fathers and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father. And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15:25

Connecting Statement:

The rest of chapter 15 and 16 is about the kings of Israel. These events happened while King Asa of Judah was still alive.

the second year of Asa king of Judah

This refers to the second year of Asa's reign. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "when Asa had been king of Judah for almost two years" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

he reigned over Israel two years

"Nadab reigned over Israel two years"

ULT

²⁵ And Nadab the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in year two of Asa the king of Judah. And he reigned over Israel two years.

1 Kings 15:26

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

walked in the way of his father

Walking here represents behaving. Alternate translation: "did the same things that his father had done" (See: [Metaphor](#))

in his own sin

Walking in his own sin represents sinning in ways that were different from the ways that his father had sinned. Alternate translation: "he sinned in his own ways" (See: [Metaphor](#))

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "and by sinning, he influenced Israel to sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

26 And he did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh. And he walked in the way of his father and in his sin that he caused Israel to sin.

1 Kings 15:27

conspired against Nadab

“secretly plotted to kill King Nadab”

Gibbethon

This is the name of a city. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Nadab and all Israel

“The phrase “all Israel” is a generalization that represents the many soldiers of Israel. Alternate translation: “Nadab and the many soldiers of Israel” or “Nadab and the army of Israel” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

were laying siege to Gibbethon

“were surrounding Gibbethon, so that the people of Gibbethon would surrender to them”

ULT

27 And Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which is for the Philistines. And Nadab and all Israel were laying siege against Gibbethon.

1 Kings 15:28

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him."
Alternate translation: "became king instead of Nadab" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

28 And Baasha put him to death in year three of Asa the king of Judah. And he reigned in his place.

1 Kings 15:29

Baasha killed all the family of Jeroboam. He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing.

These two sentences mean the same thing and are combined to emphasize his descendents were all killed. (See: [Parallelism](#))

all the family of Jeroboam

Jeroboam was King Nadab's father.

He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing

Breathing represents being alive. Alternate translation: "He left none of Jeroboam's descendants living" (See: [Metonymy](#))

his royal line

"Jeroboam's royal line"

just as Yahweh had spoken by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite

In [1 Kings 14:10](#) and [1 Kings 14:11](#) Yahweh spoke through his prophet Ahijah and told Jeroboam that he would destroy his family.

Ahijah the Shilonite

"Ahijah, who was from Shiloh"

ULT

²⁹ And it happened that as soon as he reigned, he struck down all the house of Jeroboam. He did not leave any breathing one of Jeroboam, until he had annihilated him according to the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken by the hand of his servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

1 Kings 15:30

for the sins of Jeroboam which he committed and by which he led Israel to sin

The abstract noun “sins” can be expressed with the verb “sin.”

Alternate translation: “because Jeroboam sinned and led Israel to sin in the same ways” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

ULT

³⁰ on account of the sins of Jeroboam that he sinned and that he caused Israel to sin, by his anger that he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger.

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do something. Alternate translation: “by which he influenced Israel to sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

1 Kings 15:31

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Nadab is in this other book. See how you translated a similar phrase concerning Judah in [1 Kings 14:29](#). This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

³¹ And the remainder of the matters of Nadab and all that he did, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Israel." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

1 Kings 15:32

all their days

This refers to the whole period of time that they reign as kings. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:16](#) Alternate translation: “the whole time that they reigned over Judah and Israel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

³² And war was between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel all their days.

1 Kings 15:33

Connecting Statement:

Starting in [1 Kings 15:27](#), the author told about how Baasha became king. Here the author begins to tell about what Baasha did as king of Israel.

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

ULT

³³ In year three of Asa the king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah reigned over all Israel in Tirzah 24 years.

1 Kings 15:34

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

walked in the way of Jeroboam

Walking here represents behaving. Alternate translation: "did the same things that Jeroboam had done" (See: [Metaphor](#))

in his sin by which he led Israel to sin

Possible meanings are that **his** and **he** refer to: (1) Baasha or (2) Jeroboam.

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "and by sinning, he influenced Israel to sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³⁴ And he did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh. And he walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin that he caused Israel to sin.

1 Kings 16

1 Kings 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Incorrect worship

The prophet Jehu warned Baasha, king of Israel, that God would destroy his family for worshiping the idols. But Baasha did not change his ways; so Zimri murdered Baasha's son and all his relatives. Then Omri killed Zimri. Omri's son Ahab brought in the rain god Baal and his wife, the fertility goddess Ashtoreth, as the official religion of Israel. This was very evil. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#) and [god](#), [false god](#), [goddess](#), [idol](#), [idolater](#), [idolatrous](#), [idolatry](#) and [evil](#), [wicked](#), [unpleasant](#))

1 Kings 16:1

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

1 And the word of Yahweh was to Jehu the son of Hanani, against Baasha, saying,

1 Kings 16:2

Although I exalted you

This is God's message that Jehu was to give to Baasha. The word "you" refers to Baasha.

I exalted you out of the dust

"I raised you out of the dust." Being in the dust on the ground represents not being important. Exalting someone represents making him important. Alternate translation: "I raised you from a very unimportant position" or "when you had no power or influence over people, I made you important" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

² "Because I raised you up from the dust and I gave you as leader over my people Israel, and you walked in the way of Jeroboam and caused my people Israel to sin, by provoking me to anger by their sins,

you have walked in the way of Jeroboam

Walking represents behaving. Jeroboam and Baasha both sinned. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "you have done the same things that Jeroboam did" or "you have sinned as Jeroboam sinned" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

1 Kings 16:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Baasha what he will do to him.

See, I will completely sweep away Baasha and his family

Yahweh is speaking to Baasha, and the phrase “his family” refers to Baasha’s family. This can be translated using the words “you” and “your.” Alternate translation: “Listen, Baasha. I will completely sweep away you and your family” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

I will completely sweep away

Sweeping away represents destroying. Alternate translation: “I will completely destroy” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ behold, I am about to burn after Baasha and after his house. And I shall make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

1 Kings 16:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ The one who dies of Baasha in the city the dogs shall eat. And the one who dies of him in the field the birds of the heavens shall eat.

1 Kings 16:5

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Baasha is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31](#). Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁵ And the remainder of the matters of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

1 Kings 16:6

Baasha slept with his ancestors

Sleeping is a euphemism that represents dying. Alternate translation: “Baasha died as his ancestors had” or “Like his ancestors, Baasha died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “people buried him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

became king in his place

The phrase “in his place” is a metaphor meaning “instead of him.” Alternate translation: “became king instead of Baasha” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁶ And Baasha laid down with his fathers and he was buried in Tirzah. And Elah his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 16:7

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words” (See: [Idiom](#))

all the evil that he did in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh’s judgment. Alternate translation: “all the things that Baasha that are evil in Yahweh’s judgment” or “all the things that Baaha did that Yahweh considers to be evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

so as to provoke him to anger

The abstract noun “anger” can be expressed with the adjective “angry.” Alternate translation: “so as to make Yahweh very angry” or “that made God very angry” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

with the work of his hands

Here Basha is represented by his “hands.” This speaks of all of his actions as his “work.” Alternate translation: “by the things Baasha had done” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁷ And also by the hand of Jehu the son of Hanani the prophet, the word of Yahweh was to Baasha and to his house, and against all the evil that he had done in the eyes of Yahweh, by provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, by being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he had struck him down.

1 Kings 16:8

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

ULT

⁸ In the year of year 26 of Asa the king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha reigned over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

1 Kings 16:9

His servant Zimri

“Elah’s servant Zimri”

captain of half his chariots

The word “chariots” here represents the soldiers who drove the chariots. Alternate translation: “captain of half his chariot drivers” (See: [Metonymy](#))

drinking himself drunk

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “drinking so much wine that he was getting drunk” or “getting drunk” (See: [Idiom](#))

who was over the household

Being over the household represents being in charge of the things in King Elah’s house. Alternate translation: “who was in charge of the things in the Elah’s house” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And his servant Zimri, the commander of half of the chariotry, conspired against him. And he was in Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the house in Tirzah.

1 Kings 16:10

attacked him and killed him

“attacked and killed Elah”

became king in his place

The phrase “in his place” is a metaphor meaning “instead of him.”
Alternate translation: “became king instead of Elah” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

10 And Zimri entered and he struck him down and he put him to death in year 27 of Asa the king of Judah. And he reigned in his place.

1 Kings 16:11

He did not leave alive a single male

This means that he killed all the men and boys. Alternate translation: "He did not leave even one male alive"

ULT

11 And it happened that when he reigned, as soon as he sat on his throne, he struck down all the house of Baasha. He did not leave of him one who urinates on a wall or his kinsmen or his friend.

1 Kings 16:12

the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh” or “Yahweh’s message”

which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet

Speaking “by” a prophet represents telling a prophet to speak and the prophet speaking. Alternate translation: “that Yahweh told Jehu the prophet to speak against Baasha” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

¹² And Zimri annihilated all the house of Baasha according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke against Baasha by the hand of Jehu the prophet,

1 Kings 16:13

they had led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: “they had influenced Israel to sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

they had led Israel to sin

Here the word “Israel” refers to the ten northern tribes of Israel. Baasha and Elah had been their king.

they provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their idols

God became angry with the people because they worshiped idols. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: “they made Yahweh, the God of Israel, angry because they worshiped idols” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the God of Israel

Here the word “Israel” refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.

ULT

13 concerning all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son which they had sinned, and because they caused Israel to sin, by provoking Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their vapors.

1 Kings 16:14

are they not written ... kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Elah is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31](#). Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

14 And the remainder of the matters of Elah and all that he did, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

are they not written ... Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

1 Kings 16:15

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

the army was camped by Gibbethon

The word “army” refers to the army of the kingdom of Israel.

Gibbethon

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 15:27](#).

ULT

15 In the year of year 27 of Asa the king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. And the people were camping against Gibbethon, which was for the Philistines.

1 Kings 16:16

The army camped there heard it said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The soldiers who camped there heard someone say” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

all Israel

Both times this phrase is used, it represents the army of Israel. Here the word “all” is a generalization meaning “most.” Alternate translation: “all the army of Israel” or “most of the soldiers in the army of Israel” or “the army of Israel” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Hyperbole](#))

ULT

16 And the people, the ones who camped, heard, saying, “Zimri has conspired and also has struck down the king!” And all Israel caused Omri, the commander of the army, to reign over Israel on that day in the camp.

1 Kings 16:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon and all Israel with him, and they laid seige against Tirzah.

1 Kings 16:18

that the city had been taken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “that Omri and the army had taken the city” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

18 And it happened as soon as Zimri saw that the city had been seized, that he entered into the citadel of the house of the king. And he burned the house of the king over himself with fire and he died,

1 Kings 16:19

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

walking in the way of Jeroboam

Here walking represents behaving. Alternate translation: "doing the same things that Jeroboam had done" (See: [Metaphor](#))

so as to lead Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "so as to influence Israel to sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹⁹ on account of his sin that he had sinned by doing the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh, by walking in the way of Jeroboam, and by his sin that he did by causing Israel to sin.

1 Kings 16:20

the treason that he carried out

This treason refers to Zimri's plot to kill Elah, the king of Israel. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "how he plotted against King Elah" or "how he killed the king of Israel" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Zimri is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated a similar phrase concerning Judah in [1 Kings 14:29](#). Alternate translation: "they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

are they not written ... Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel." (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

20 And the remainder of the matters of Zimri and his conspiracy that he conspired, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings 16:21

followed Tibni ... followed Omri

Here “followed” represents supporting or wanting to make him king. Alternate translation: “supported Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half supported Omri” or “wanted to make Tibni son of Ginath king, and half wanted to make Omri king” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

21 Then the people of Israel was divided by the half. Half of the people were behind Tibni the son of Ginath, to cause him to reign, but the other half were behind Omri.

1 Kings 16:22

**were stronger than the people who followed
Tibni**

“overpowered the people who followed Tibni”

ULT

²² And the people who were behind Omri became strong against the people who were behind Tibni the son of Ginath. And Tibni died and Omri reigned.

1 Kings 16:23

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [1 Kings 14:17](#).

ULT

²³ In the year of year 31 of Asa the king of Judah, Omri reigned over Israel 12 years. In Tirzah he reigned six years.

1 Kings 16:24

Shemer

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

two talents of silver

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: “about 66 kilograms of silver” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

He built a city

The word “He” refers to Omri. He commanded people to build the city. Alternate translation: “Omri had his people build a city” or “Omri commanded and his workers built a city” (See: [Metonymy](#))

after the name of Shemer

This is an idiom that means “to honor Shemer” or “so that people would remember Shemer.” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

²⁴ And he bought the hill Samaria from with Shemer for two kikkars silver. And he built the hill and he called the name of the city that he built Samaria, in accordance with the name of Shemer, the master of the hill.

1 Kings 16:25

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²⁵ And Omri did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh and he did more evil than all who were before him.

1 Kings 16:26

walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat

Walking represents behaving. Alternate translation: “did all the same things that Jeroboam son of Nebat did” (See: [Metaphor](#))

in his sins by which he led Israel to sin

Possible meanings are that **his** and **he** refer to: (1) Baasha or (2) Jeroboam.

in his sins

Possible meanings are walking in his sins represents: (1) sinning as Jeroboam sinned. Alternate translation: “he sinned as Jeroboam sinned” or (2) or sinning habitually. Alternate translation: “he sinned habitually” (See: [Metaphor](#))

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to sin represents influencing them to sin. Alternate translation: “his sins, by which he influenced Israel to sin” or “and by sinning like this, he influenced people to sin.”

to provoke Yahweh ... to be angry with their worthless idols

God became angry with the people because they worshiped idols. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 16:13](#). Alternate translation: “to make Yahweh, the God of Israel, angry because they worshiped worthless idols” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

their worthless idols

The word “worthless” here reminds people that idols are worthless because they cannot do anything. Alternate translation: “their idols, which are worthless” or “their idols, which are useless” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

the God of Israel

Here the word “Israel” refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.

ULT

²⁶ And he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sins that he caused Israel to sin by provoking Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their vapors.

1 Kings 16:27

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Omri is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31](#). Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

are they not written ... Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

²⁷ And the remainder of the matters of Omri, what he did and his might that he did, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings 16:28

Omri slept with his ancestors

The euphemism “sleeping” here represents dying. Alternate translation: “Omri died as his ancestors had” or “Like his ancestors, Omri died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

became king in his place

The phrase “in his place” is a metaphor meaning “instead of him.” Alternate translation: “became king instead of Omri” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

28 And Omri laid down with his fathers and he was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 16:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁹ And Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in the year of year 38 of Asa the king of Judah. And Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria 22 years.

1 Kings 16:30

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³⁰ And Ahab the son of Omri did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh, more than all who were before his face.

1 Kings 16:31

It was to Ahab a trivial thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat

This implies that Ahab wanted to commit worse sins. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It was as if Ahab thought that walking in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat was not enough" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

³¹ And it happened (was his walking in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat trivial?) that he took a wife, Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians. And he went and served the Baal and he bowed down to him.

It was to Ahab a trivial thing

This is an idiom. The phrase "to Ahab" means that Ahab considered or thought something. Alternate translation: "Ahab considered it a trivial thing" or "Ahab thought that it was not enough" (See: [Idiom](#))

a trivial thing

"an insignificant thing" or "not enough"

to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat

Walking in Jeroboam's sins represents sinning as Jeroboam had sinned. Alternate translation: "to sin as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned" (See: [Metaphor](#))

worshiped Baal and bowed down to him

These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase "bowed down to him" describes the posture that people used in worship. (See: [Parallelism](#))

1 Kings 16:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³² And he raised up an altar for the Baal at the house of the Baal that he had built in Samaria.

1 Kings 16:33

the God of Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to the nation of Israel, which consisted of twelve tribes.

the kings of Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to the kingdom of Israel, which consisted of ten tribes.

ULT

33 And Ahab made the Asherah and Ahab continued to act, to provoke Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger more than all the kings of Israel who were before his face.

1 Kings 16:34

at the cost of the life of Abiram, his firstborn son

The consequence of building the city is spoken of as if it were a cost that Hiel paid. Alternate translation: “and the consequence of his sin was that Abiram, his firstborn son, died” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Segub, his youngest son, lost his life

Dying is spoken of as if he lost his life. Alternate translation: “Segub, his youngest son, died” (See: [Metaphor](#))

while he was building the gates of the city

“while Hiel was building the gates of the city”

in keeping with the word of Yahweh

“according to the word of Yahweh”

the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh” or “Yahweh’s message”

which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun

Speaking “by” someone represents both telling someone to speak and the person doing it. Alternate translation: “which Yahweh caused Joshua son of Nun to speak” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁴ In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. For Abiram his firstborn he founded it, and for Segub his younger one he set up its doors, according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke by the hand of Joshua the son of Nun.

1 Kings 17

1 Kings 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of the story of Elijah. (1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 2)

Special concepts in this chapter

Baal worship

Ahab had introduced the worship of Baal, the god people thought brought rain, to Israel. Because of this, God caused a drought. Elijah told Ahab that it would not rain or dew until he, Elijah, said so. Elijah had to hide so Ahab would not kill him for bringing the drought. (See: [god](#), [false god](#), [goddess](#), [idol](#), [idolater](#), [idolatrous](#), [idolatry](#))

1 Kings 17:1

the Tishbite

This is the name of a people group from Tishbe. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Tishbe

This is the name of a town in the region of Gilead. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

As Yahweh, the God of Israel lives

This phrase is an oath to emphasize that what he will say is true.

before whom I stand

This is an idiom that means “to serve.” Alternate translation: “whom I serve” (See: [Idiom](#))

dew

drops of water that form on the plants during the night

ULT

¹ And Elijah the Tishbite from the Tishbites of Gilead said to Ahab, “As Yahweh, the God of Israel is alive, before whose face I stand, there will not be dew or rain these years unless by the mouth of my word.”

1 Kings 17:2

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke his message" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

² And the word of Yahweh was to him, saying,

1 Kings 17:3

Kerith

This is the name of a very small stream. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

³ “Go from this place and turn for yourself eastward. And you will be hidden at the wadi of Kerith, which is on the face of the Jordan.

1 Kings 17:4

It will happen that

This phrase is used to introduce how Yahweh will take care of Elijah during the drought. Alternate translation: "There"

ravens

large, black birds (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

ULT

⁴ And it will happen that you shall drink from the wadi. And I have commanded the ravens to sustain you there."

1 Kings 17:5

as the word of Yahweh commanded

Here “the word” represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the brook Kerith

This is the name of a very small stream. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 17:2](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

ULT

⁵ And he went and did according to the word of Yahweh. And he went and dwelled at the wadi of Kerith, which is on the face of the Jordan.

1 Kings 17:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁶ And the ravens were bringing bread and meat to him in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening. And he drank from the wadi.

1 Kings 17:7

in the land

“in that area” or “in that country”

ULT

⁷ And it happened from the end of some days that the wadi dried up because rain was not in the land.

1 Kings 17:8

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke his message” (See: [Idiom](#))

came to him

Here the word “him” refers to Elijah.

ULT

⁸ And the word of Yahweh was to him, saying,

1 Kings 17:9

Zarephath

This is a town. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Look, I

“Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I”

ULT

⁹ “Rise, go to Zarephath, which is for Sidon, and you shall dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a woman, a widow, there to sustain you.”

1 Kings 17:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

10 And he rose and went to Zarephath. And he entered into the opening of the city. And behold, there was a woman, a widow, gathering wood pieces. And he called to her and he said, "Please take to me a little water in the vessel and I will drink."

1 Kings 17:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

11 As she went to take, and he called to her, and said, "Please take to me a bit of bread in your hand."

1 Kings 17:12

As Yahweh your God lives

This phrase is an oath to emphasize that what she will say is true.

only a handful of meal

“only a little bit of meal”

meal

“flour.” This what is used to make bread.

See, I

“Let me tell you what I am doing: I”

two sticks

This may refer to two sticks or to only a few sticks. (See: [Numbers](#))

that we may eat it, and die

It is implied that they will die because they do not have anymore food. Alternate translation: “that we may eat. Afterwards, we will starve to death” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

12 And she said, “As Yahweh your God is alive, there is not for me a bread cake, but only a fullness of a palm of flour in the jar and a little bit of oil in the jug. And behold, I am gathering two wood pieces and I will enter and I make it for me and for my son. And we will eat it and will die.”

1 Kings 17:13

afterward make some for you and for your son

It is implicit that there would be enough flour and oil to make more bread. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

¹³ And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear. Come, do according to your word, only make for me from there a little bread cake at the first and bring it out to me. And make for you and for your son at the later time.

1 Kings 17:14

Yahweh sends rain

This is an idiom that means Yahweh causes it to rain. Alternate translation: "Yahweh causes rain to fall" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

14 For thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'The jar of flour will not come to an end, and the jug of oil will not lack, until the day Yahweh gives rain on the face of the ground.'

1 Kings 17:15

She and Elijah, along with her household, ate for many days

In the original language it says, "And she and he and her household ate for many days." It is unclear who "he" is. This could mean: (1) Elijah, the widow, and her son ate for many days or (2) the widow, her son, and everyone living in her house ate for many days or (3) Elijah, the widow, and everyone living in her house ate for many days.

ULT

¹⁵ And she went and did according to the word of Elijah. And she ate, he and she and her house for days.

along with her household

Possible meanings for **household** are: (1) this refers only to the widow's son or (2) this refers to other people who live in her house but are not named in the story or (3) this refers to her son and others living in her house.

1 Kings 17:16

just as the word of Yahweh had said

Here “word” represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: “just as Yahweh had said” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

16 The jar of flour did not come to an end, and the jug of oil did not lack, according to the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken by the hand of Elijah.

1 Kings 17:17

the woman's son, the woman who owned the house

"the son of the woman who owned the house"

there was no more breath left in him

This is a polite way of saying the boy died. Alternate translation: "he stopped breathing" or "he died" (See: [Euphemism](#))

ULT

17 And it happened that after these things the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick, and his sickness became very strong until breath did not remain in him.

1 Kings 17:18

man of God

The phrase “man of God” is another title for a prophet.

of my sin

This means sins in general not a specific sin. Alternate translation: “of my sins” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

ULT

18 And she said to Elijah, “What is to me and is to you, man of God, that you came to me to cause my iniquity to be remembered and to put my son to death?”

1 Kings 17:19

where he was staying

Here “he” refers to Elijah.

on his own bed

Here “his” refers to Elijah.

ULT

19 And he said to her, “Give to me your son.” And he took him from her lap and he brought him up to the upper room there where he was dwelling, and he laid him down on his bed.

1 Kings 17:20

have you also brought disaster on the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?

This could mean: (1) Elijah is truly asking a question. Alternate translation: “why would you cause the widow with whom I am staying to suffer even more by killing her son” or (2) Elijah uses a question to express how sad he is. Alternate translation: “surely, you would not cause the widow with whom I am staying to suffer even more by killing her son” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²⁰ And he cried out to Yahweh and said, “Yahweh, my God, will you also cause evil on the widow with whom I am sojourning, by putting her son to death?”

have you also brought disaster on the widow

Causing the widow to suffer is spoken of as if “disaster” were an object that is placed on the widow. (See: [Metaphor](#))

also brought disaster

Here “also” means in addition to the disaster that the drought has caused.

1 Kings 17:21

stretched himself on the child

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “lay on top of the child” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

21 And he stretched himself out over the child three times. And he cried out to Yahweh and he said, “Yahweh, my God, please let the life of this child return on his inner part.”

1 Kings 17:22

Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah

Here “voice” represents what Elijah prayed. Alternate translation: “Yahweh answered Elijah’s prayer” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the life of the child returned to him, and he revived

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: “the child came back to life” or “the child lived again” (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

²² And Yahweh heard the voice of Elijah.
And the life of the child returned on his inner part, and he lived.

1 Kings 17:23

his room

Here “his” refers to Elijah.

See, your son is alive

The word “See” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

ULT

²³ And Elijah took the child and he brought him down from the upper room to the house, and he gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives.”

1 Kings 17:24

the word of Yahweh in your mouth is true

“the message of Yahweh in your mouth is true.” The word “mouth” represents what Elijah said. Alternate translation: “the message that you spoke from Yahweh is true” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²⁴ And the woman said to Elijah, “Now this I know, that you are a man of God. And the word of Yahweh in your mouth is truth.”

1 Kings 18

1 Kings 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Baal

God proved himself to all the people of Israel. Elijah went to meet Ahab. He told Ahab to bring the 450 prophets of Baal and all the people to Mount Carmel. Then he proposed an experiment, which was carried out. The prophets of Baal took one bull, killed them, cut them up, and placed them on wood on an altar without lighting the fire. The prophets of Baal danced and prayed to Baal all morning and half the afternoon. After they were exhausted, Elijah built his altar and drenched it with water. Then he prayed. God answered his prayer with fire that burned up the sacrifice, the altar and the water. Then Elijah told the people to seize the prophets of Baal and kill them. After that, Elijah prayed for rain, and it rained very hard. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Humor

Elijah insults the false god Baal. He states, “Perhaps he is thinking, or is relieving himself, or he is traveling on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.” Baal was too busy in the bathroom to answer the prophets. “Relieving himself” is a euphemism. (See: [god](#), [false god](#), [goddess](#), [idol](#), [idolater](#), [idolatrous](#), [idolatry](#) and [Euphemism](#))

1 Kings 18:1

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke his word” (See: [Idiom](#))

send rain on the land

“cause rain to fall on the land”

ULT

1 And it was many days and the word of Yahweh was to Elijah in the third year, saying, “Go, appear to Ahab and I will give rain on the face of the ground.”

1 Kings 18:2

now the famine was severe

The word “now” is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here the writer tells background information about how the famine had affected Samaria. (See: [Background Information](#))

ULT

² And Elijah went to appear to Ahab.
(Now the famine was strong in Samaria.)

1 Kings 18:3

Now Obadiah honored Yahweh

The word “Now” is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here the writer tells about a new person in the story.

ULT

³ And Ahab called to Obadiah, who was over the house. (Now Obadiah was one who feared Yahweh exceedingly.)

1 Kings 18:4

one hundred prophets and hid them by fifties

“100 prophets and hid them in groups of 50” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁴ And it had happened when Jezebel cut off the prophets of Yahweh, that Obadiah had taken 100 prophets and hid them, 50 men in the cave, and he sustained them with bread and water.)

1 Kings 18:5

save the horses and mules alive ... not lose all the animals

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "prevent the horses and mules from dying" (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

⁵ And Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go in the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis. Perhaps we will find grass and we will keep alive a horse or a mule, and not cut off some of the livestock."

1 Kings 18:6

Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way

The phrase “by himself” emphasizes that Ahab and Obadiah went in separate directions, not necessarily that no one was with Ahab. Alternate translation: “Ahab lead a team in one direction and Obadiah lead a team in the other direction” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁶ And they divided the land for themselves to pass through it. Ahab went in the one way by himself and Obadiah went in the one way by himself.

1 Kings 18:7

master Elijah

Here the word “master” is used as a term of respect.

ULT

⁷ And it happened that Obadiah was in the road, and behold, Elijah was to meet him. And he recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is this you, my master Elijah?”

1 Kings 18:8

Go tell your master, 'Look, Elijah is here.'

Here the word "master" refers to Ahab.

Look, Elijah

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: Elijah"

ULT

⁸ And he said to him, "It is I. Go, say to your master, 'Here is Elijah.'"

1 Kings 18:9

How have I sinned ... for him to kill me?

Obadiah asks this question to emphasize the danger to himself because of King Ahab's anger at Elijah. Alternate translation: "I have not wronged you ... for him to kill me." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁹ And he said, "How have I sinned, that you are giving your servant over into the hand of Ahab, to put me to death?"

give your servant into the hand of Ahab

"Hand" is metonymy for power and control. Alternate translation: "deliver your servant to Ahab" (See: [Metonymy](#))

your servant

Obadiah refers to himself as Elijah's servant in order to honor Elijah.

1 Kings 18:10

As Yahweh your God lives

This is an oath used to emphasize that what he is saying is true.

there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent men

Here “no nation or kingdom” is an exaggeration that means that men have traveled very far and gone to many places to find Elijah. This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “my master has sent men to nations and kingdoms near and far” (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

10 As Yahweh your God is alive, if there is a nation or a kingdom there where my master has not sent to seek you, and they said ‘he is not here,’ then he caused the kingdom or the nation to swear that it did not find you.

1 Kings 18:11

Yet now

This phrase is used to emphasize the danger in what Elijah is telling Obadiah to do.

ULT

11 And now you are saying, 'Go, say to your master, "Here is Elijah. "'

1 Kings 18:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

12 And it will happen that I myself will go from with you, and the Spirit of Yahweh will lift you to where I will not know. And I will come to tell Ahab and he will not find you and he will slay me. And your servant has been fearing Yahweh from my youth.

1 Kings 18:13

Has it not been told to you ... with bread and water?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Surely you have been told about what I did ... with bread and water!" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

my master

Here the word "master" is a term of respect used to refer to Elijah.

one hundred of Yahweh's prophets by fifties

"100 of Yahweh's prophets in groups of 50" (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

¹³ Has it not been told to my master, what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of Yahweh, and I hid from the prophets of Yahweh a hundred men, 50 by 50 men in the cave, and I sustained them with bread and water?

1 Kings 18:14

Go and tell your master that Elijah is here

See how you translated these words in [1 Kings 18:11](#).

your master

Here “master” refers to King Ahab.

ULT

14 And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, “Here is Elijah,” ’ and he will slay me.”

1 Kings 18:15

As Yahweh of hosts lives

This is an oath to emphasize that what he will say is true.

before whom I stand

To “stand before” is an idiom for being in someone’s presence and ready to serve him. Alternate translation: “whom I serve” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

15 And Elijah said, “As Yahweh of hosts is alive, before whose face I stand, surely today I will appear to him.”

1 Kings 18:16

told him what Elijah said

“Obadiah told Ahab what Elijah had told him to say”

ULT

16 And Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and he told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah.

1 Kings 18:17

Is it you? You are the one who brings trouble to Israel!

Ahab asks the question for emphasis to be certain about Elijah's identity. Alternate translation: "So here you are. You are the troublemaker of Israel!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

¹⁷ And it happened as soon as Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Are you this one who troubles Israel?"

1 Kings 18:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

18 And he said, "I have not troubled Israel, but rather you and the house of your father, by your forsaking the commandments of Yahweh and going after the Baals.

1 Kings 18:19

all Israel

This is a generalization to refer to the leaders and people who represent the ten tribes of the northern kingdom. (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Metonymy](#))

450 prophets

“four hundred and fifty prophets” (See: [Numbers](#))

four hundred prophets

“400 prophets” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

19 And now send, gather to me all Israel to the mountain of the Carmel, and the 450 prophets of the Baal and the 400 prophets of the Asherah, those who eat of the table of Jezebel.”

1 Kings 18:20

sent word to ... and gathered

“Word” represents Ahab’s message and is also a metonym for the messenger who delivered the message. This is a common statement used with the meaning understood. Alternate translation: “sent a message to ... and gathered” or “sent a messenger to summon ... to gather” (See: [Synecdoche](#) and [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

ULT

20 And Ahab sent among all the sons of Israel and he gathered the prophets to the mountain of the Carmel.

1 Kings 18:21

How long will you keep changing your mind?

Elijah asks this question to urge the people to make a decision. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have been indecisive for long enough." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

did not answer him a word

"did not say anything" or "were silent"

ULT

21 And Elijah came near to all the people and he said, "Until when will you be limping over the two opinions? If Yahweh is God, go after him, but if the Baal, go after him." And the people did not answer him a word.

1 Kings 18:22

I, I alone, am left

The word "I" is repeated for emphasis.

450 men

"four hundred and fifty men" (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

²² And Elijah said to the people, "I myself remain a prophet of Yahweh by myself, but the prophets of the Baal are 450 men."

1 Kings 18:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²³ And let them give to us two bulls, and let them choose for themselves the one bull, and let them cut it into pieces. And let them set it on the wood pieces, but a fire they will not set. And as for me I will make the one bull that I will give on the wood pieces, but a fire I will not set.

1 Kings 18:24

call on the name of your god ... call on the name of Yahweh

“Name” is metonymy for the reputation and honor of someone and “calling on” him represents an appeal. Alternate translation: “call to your god ... call to Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

all the people answered and said, “This is good.”

“all the people said, ‘This is a good thing to do.’”

ULT

²⁴ And you will call on the name of your god, but as for me, I will call on the name of Yahweh. And it will happen that the God who answers with fire, he is God.” And all the people answered and they said, “The thing is good.”

1 Kings 18:25

prepare it

“make it ready to be sacrificed”

you are many people

Here the word “you” is plural. (See: [Forms of You](#))

ULT

²⁵ And Elijah said to the prophets of the Baal, “Choose for yourselves the one bull and make it first, for you are the most abundant. And call on the name of your god, but a fire you will not set.”

1 Kings 18:26

They took the bull

“The prophets of Baal took the bull”

the bull that was given to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “the bull that someone gave them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

But there was no voice, nor anyone who answered

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that there was no one to respond to the prayers of the false prophets. The word “voice” represents someone speaking. Alternate translation: “But Baal did not say or do anything” (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

²⁶ And they took the bull that he gave to them and they made, and they called on the name of the Baal from the morning and until the midday, saying, “The Baal, answer us!” But there was no voice and there was no answering. And they limped beside the altar that he had made.

1 Kings 18:27

Perhaps he is thinking

“Maybe he is thinking” or “It could be that he is thinking”

relieving himself

This euphemism is a more pleasant way to express a harsh statement. Elijah uses understatement to insult Baal with sarcasm. Alternate translation: “in the bathroom” (See: [Euphemism](#))

must be awakened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “you must awaken him” or “you must wake him up” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

27 And it happened at the midday that Elijah mocked them and he said, “Cry out with a great voice, for he is a god. Surely he is musing, or surely moving away for himself, or surely a way is for him. Perhaps he is asleep and he will wake up.”

1 Kings 18:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁸ And they cried out with a great voice, and they cut themselves, according to their custom, with the swords and with the spears, until a pouring out of blood was on them.

1 Kings 18:29

they were still raving

“they continued their wild behavior.” Prophets often acted in ways that seemed unusual or even crazy. In this case they were calling on Baal while dancing, shouting loudly, and cutting themselves with knives.

of offering of the evening sacrifice

“to offer the evening sacrifice”

but there was no voice or anyone to answer; there was no one who paid any attention to their pleadings

These phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that no one responded to the prayers of the false prophets. Alternate translation: “but Baal did not say or do anything or even pay attention” (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Metonymy](#))

there was no voice or anyone to answer

See how you translated this in [1 Kings 18:26](#).

ULT

²⁹ And it happened as soon as the midday passed, that they prophesied until the offering up of the grain offering, but there was no voice and there was no answering and there was no attentiveness.

1 Kings 18:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁰ And Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the torn down altar of Yahweh.

1 Kings 18:31

twelve stones

“12 stones” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

³¹ And Elijah took 12 stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom was the word of Yahweh, saying, “Israel shall be your name.”

1 Kings 18:32

in the name of Yahweh

“Name” here is a metonym for honor and reputation. This could mean: (1) “to honor Yahweh” or (2) “with the authority of Yahweh.” (See: [Metonymy](#))

trench

a small waterway to hold water

two seahs of seeds

A seah is a unit of volume equal to about 7.7 liters. Alternate translation: “about 15 liters of seeds” (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

ULT

³² And he built with the stones an altar in the name of Yahweh. And he made a trench like the house of two seahs of seed surrounding the altar.

1 Kings 18:33

He arranged the wood for a fire

“On the altar” where he placed the wood is assumed in this sentence. Alternate translation: “He put the wood for a fire on the altar” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

four jars

“4 jars” (See: [Numbers](#))

jars

A jar is a container for water.

ULT

³³ And he arranged the wood pieces.
And he cut the bull into pieces and he set it on the wood pieces.

1 Kings 18:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁴ And he said, "Fill four jars with water, and pour out on the burnt up offering and on the wood pieces." And he said "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time.

1 Kings 18:35

trench

See how you translated this in [1 Kings 18:30](#).

ULT

³⁵ And the water went around the altar
and even the trench he filled with water.

1 Kings 18:36

It happened

This phrase is used here to reference a significant and meaningful time of the day in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Yahweh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel

Here "Israel" is referring to Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel (Genesis 32:28), and God named the nation of Jacob's descendants "Israel."

let it be known this day

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "make these people know today" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

36 And it happened at the offering up of the grain offering, that Elijah the prophet came near and he said, "Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel, and I am your servant, and by your word I have done all these things."

1 Kings 18:37

Hear me ... hear me

This phrase is repeated to emphasize the appeal of Elijah to Yahweh.

turned their heart back again to yourself

The people's "heart" is a metonym for the affection and loyalty of the people. Alternate translation: "caused them to be loyal to you again" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

37 Answer me, Yahweh! Answer me, that this people may know that you, Yahweh, are God, and you have turned around their heart backward."

1 Kings 18:38

the fire of Yahweh fell

“the fire of Yahweh came down”

licked up

The fire is compared to a thirsty person drinking water. (See: [Personification](#))

ULT

³⁸ And the fire of Yahweh fell and ate the burnt up offering and the wood pieces and the stones and the dust. And it licked up the water that was in the trench.

1 Kings 18:39

Yahweh, he is God! Yahweh, he is God!

This phrase is repeated for emphasis.

ULT

³⁹ And all the people saw and they fell on their faces. And they said, "Yahweh, he is God! Yahweh, he is God!"

1 Kings 18:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁰ And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of the Baal. Do not let a man from them slip away." And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the wadi Kishon and he slaughtered them there.

1 Kings 18:41

there is the sound of much rain

“it sounds like it is going to rain a lot”

ULT

⁴¹ And Elijah said to Ahab, “Get up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of the roar of the rain.”

1 Kings 18:42

bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees

This describes a posture used for praying.

ULT

⁴² And Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the head of the Carmel, and he bent down toward the earth and he put his face between his knees.

1 Kings 18:43

seven times

The word “seven” can be rendered as the numeral “7.” Alternate translation: “7 times” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

43 And he said to his young man, “Go up, now, look toward the way of the sea.” And he went up and he looked and he said, “There is not anything.” And he said, “Return seven times.”

1 Kings 18:44

as small as a man's hand

From a long distance, the cloud could be covered from sight by a man's hand.

ULT

44 And it happened at the seventh time that he said, "Behold, a small cloud like the palm of a man is going up from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Harness and go down so the rain will not stop you.'"

1 Kings 18:45

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark where a new step in the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

ULT

⁴⁵ And it happened until here and until there, that the heavens became dark with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

1 Kings 18:46

the hand of Yahweh was on Elijah

Here the word “hand” is a metonym for strength. Alternate translation: “Yahweh gave his power to Elijah” (See: [Metonymy](#))

tucked his robe in his belt

Elijah wrapped his long robe around his waist so that his legs would be free for running.

ULT

46 And the hand of Yahweh was to Elijah, and he girded up his loins and he ran before the face of Ahab as far as your coming into Jezreel.

1 Kings 19

1 Kings 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The queen was angry that Elijah had killed her prophets of Baal. She promised to kill Elijah. Elijah fled south into the desert south of Judah. He traveled on to Mount Horeb also known as Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. God asked him why he was there. He said he had come to Mount Horeb because Israel had deserted God, killed his prophets, and wanted to kill him. God sent him home to make Hazael the king of Aram, Jehu the king of Israel, and Elisha as the prophet in his place. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#) and [promise](#), [promised](#))

1 Kings 19:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

¹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and everthing, that he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

1 Kings 19:2

So may the gods do to me, and more also

This is a comparison used as an emphatic oath. "May the gods kill me and do even more bad things"

if I do not make your life like the life of one of those dead prophets

"if I do not kill you like you killed those prophets"

ULT

² And Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do and so may they add, unless about this time tomorrow I will set your life as the life of one from them."

1 Kings 19:3

he arose

“he stood up”

ULT

³ And he saw and rose and went for his life and he came to Beersheba, which is for Judah. And he caused his young man to rest there.

1 Kings 19:4

he himself went a day's journey

The word "himself" is used to emphasize that he was alone. Alternate translation: "he walked by himself for a day" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

broom tree

A "broom tree" is a plant that grows in the desert. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

He requested for himself that he might die

"He prayed that he would die"

It is enough, now, Yahweh

"These troubles are too much for me, Yahweh"

ULT

⁴ But as for him, he went a road of a day into the wilderness, and he came and sat under one broom shrub. And he requested with respect to his life to die, and he said, "Too much, now, Yahweh; take my life, for I am not better than my fathers."

1 Kings 19:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ And he lay down and slept under one broom shrub. And behold this, an angel was touching him and he said to him, "Get up! Eat!"

1 Kings 19:6

bread that had been baked on coals

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “bread that someone had cooked on hot stones” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

jug of water

“a container of water”

ULT

⁶ And he looked, and behold, at the place of his head was a bread cake of glowing coals and a jug of water. And he ate and drank and returned and lay down.

1 Kings 19:7

will be too much for you

“will be too difficult for you.”

ULT

⁷ And the angel of Yahweh returned a second time and he touched him and he said, “Get up! Eat! For the road will be too much for you.”

1 Kings 19:8

he traveled in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights

“that food gave him energy to travel for 40 days and 40 nights” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁸ And he rose and ate and drank. And he went in the strength of that food 40 days and 40 nights as far as the mountain of God, Horeb.

1 Kings 19:9

to a cave there

Here the word “there” refers to Mount Horeb. A cave is an opening in a mountainside that leads to a natural room or rooms underground.

the word of Yahweh came to him and said to him, “What

The idiom “The word of Yahweh came to,” is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh gave a message to him. He said, ‘What’ or “Yahweh spoke this message to him: ‘What’ (See: [Idiom](#))

What are you doing here, Elijah?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke Elijah and to remind him of his duty. Alternate translation: “This is not where you should be, Elijah.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁹ And he entered there into the cave, and he spent the night there. And behold, the word of Yahweh was to him and he said to him, “What is for you here, Elijah?”

1 Kings 19:10

I, only I, am left

Here the word "I" is repeated for emphasis.

ULT

10 And he said, "I have been very zealous for Yahweh, the God of hosts, but the sons of Israel have forsaken your covenant, your altars they have torn down, and your prophets they have slain with the sword. And I am left, I by myself, and they seek my life, to take it."

1 Kings 19:11

on the mountain before me

“Before me” here is an idiom for standing in front of someone.
Alternate translation: “on the mountain in my presence” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

11 And he said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the face of Yahweh, and behold, Yahweh is about to pass over!” And a great and strong wind was splitting the mountains and shattering rocks before the face of Yahweh. Yahweh was not in the wind. And after the wind was an earthquake. Yahweh was not in the earthquake.

1 Kings 19:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

12 And after the earthquake was a fire.
Yahweh was not in the fire. And after
the fire was the voice of a thin whisper.

1 Kings 19:13

he wrapped his face in his cloak

“he covered his face with his cloak” A cloak is a long robe, a piece of clothing that covers the whole body.

Then a voice came to him

“Then he heard a voice”

What are you doing here, Elijah?

See how you translated this text in [1 Kings 19:9](#).

ULT

13 And it happened as soon as Elijah heard, that he wrapped his face in his cloak. And he went out and stood at the opening of the cave. And behold, a voice was to him and it said, “What is for you here, Elijah?”

1 Kings 19:14

Elijah replied, “I have been very zealous ... and they are also trying to take my life.”

See how you translated this text in [1 Kings 19:10](#).

I, only I, am left

Here the word “I” is repeated for emphasis.

ULT

¹⁴ And he said, “I have been very zealous for Yahweh, the God of hosts, but the sons of Israel have forsaken your covenant, your altars they have torn down, and your prophets they have slain with the sword. And I am left, I by myself, and they seek my life, to take it.”

1 Kings 19:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

15 And Yahweh said to him, "Go, return to your way toward the wilderness of Damascus. And you shall come and anoint Hazael as king over Aram."

1 Kings 19:16

prophet in your place

“prophet instead of you”

ULT

16 And you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And you shall anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah as prophet in your place.

1 Kings 19:17

It will happen

This phrase is used to introduce what will happen when Elijah does what Yahweh has told him to do. "What will happen is"

whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael

"Sword" is metonymy for killing as in battle. Alternate translation: "whomever Hazael does not kill with the sword" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

17 And it will happen that the one who slips away from the sword of Hazael, Jehu will put to death. And the one who slips away from the sword of Jehu, Elisha will put to death.

1 Kings 19:18

I will leave for myself

Here the words “I” and “myself” refer to Yahweh. Alternate translation: “I will save from death” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

seven thousand people

“7,000 people” (See: [Numbers](#))

whose knees have not bent down to Baal, and whose mouths have not kissed him

“Bending down” and “kissing” are metonymies for actions people did to worship idols. They are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: “who have not bowed down and kissed Baal” or “who have not worshiped Baal” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Parallelism](#))

ULT

18 And I have left in Israel 7000 men, all the knees that have not bowed to the Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

1 Kings 19:19

Shaphat

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

twelve yoke of oxen

“12 yoke of oxen” (See: [Numbers](#))

he himself was plowing with the twelfth yoke

The word “himself” indicates that Elisha was plowing with the last yoke, while other men were plowing with the other eleven yokes. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

19 And he went from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat. And he was plowing with 12 pairs before his face and he was with the 12th. And Elijah passed over to him and he threw his cloak on him.

1 Kings 19:20

he said, "Please

The word "he" refers to Elisha.

ULT

²⁰ And he left the cattle and he ran after Elijah and he said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and let me go after you." And he said to him, "Go, return, for what have I done to you?"

1 Kings 19:21

he gave it to the people

Elisha gave the cooked meat to the people of his city. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

21 And he returned from after him. And he took the pair of cattle and he sacrificed it and with the implements of the cattle he boiled them, the meat. And he gave to the people and they ate. And he rose and went after Elijah and he attended him.

1 Kings 20

1 Kings 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is a story of two battles between Aram and Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Battle

God had chosen to defeat Ben Hadad, king of Aram. So when he attacked Samaria with a huge army, the tiny army of Israel defeated him. The people of Aram said that Yahweh was the god of the hills, but they could defeat Israel on the plains. So they came again but Israel defeated them again. Then Ben Hadad offered a peace plan and Ahab accepted. But God had wanted him to kill Ben Hadad and was angry at Ahab for making peace with him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

There were so few Israel soldiers that they were “like two little flocks of goats.” (See: [Simile](#))

1 Kings 20:1

Ben Hadad

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

thirty-two lesser kings

“32 lesser kings” (See: [Numbers](#))

lesser kings

“kings ruling smaller groups of people”

ULT

¹ Now Ben Hadad the king of Aram gathered all his strength and 32 kings with him, and horse and chariotry. And he went up and laid seige against Samaria and he fought against it.

1 Kings 20:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² And he sent messengers to Ahab the king of Israel at the city.

1 Kings 20:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³ And he said to him, 'Thus says Ben Hadad, "Your silver and your gold, it is for me. And your wives and your sons, the good ones, they are for me."' "

1 Kings 20:4

It is as you say

This is an idiom to express agreement. Alternate translation: "I agree with you" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁴ And the king of Israel answered and said, "According to your word, my master the king, I and all that is for me is for you."

1 Kings 20:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ And the messengers returned and said, "Thus says Ben Hadad, saying, 'Surely I sent to you, saying, your silver and your gold and your wives and your sons you will give to me,

1 Kings 20:6

tomorrow about this time

“tomorrow at the same time of day that it is now”

whatever pleases their eyes

Here the “eyes” represent the whole person and emphasize them looking at something and desiring it. Alternate translation:

“whatever pleases them” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁶ but rather around this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you, and they will search through your house and the houses of your servants. And it will happen that any precious thing of your eyes they will put in their hand and they will take.”

1 Kings 20:7

of the land

“The land” represents all the people living there. Alternate translation: “of the people of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

take note and see

“Take note” here is an idiom to observe carefully. Alternate translation: “pay close attention to” (See: [Idiom](#))

I have not refused him

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: “I have agreed to his demands” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

ULT

⁷ And the king of Israel called to all the elders of the land. And he said, “Please know and see that this one is seeking evil, for he has sent to me for my wives and for my sons and for my silver and for my gold, and I have not withheld from him.”

1 Kings 20:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁸ And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen and do not consent."

1 Kings 20:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁹ And he said to the messengers of Ben Hadad, "Say to my master the king, 'All that you sent to your servant at the first I will do, but this thing I am not able to do.'" And the messengers went and returned him word.

1 Kings 20:10

May the gods do so to me and more also

This is an oath with great emphasis. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 19:2](#).

if even the ashes of Samaria will be enough for all the people who follow me to have a handful each

Ben Hadad is threatening that his army will totally destroy everything in Samaria. (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

10 And Ben Hadad sent to him and he said, "Thus may gods do to me and thus may they add, if the dust of Samaria will be sufficient for handfuls for all the people who will be at my feet!"

1 Kings 20:11

Tell Ben Hadad, 'No one who is just putting on his armor ... as if he were taking it off.'

This is an expression to give advice. "Putting on armor" is metonymy for getting prepared for battle. "Tell Ben Hadad, 'Do not boast as if you have already won a battle that you have not yet fought.'" (See: [Proverbs](#) and [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹¹ And the king of Israel answered and said, "Speak, 'one about to gird should not boast like one who is ungirding.'"

1 Kings 20:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

12 And it happened at the hearing of this word as he was drinking, he and the kings in the huts, that he said to his servants, "Set up," and they set up against the city.

1 Kings 20:13

Then behold

The word “behold” alerts us to the sudden appearance of a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Have you seen this great army?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize the size and strength of Ben Hadad’s army. Alternate translation: “Look at this great army.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Look, I will place it into your hand today

The word “Look” here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

place it into your hand

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “give you victory over that army” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

13 And behold, one prophet came near to Ahab the king of Israel and he said, “Thus says Yahweh, ‘Have you seen all of this great crowd? Behold, I am about to give it into your hand today, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.’”

1 Kings 20:14

By whom?

Ahab leaves out the words 'will you do this' Alternate translation: "By whom will you do this?" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

ULT

14 And Ahab said, "By whom?" And he said, "Thus says Yahweh, by the young men of the commanders of the provinces." And he said, "Who will tie up the battle?" And he said, "You."

1 Kings 20:15

Ahab mustered the young officers

“Ahab assembled the young officers”

all the soldiers, all the army of Israel

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

seven thousand

“7,000” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

15 And he mustered the young men of the commanders of the provinces, and they were 232. And after them he mustered all the people, all the sons of Israel were 7,000.

1 Kings 20:16

They went out

Here the word "They" refers to the Israelite army.

thirty-two lesser kings

See how you translated this in [1 Kings 20:1](#).

ULT

16 And they went out at the midday. And Ben Hadad was drinking drunk in the huts, he and the kings, 32 kings who helped him.

1 Kings 20:17

Ben Hadad was informed by scouts that he had sent out

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Scouts that Ben Hadad had sent out informed him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

scouts

A "scout" is a soldier sent to gather information about the enemy.

ULT

¹⁷ And the young men of the commanders of the provinces went out at the first. And Ben Hadad sent and they told him, saying, "Men have gone out from Samaria."

1 Kings 20:18

Ben Hadad said

It is understood that Ben Hadad is speaking to his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Ben Hadad said to his soldiers" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Whether they have ... take them

Here "they" and "them" refer to the Israelite army.

ULT

18 And he said, "If they have gone out for peace, seize them alive, and if they have gone out for war, alive seize them."

1 Kings 20:19

So the young officers ... the army followed

“The young Israelite officers ... the Israelite army followed”

ULT

¹⁹ And these went out from the city, the young men of the commanders of the provinces and the strength that was behind them.

1 Kings 20:20

Israel pursued them

“Israel” is synecdoche for all the soldiers of the nation of Israel.
Alternate translation: “the men of the army of Israel pursued them”
(See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

20 But they struck down, a man his man.
And Aram fled and Israel pursued them.
And Ben Hadad the king of Aram
slipped away on a horse with
horsemen.

1 Kings 20:21

the king of Israel went out and attacked

“The king” is synecdoche for the king and all the soldiers serving under him. Alternate translation: “The king of Israel and his soldiers went out and attacked” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

21 And the king of Israel went out and he struck down the horse and the chariot. And he struck Aram a great blow.

1 Kings 20:22

strengthen yourself

“Yourself” represents by metonymy the army of the king. Alternate translation: “strengthen your forces” (See: [Metonymy](#))

understand and plan

These two words mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: “determine” (See: [Doublet](#))

at the return of the year

This could mean: (1) “in the springtime of next year” or (2) “at this time next year.”

ULT

22 And the prophet came near to the king of Israel and he said to him, “Go, strengthen yourself, and know and see what you should do, because at the return of the year the king of Aram will be coming up against you.”

1 Kings 20:23

let us fight ... we will be stronger

The words "us" and "we" refer to the servants, the king, and the army all together. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

ULT

23 And the servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their gods are gods of the mountains. Therefore they were stronger than us. But indeed let us fight them in the plain, surely we will be stronger than them."

1 Kings 20:24

Remove all the kings from their positions of authority

“You must remove the thirty-two kings who are leading your troops”

ULT

²⁴ And do this thing: remove the kings, a man from his place, and set governors in their places.

1 Kings 20:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁵ And you should assign for yourself strength like the strength that fell from you, and a horse like the horse and a chariot like the chariot, and we will fight them in the plain. Surely will we be stronger than them." And he listened to their voice and did so.

1 Kings 20:26

Aphek

This is the name of a city. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

to fight against Israel

“Israel” represents the army of Israel. Alternate translation: “to fight against the army of Israel” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

²⁶ And it happened at the return of the year, that Ben Hadad mustered Aram. And he went up to Aphek for the battle with Israel.

1 Kings 20:27

The people of Israel were mustered and supplied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “The Israelite army also gathered together, and the commanders gave the arms that they needed for the battle” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

like two little flocks of goats

This simile compares the Israelite army to two little flocks of goats. Alternate translation: “The Israelite army appeared to be small and weak like two flocks of goats” (See: [Simile](#))

ULT

²⁷ And the sons of Israel had been mustered and were sustained and they went to meet them. And the sons of Israel camped in front of them were like two little flocks of goats, and Aram filled the land.

1 Kings 20:28

a man of God

This is another title for a prophet. Alternate translation: “a prophet”

place this great army into your hand

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “give you victory over this great army” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

28 And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, and he said, “Thus says Yahweh, ‘Because Aram said “Yahweh is a god of mountains, but he is not a god of valleys,” I shall give all of this great crowd into your hand, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.’”

1 Kings 20:29

seven days

“7 days” (See: [Numbers](#))

100000

“one hundred thousand” (See: [Numbers](#))

footmen

A “footman” is a soldier who marches on foot.

ULT

²⁹ And they camped, these opposite these, seven days. And it happened on the seventh day that the battle approached, and the sons of Israel struck down Aram, 100,000 on foot in one day.

1 Kings 20:30

The rest fled to Aphek

The expression “the rest” assumes the words “of the Aramean soldiers.” Alternate translation: “The rest of the Aramean soldiers” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Aphek

This is the name of a town. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

twenty-seven thousand

“27,000” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

³⁰ And the ones who were left fled to Aphek, into the city, and the wall fell on 127,000 men, the ones who were left. And Ben Hadad fled and entered into the city, a room in a room.

1 Kings 20:31

Look now

This emphasizes what they will say. Alternate translation: “Listen” or “Pay attention to what we are about to tell you”

put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads

This was a sign of surrender.

ULT

31 And his servants said to him, “Behold, please, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel, that they are kings of mercy. Please let us put sackcloth around our loins and ropes on our heads, and we will go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he may let your life live.”

1 Kings 20:32

Is he still alive?

Ahab asks this question to express surprise. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that he is still alive!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

He is my brother

"My brother" here is a metaphor for somebody who is a good friend. Alternate translation: "He is like a brother to me" or "He is like family" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

32 And they girded on sackcloth around their waists and ropes on their heads and they came to the king of Israel. And they said, "Your servant Ben Hadad says, 'Please let my life live.'" And he said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother."

1 Kings 20:33

Now the men

The word “Now” does not mean “at this moment,” but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

for any sign from Ahab

“Sign” is metonymy for an action that gives a meaning. Alternate translation: “for any action from Ahab that would show them that Ahab wanted to be merciful” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

33 And the men sought an omen and they hurried and accepted whether it was from him. And they said, “Your brother is Ben Hadad.” And he said, “Come, bring him!” And Ben Hadad went out to him, and he brought him up on the chariot.

1 Kings 20:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁴ And he said to him, "I will return the cities that my father took from with your father, and the outside you may set up for yourself in Damascus, just as my father set up in Samaria. As for me, by the covenant, I will send you away." And he cut a covenant for him and he sent him away.

1 Kings 20:35

one of the sons of the prophets

“a member of the group of prophets”

the word of Yahweh

“the message of Yahweh” or “Yahweh’s message”

ULT

³⁵ And one man from the sons of the prophets said to his neighbor, “By the word of Yahweh, please strike me.” But the man refused to strike him.

1 Kings 20:36

you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh

“The voice” is metonymy for what Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: “you have not obeyed Yahweh” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³⁶ And he said to him, “Because you did not listen to the voice of Yahweh, behold, you are about to go from with me, and the lion will strike you down.” And he went from beside him and the lion found him and struck him down.

1 Kings 20:37

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁷ And he found one man and said, "Please strike me." And the man struck him, striking and wounding.

1 Kings 20:38

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³⁸ And the prophet went and he stood for the king on the road. And he made himself unrecognizable with the covering over his eyes.

1 Kings 20:39

Your servant went out

The prophet refers to himself in the third person as a sign of respect to the king.

into the heat of the battle

“Heat of the battle” here is an idiom to express the most intense and fierce fighting. Alternate translation: “to where the battle was most intense” (See: [Idiom](#))

your life will be given for his life

“you will die in his place”

a talent of silver

A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: “33 kilograms of silver” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

ULT

39 And it happened that the king was passing by and he himself cried out to the king. And he said, “Your servant went out in the middle of the battle, and behold, a man turned aside and he brought a man to me. And he said, ‘Keep this man. If he is missing at all, then your life will be in place of his life or you must weigh a kikkar of silver.’”

1 Kings 20:40

going here and there

This is an idiom to represent being very busy and preoccupied.
Alternate translation: "doing other things" or "doing this and that"
(See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

40 And it happened that your servant was doing here and there, and he was not there." And the king of Israel said to him, "Thus is your judgment, you yourself have decided."

1 Kings 20:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴¹ And he hurried and removed the covering from over his eyes. And the king of Israel recognized him, that he was from the prophets.

1 Kings 20:42

let go from your hand

Here the word "hand" is metonymy for power. Alternate translation: "released" or "spared the life of" (See: [Metonymy](#))

your life will take the place of his life, and your people for his people

"you will die in his place, and your people will die in the place of his people"

ULT

42 And he said to him, "Thus says Yahweh, 'Because you have sent away a man of complete destruction from hand. And it will be your life in place of his life, and your people in place of his people.'"

1 Kings 20:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴³ And the king of Israel went to his house sullen and vexed, and he came to Samaria.

1 Kings 21

1 Kings 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God hates oppression but is forgiving to people who are sorry for their sins. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard to make into a garden for his palace, but Naboth refused to sell it. So the queen, Ahab's wife, told the civic leaders of Naboth's town to falsely accuse him and execute him. Elijah told Ahab that he would be killed in Naboth's vineyard and all his family destroyed. Ahab repented and showed he was very sorry for what he did, so God said it would not happen to Ahab himself but to his son. (See: [oppress](#), [oppressed](#), [oppression](#), [oppressor](#), [dominate](#), [forgive](#), [forgiven](#), [forgiveness](#), [pardon](#), [pardoned](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [repent](#), [repentance](#))

1 Kings 21:1

Now some time later

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story and indicates that these events happened later, not that Naboth owned the vineyard later. If your language has a way marking the beginning of a new part of a story, you could consider using it here. Alternate translation: "Now this is what happened later" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

ULT

¹ Now it happened after these things that there was a vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which was in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab the king of Samaria.

Naboth the Jezreelite

This is the name of a man from Jezreel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

king of Samaria

"Samaria" was the capital city of the kingdom of Israel and here represents the entire nation. Alternate translation: "king of Israel" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

1 Kings 21:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

² And Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give to me your vineyard, and it will be for me as a garden of herbage, because it is near beside my house. And let me give to you in its place a better vineyard than it. If it is good in your eyes, let me give to you silver of the price of this one."

1 Kings 21:3

May Yahweh forbid that I should give

This phrase is an oath that emphasizes that what follows will not happen. Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh forbids it, I will never give" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

give the inheritance of my ancestors to you

The land that his ancestors received as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance. Alternate translation: "give to you the land that my ancestors received as an inheritance" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

³ And Naboth said to Ahab, "Far be it for me from Yahweh, from my giving the inheritance of my fathers to you."

1 Kings 21:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴ And Ahab entered into his house sullen and vexed on account of the word that Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him. And he said, "I will not give to you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and he turned away his face and he did not eat bread.

1 Kings 21:5

Why is your heart so sad

Here “heart” refers to the entire person and his emotions. Alternate translation: “Why are you so sad” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁵ And Jezebel his wife came to him and she spoke to him, “What is this? Your spirit is sullen and you are not eating bread?”

1 Kings 21:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁶ And he spoke to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and I said to him, 'Give your vineyard to me for silver, or if you are desiring, let me give a vineyard to you in its place.' And he said, 'I will not give my vineyard to you.'"

1 Kings 21:7

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?

Jezebel uses this negative rhetorical question to rebuke Ahab. It can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "You still rule the kingdom of Israel!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

let your heart be happy

Here "heart" refers to the entire person and his emotions. Alternate translation: "be happy" or "cheer up" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

⁷ And Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now, you do the kingship over Israel. Get up! Eat bread and let your heart be good! I myself will give to you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

1 Kings 21:8

wrote letters in Ahab's name

This could mean: (1) she wrote Ahab's name on the letters. Alternate translation: "wrote letters and signed them with Ahab's name" or (2) the word "name" is a metonym for authority. Alternate translation: "wrote letters on behalf of Ahab" (See: [Metonymy](#))

the wealthy who sat with him

The word "wealthy" refers to wealthy people. Alternate translation: "the wealthy people who sat with Naboth" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

ULT

⁸ And she wrote letters in the name of Ahab, and she sealed them with his seal. And she sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who were in his city, the ones who dwelled near Naboth.

1 Kings 21:9

seat Naboth above the people

Having Naboth sit in a place of honor is spoken of as if it were having him sit above the rest of the people who were present. Alternate translation: "have Naboth sit in a place of honor among the people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

⁹ And she wrote in the letters, saying,
"Call a fast and seat Naboth at the head
the people."

1 Kings 21:10

let them testify against him

“have them accuse him”

ULT

10 And seat two men, sons of worthlessness, in front of him and let them witness against him, saying, ‘You cursed God and the king.’ And take him out and stone him and let him die.”

1 Kings 21:11

the wealthy who lived in Naboth's city

The word "wealthy" refers to wealthy people. Alternate translation: "the wealthy people who lived in Naboth's city" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

as was written in the letters

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as she had written in the letters" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 And the men of his city, the elders and the nobles, who were the ones dwelling in his city, did just as Jezebel had sent to them, just as was written in the letters that she had sent to them.

1 Kings 21:12

seated Naboth above the people

Having Naboth sit in a place of honor is spoken of as if it were having him sit above the rest of the people who were present. See how you translated this idea in [1 Kings 21:9](#). Alternate translation: “had Naboth sit in a place of honor among the people” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

¹² They called a fast and they seated Naboth at the head of the people.

1 Kings 21:13

sat before Naboth

“sat in front of Naboth”

they carried him out

Here the word “they” refers to the people of the city.

ULT

13 And the two men, the sons of worthlessness, came and they sat in front of him, and the men of worthlessness witnessed against Naboth in front of the people, saying, “Naboth cursed God and the king.” And they brought him to the outside of the city and they stoned him with the stones and he died.

1 Kings 21:14

Naboth has been stoned and is dead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “We have stoned Naboth and he is dead” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

14 And they sent to Jezebel, saying,
“Naboth has been stoned and he has died.”

1 Kings 21:15

that Naboth had been stoned and was dead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “that the people had stoned Naboth and he was dead” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Naboth is not alive, but dead.

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize Jezebel’s statement. Alternate translation: “Naboth is dead!” (See: [Doublet](#))

ULT

15 And it happened as soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and had died, that Jezebel said to Ahab, “Get up! Possess the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give to you for silver, for Naboth is not alive, but he has died!”

1 Kings 21:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

16 And it happened as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth had died, that Ahab rose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to possess it.

1 Kings 21:17

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom means that Yahweh spoke or has sent a message. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

17 And the word of Yahweh was to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

1 Kings 21:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

18 "Get up! Go down to meet Ahab the king of Israel, who is in Samaria. Behold he is in the vineyard of Naboth, there where he has gone down to possess it.

1 Kings 21:19

Have you killed and also taken possession?

Yahweh asks this question to scold Ahab. Alternate translation: "You have killed Naboth and stolen his vineyard!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

your blood, yes, your blood

This is repeated for emphasis.

ULT

19 And you shall speak to him saying,
'Thus says Yahweh, "Have you murdered and also taken possession? "'
And you shall speak to him, saying,
'Thus says Yahweh, "In a place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick your blood, even you." "'

1 Kings 21:20

Have you found me, my enemy?

Ahab uses this question to express anger toward Elijah. That Elijah “found” Ahab likely refers to Elijah discovering Ahab’s actions, not to finding his physical location. Alternate translation: “You have found me, my enemy!” or “You have discovered what I have done, my enemy!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, “Have you found me, my enemy?” And he said, “I have found, on account of you having sold yourself by doing the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh.”

you have sold yourself to do what is evil

A person being committed to doing what is evil is spoken of as if that person had sold himself to evil. Alternate translation: “you have dedicated yourself to doing what is evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

what is evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, “in the sight of” refers to someone’s opinion. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:6](#). Alternate translation: “what Yahweh considers to be evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

1 Kings 21:21

See

“Look” or “Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

completely consume and cut off from you every male child and slave and free man in Israel

Yahweh speaks of destroying Ahab’s family and preventing him from having any decedents as if he were consuming these people like a fire would consume them, and cutting them off as one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: “destroy every one of your male children in Israel, whether slave or free” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

21 ‘Behold, I am about to bring evil on you and I will burn after you, and I will cut off with respect to Ahab one who urinates on a wall, and one who is restrained, and one who is let free in Israel.

1 Kings 21:22

I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam ... and like the family of Baasha

Yahweh will destroy Ahab's family like he destroyed the families of Jeroboam and Baasha.

ULT

²² And I will give over your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, on account of the anger that you have provoked to anger and you have caused Israel to sin.'

1 Kings 21:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²³ And also with respect to Jezebel
Yahweh has spoken, saying, 'The dogs
will eat Jezebel at the rampart of
Jezreel.'

1 Kings 21:24

Anyone who belongs to Ahab

“Anyone who belongs to Ahab’s family”

ULT

²⁴ The one of Ahab who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat. And the one who dies in the field, the bird of the heavens shall eat.”

1 Kings 21:25

who sold himself to do what was evil

A person being committed to doing what is evil is spoken of as if that person had sold himself to evil. See how you translated this idea in [1 Kings 21:20](#). Alternate translation: “who dedicated himself to doing what was evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, “in the sight of” refers to someone’s opinion. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:6](#). Alternate translation: “what Yahweh considers to be evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

²⁵ Surely there was not one like Ahab, who sold himself by doing the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh, he whom Jezebel his wife incited.

1 Kings 21:26

removed before the people of Israel

Here “Israel” refers to all twelve tribes of Israel and not just to the northern kingdom. Alternate translation: “removed from the presence of the people of Israel” or “drove out of the land before the people of Israel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²⁶ And he acted very abominably by walking after the idols, like all that the Amorite had done, whom Yahweh had dispossessed from the face of the sons of Israel.

1 Kings 21:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁷ And it happened as soon as Ahab heard these words, that he tore his garments and put sackcloth over his flesh and he fasted. And he lay down in the sackcloth and he walked softly.

1 Kings 21:28

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom means that Yahweh spoke or has sent a message. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11](#). Alternate translation: “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke” (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

28 And the word of Yahweh was to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

1 Kings 21:29

Do you see how Ahab humbles himself before me?

God uses this question to show Elijah that Ahab's sorrow is genuine. Alternate translation: "I have seen how Ahab humbles himself before me." or "Look at how Ahab humbles himself before me." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

in his days ... in his son's day

"during his lifetime ... during his son's lifetime"

ULT

²⁹ "Have you seen that Ahab has humbled himself from before my face? Because he has humbled himself from my face, I will not bring the evil thing in his days. In the days of his son I will bring the evil thing on his house."

1 Kings 22

1 Kings 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of Ahab and a continuation of the story of Elijah as he had predicted Ahab's death and the dogs licking his blood.

Special concepts in this chapter

When God has decided a person will die, then they cannot avoid death. Ahab persuaded Jehoshaphat, king of Judah to help him in a battle against the army of Aram. Ahab's false prophets all told him to go because he would be successful. But a randomly shot arrow hit him and he bled to death. They washed his chariot at the pool and the dogs licked up his blood, just as Elijah had said they would. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

“However, the shrines were still not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense at the shrines.”

At the shrines, the people worshiped Yahweh. But later, during Hezekiah's reign it was decided that all sacrifices must be made only at the temple. (See: [temple](#), [house](#), [house of God](#))

1 Kings 22:1

Three years

“3 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

¹ And they dwelled three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel.

1 Kings 22:2

it came about that

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

ULT

² And it happened in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to the king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:3

Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is ours, but that we are doing nothing to take it from the hand of the king of Aram?

Ahab asks this question to emphasize that they should have already recaptured Ramoth Gilead. Alternate translation: “Ramoth Gilead is ours, but we have done nothing yet to take it from the hand of the king of Aram.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

to take it from the hand of the king of Aram

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “to take it from the control of the king of Aram” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

³ And the king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is for us, but we are staying inactive from taking it from the hand of the king of Aram?”

1 Kings 22:4

I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses are like your horses

Jehoshaphat tells Ahab that he, his people, and his horses belong to Ahab, meaning that Ahab can command them as he pleases.

Alternate translation: "I, my soldiers, and my horses are yours to use in any way you want" (See: [Idiom](#))

ULT

⁴ And he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to war at Ramoth Gilead?" And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Like me, like you. Like my people, like your people. Like my horses, like your horses."

1 Kings 22:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁵ And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please seek the word of Yahweh at today."

1 Kings 22:6

four hundred men

“400 men” (See: [Numbers](#))

for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “for the Lord will allow the king to capture Ramoth Gilead” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

⁶ And the king of Israel gathered the prophets, about 400 men, and he said to them, “Should I go against Ramoth Gilead to war, or should I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for my Lord will give into the hand of the king.”

1 Kings 22:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁷ And Jehoshaphat said, “Is there still no prophet of Yahweh here so we may seek from him?”

1 Kings 22:8

May the king not say that

Jehoshaphat refers to Ahab in the third person to show respect for him. Alternate translation: “You should not say that” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

ULT

⁸ And the king of Israel responded to Jehoshaphat, “There is still one man for seeking Yahweh from him, but I myself hate him because he does not prophesy good on my account, but rather evil: Micaiah the son of Imlah.” And Jehoshaphat said, “The king should not say so.”

1 Kings 22:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁹ And the king of Israel called to one eunuch. And he said, "Get quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah."

1 Kings 22:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

10 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting, a man on his throne, clothed with garments, by the threshing floor at the opening of the gate of Samaria. And all the prophets were prophesying before their faces.

1 Kings 22:11

made himself horns of iron

“made iron horns for himself”

With these you will push the Arameans until they are consumed

The prophet's actions are a symbolic metaphor that illustrates the way that Ahab would defeat the Arameans. Ahab's army will win with great strength, as a bull attacks another animal. (See: [Symbolic Action](#) and [Metaphor](#))

until they are consumed

Destroying an enemy army is spoken of as if it were consuming them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “until you consume them” or “until you destroy them” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

11 And Zedekiah the son of Kenaanah made horns of iron for him, and he said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘With these you shall gore Aram until their finishing.’”

1 Kings 22:12

given it into the hand of the king

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “allowed the king to capture it” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

12 And all the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and be successful, and Yahweh will give into the hand of the king.”

1 Kings 22:13

Now look

“Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

the words of the prophets declare good things to the king with one mouth

The prophets all saying the same thing is spoken of as if they all spoke with the same mouth. Alternate translation: “the prophets all declare the same good things to the king” (See: [Metaphor](#))

let your word be like one of them

Here the word “them” refers to “the words of the prophets.” Alternate translation: “let what you say agree with what they have said” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

13 And the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, “Behold, please, the words of the prophets as one mouth are good for the king. Please let your word be like the one word from them and speak good.”

1 Kings 22:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

14 And Micaiah said, "As Yahweh is alive, surely what Yahweh will say to me, it I will speak."

1 Kings 22:15

should we go

The word “we” refers to Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and their armies but not to Micaiah. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

will give it into the hand of the king

Here the word “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “will allow the king to capture it” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

15 And he came to the king, and the king said to him, “Micaiah, should we go to Ramoth Gilead to war, or should we refrain?” And he said to him, “Go up and be successful, and Yahweh will give into the hand of the king.”

1 Kings 22:16

How many times must I require ... in the name of Yahweh?

Ahab asks this question out of frustration to rebuke Micaiah.

Alternate translation: "Many times I have required ... in the name of Yahweh." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

in the name of Yahweh

Here the word "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "as the representative of Yahweh" (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

¹⁶ And the king said to him, "Up to how many times must I cause you to swear that you would not speak concerning me except truth in the name of Yahweh?"

1 Kings 22:17

I saw all Israel

Here “all Israel” refers to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: “I saw the entire army of Israel” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

like sheep who have no shepherd

The people of the army are compared to sheep that have no one to lead them because their shepherd, the king, has died. (See: [Simile](#))

These have no shepherd

Yahweh speaks of the king as if he were a shepherd. Just like a shepherd is responsible to care for and protect his sheep, the king is responsible to lead and protect his people. Alternate translation: “These people no longer have a leader” (See: [Metaphor](#))

ULT

17 And he said, “I saw all Israel scattered to the mountains, like a flock when there is not a shepherd for them. And Yahweh said, ‘There are no masters for these. Let them return, a man to his house, in peace.’”

1 Kings 22:18

Did I not tell you ... but only disaster?

Ahab asks this question to emphasize that he had spoken the truth about Micaiah. Alternate translation: "I told you ... but only disaster!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not say to you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but rather evil?"

1 Kings 22:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

19 And he said, “Therefore hear the word of Yahweh: I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, and all the host of the heavens standing beside him from his right and from his left.

1 Kings 22:20

fall at Ramoth Gilead

Ahab dying in battle is spoken of as if he will fall. Alternate translation: "die at Ramoth Gilead" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

One of them said ... and another one said

"One ... and another" refers to two or more angels in the heavenly host who were responding to Yahweh's question in the previous verse.

ULT

²⁰ And Yahweh said, 'Who will deceive Ahab, so he may go up and may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' And this one said, "In this way," and this one was saying, "In this way."

1 Kings 22:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²¹ And the spirit went out, and he stood before the face of Yahweh. And he said, 'I myself will deceive him.' And Yahweh said to him, 'By what means?'

1 Kings 22:22

be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets

Here the word “spirit” refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words “the mouth” represents what they will say. Alternate translation: “cause all his prophets to speak lies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²² And he said, ‘I will go out and I will be a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You may deceive and also you will be able. Go out and do so.’

1 Kings 22:23

see

“pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important”

has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours

Here the word “spirit” refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words “the mouth” represents what they will say. Alternate translation: “has caused all of your prophets to speak lies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

²³ And now, behold, Yahweh has given a spirit of falsehood into the mouth of all these prophets of yours. And Yahweh has spoken evil against you.”

1 Kings 22:24

Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?

Zedekiah asks this sarcastic question to insult and rebuke Micaiah. Alternate translation: "Do not think that Yahweh's Spirit left me to speak to you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

²⁴ And Zedekiah the son of Kenaanah came near, and he struck Micaiah on the cheek. And he said, "How is this, the Spirit of Yahweh has passed over from with me to speak with you?"

1 Kings 22:25

Look

“Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

you will see

“you will know the answer to your question.” If Zedekiah’s rhetorical question is translated as a statement, this phrase may be translated to supply implicit information. Alternate translation: “you will know that the Spirit of Yahweh has spoken to me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

ULT

²⁵ And Micaiah said, “Behold, you are about to see on that day when you enter a room in a room to hide yourself.”

1 Kings 22:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁶ And the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon, the commander of the city, and to Joash, the son of the king."

1 Kings 22:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

²⁷ And you shall say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this one in the house of imprisonment and feed him bread of oppression and water of oppression, until my coming in peace.'"

1 Kings 22:28

If you return safely

This describes something that would not happen. Yahweh had already told Micaiah that the king would not return safely. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

ULT

²⁸ And Micaiah said, "If indeed you return in peace, Yahweh has not spoken by me." And he said, "Listen, peoples, all of them."

1 Kings 22:29

Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up

Here the kings represent themselves accompanied by their armies.
Alternate translation: "Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah led their armies up" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

ULT

²⁹ And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead.

1 Kings 22:30

disguise

This means to change the usual appearance so as not to be identified.

ULT

³⁰ And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will cause myself to be unrecognizable and come into the battle, but you wear your garments." And the king of Israel caused himself to be unrecognizable and he came into the battle.

1 Kings 22:31

thirty-two captains

“32 captains” (See: [Numbers](#))

Do not attack unimportant or important soldiers

By mentioning both “unimportant” and “important soldiers,” the king meant all soldiers. Alternate translation: “Do not attack any of the soldiers” (See: [Merism](#))

ULT

³¹ Now the king of Aram had commanded the commanders of the chariotry, which were 32 for him, saying, “You shall not fight with a small one or with a great one, but rather with the king of Israel by himself.”

1 Kings 22:32

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

ULT

³² And it happened as soon as the commanders of the charioty saw Jehoshaphat, that they themselves said, "Surely he is the king of Israel." And they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried out.

1 Kings 22:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

³³ And it happened as soon as the commanders of the chariotry saw that he was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from after him.

1 Kings 22:34

drew his bow at random

This could mean: (1) he took aim to shoot a soldier without knowing that it was Ahab or (2) he drew his bow to shoot without any specific target in mind.

ULT

³⁴ But a man drew with the bow in his innocence and he struck the king of Israel between the joints and the body armor. And he said to his charioteer, "Turn your hand and bring me out from the camp, for I am wounded."

1 Kings 22:35

the king was held up in his chariot

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “someone held the king up in his chariot” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

³⁵ And the battle went up on that day and the king was being stood up in the chariot opposite Aram. And he died in the evening and the blood of the wound poured out to the bosom of the chariot.

1 Kings 22:36

a cry went up

Here “a cry” represents the soldiers who were shouting. Alternate translation: “soldiers began to shout” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Every man should go back to his city; and every man should go back to his region

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

ULT

³⁶ Then the cry passed through in the camp about the going of the sun, saying, “A man to his city and a man to his land!”

1 Kings 22:37

was brought to Samaria

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “his soldiers brought his body to Samaria” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

they buried him

“people buried him”

ULT

37 And the king died and came to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria.

1 Kings 22:38

just as the word of Yahweh had declared

Here “the word of Yahweh” represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: “just as Yahweh had declared” (See: [Metonymy](#))

ULT

38 And one rinsed the chariot beside the pool of Samaria. And the dogs licked his blood, and the prostitutes bathed, according to the word of Yahweh that he had spoken.

1 Kings 22:39

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31](#). Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” or “you can read them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.” (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

³⁹ And the remainder of the matters of Ahab and all that he did, and the house of ivory that he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings 22:40

slept with his ancestors

Ahab dying is spoken of as if he had fallen asleep. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10](#). Alternate translation: “died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

ULT

40 And Ahab lay down with his fathers.
And Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 22:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴¹ And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa
reigned over Judah in year four of Ahab
the king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:42

thirty-five years old

“35 years old” (See: [Numbers](#))

twenty-five years

“25 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁴² Jehoshaphat was a son of 35 years when he reigned, and he reigned 25 years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

1 Kings 22:43

He walked in the ways of Asa, his father

A person's behavior is spoken of as if that person walked along a path. Alternate translation: "He did the same things that Asa, his father, had done" (See: [Metaphor](#))

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

Here "eyes" represents seeing and Yahweh's opinion is spoken of as if he were able to see something. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be right" (See: [Metaphor](#))

the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he did not take away the high places" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

43 And he walked in every way of Asa his father, he did not turn away from it, to do the upright thing in the eyes of Yahweh. However the high places they did not remove. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense at the high places.

1 Kings 22:44

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁴ And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:45

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29](#). Alternate translation: “they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah.” or “you can read them in the book of the events of the kings of Judah.” (See: [Active or Passive](#) and [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁴⁵ And the remainder of the matters of Jehoshaphat, and his mighty things that he did, and how he fought, are they not written on the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah?

1 Kings 22:46

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁶ And the remainder of the cultic prostitutes who were left in the days of Asa his father, he burned from the land.

1 Kings 22:47

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁷ And there was not a king in Edom, a stationed one was king.

1 Kings 22:48

the ships were wrecked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “the ships wrecked” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

⁴⁸ Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but he did not go because ships were broken at Ezion Geber.

1 Kings 22:49

(There are no notes for this verse.)

ULT

⁴⁹ Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

1 Kings 22:50

slept with his ancestors

Jehoshaphat dying is spoken of as if he had fallen asleep. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10](#). Alternate translation: “died” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Euphemism](#))

was buried with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “people buried him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

ULT

50 And Jehoshaphat lay down with his fathers and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father. And Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

1 Kings 22:51

he reigned two years

“he reigned 2 years” (See: [Numbers](#))

ULT

⁵¹ Ahaziah the son of Ahab reigned over Israel in Samaria in year 17 of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah. And he reigned over Israel two years.

1 Kings 22:52

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Yahweh's opinion regarding something is spoken of as if Yahweh were seeing that thing. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be evil" (See: [Metaphor](#))

walked in the way of his father, in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat

A person's behavior is spoken of as if that person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "did the same things that his father, mother, and Jeroboam son of Nebat had done" (See: [Metaphor](#))

led Israel to sin

Here the word "Israel" refers to the ten northern tribes that made up the kingdom of Israel.

ULT

⁵² And he did the evil thing in the eyes of Yahweh. And he walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin.

1 Kings 22:53

He served Baal and worshiped him

The words “served” and “worshiped” mean basically the same thing. (See: [Doublet](#))

the God of Israel

Here the word “Israel” refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.

ULT

53 And he served the Baal and he bowed down to him. And he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger, according to all that his father had done.



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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: [1 Kings 1:52](#); [3:6](#); [4:29](#); [8:23](#); [8:33](#); [9:7](#); [13:6](#); [14:5](#); [14:22](#); [15:30](#); [16:7](#))

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: 1 Kings 1:21; 1:52; 2:10; 2:12; 2:15; 2:19; 2:21; 2:29; 2:41; 3:2; 4:6; 5:7; 5:9; 5:14; 7:3; 7:7; 7:8; 7:9; 7:10; 7:14; 7:19; 7:21; 7:22; 7:24; 7:25; 7:26; 7:30; 7:33; 7:35; 7:36; 7:37; 7:47; 7:48; 7:50; 7:51; 8:5; 8:7; 8:15; 8:19; 8:31; 8:33; 8:43; 8:47; 8:51; 8:56; 9:8; 9:13; 10:7; 10:9; 10:10; 10:12; 10:28; 10:29; 11:17; 11:41; 11:43; 12:15; 12:24; 13:1; 13:2; 13:3; 13:4; 13:5; 13:6; 13:17; 13:24; 13:34; 14:2; 14:6; 14:11; 14:13; 14:15; 14:18; 14:19; 14:29; 14:31; 15:7; 15:14; 15:23; 15:24; 15:31; 16:5; 16:6; 16:14; 16:16; 16:18; 16:20; 16:27; 18:13; 18:26; 18:27; 18:36; 19:6; 20:17; 20:27; 21:11; 21:14; 21:15; 22:11; 22:35; 22:37; 22:39; 22:43; 22:45; 22:48; 22:50)

Apostrophe

Description

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. He does this to tell his listeners his message or feelings about that person or thing in a very strong way.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called an apostrophe?*

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

Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to, or think that the speaker is crazy to talk to things or people who cannot hear.

Examples from the Bible

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on you. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

King Saul was killed on Mount Gilboa, and David sang a sad song about it. By telling these mountains that he wanted them to have no dew or rain, he showed how sad he was.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. (Luke 13:34a ULT)

Jesus was expressing his feelings for the people of Jerusalem in front of his disciples and a group of Pharisees. By speaking directly to Jerusalem as though its people could hear him, Jesus showed how deeply he cared about them.

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: “**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, ‘See, ... on you they will burn human bones.’” (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

The man of God spoke as if the altar could hear him, but he really wanted the king, who was standing there, to hear him.

Translation Strategies

If apostrophe would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells **them** his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him. See the example below.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: “**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, ‘See, ... on you they will burn human bones.’” (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

He said this about the altar: “This is what Yahweh says **about this altar**. ‘See, ... they will burn people’s bones on **it**.’”

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on **you**. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

As for these mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on **them**.

(**Go back to:** [1 Kings 13:2](#))

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: [1 Kings 1:25](#); [1:52](#); [3:19](#); [6:37](#); [6:38](#); [7:13](#); [7:14](#); [7:19](#); [7:30](#); [Notes](#); [11:3](#); [12:20](#); [12:31](#); [13:1](#); [13:12](#); [13:20](#); [13:32](#); [14:25](#); [15:1](#); [15:3](#); [15:5](#); [15:9](#); [15:16](#); [15:17](#); [15:18](#); [15:19](#); [15:25](#); [15:32](#); [16:2](#); [16:13](#); [16:20](#); [16:26](#); [16:31](#); [17:12](#); [17:13](#); [19:19](#); [19:21](#); [21:3](#); [21:20](#); [21:26](#); [22:13](#); [22:25](#))

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:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-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: [1 Kings 18:2](#))

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: [1 Kings 6:2](#); [6:3](#); [6:6](#); [6:10](#); [6:16](#); [6:17](#); [6:23](#); [6:24](#); [7:2](#); [7:6](#); [7:10](#); [7:15](#); [7:16](#); [7:19](#); [7:23](#); [7:27](#); [7:31](#); [7:32](#); [7:35](#); [7:38](#))

Biblical Volume

Description

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the measures of volume that are in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-decimal\]\]](#)

Type	Original Measure	Liters
Dry	omer	2 liters
Dry	ephah	22 liters
Dry	homer	220 liters
Dry	cor	220 liters
Dry	seah	7.7 liters
Dry	letheke	114.8 liters
Liquid	metrete	40 liters
Liquid	bath	22 liters
Liquid	hin	3.7 liters
Liquid	kab	1.23 liters
Liquid	log	0.31 liters

Translation Principles

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

When the unit of measure is stated

Translation Strategies

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)
- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

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

For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one bath, and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah. (Isaiah 5:10 ULT)

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

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one **bat**, and one **homer** of seed will yield only an **efa**.”

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

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22 liters** and **220 liters** of seed will yield only **22 liters**.”

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22**, and **ten baskets** of seed will yield only **one basket**.”

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

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **six gallons**, and **six and a half bushels** of seed will yield only **20 quarts**.”

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

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **one bath (six gallons)**, and **one homer (six and a half bushels)** of seed will yield only **an ephah (20 quarts)**.”

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

“For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only 22 liters¹, and 220 liters² of seed will yield only 22 liters³.”

The footnotes would look like:

[1] one bath
[2] one homer
[3] one ephah

When the unit of measure is implied

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

When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 measures** of wine, there were only 20. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

Translation Strategies

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

Translation Strategies Applied

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

When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty measures** of wine, there were only **20**. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

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

When you came to a heap of **20** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50** of wine, there were only **20**.

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

When you came to a heap of **20 amounts** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty amounts** of wine, there were only **20**.

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

When you came to a heap of **20 baskets** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 jars** of wine, there were only **20**.

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

When you came to a heap for **20 liters** of grain, there were only **ten liters**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 liters** of wine, there were only **20 liters**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-fraction]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo]]

(Go back to: [1 Kings 4:22](#); [5:11](#); [7:26](#); [7:38](#); [18:32](#))

Biblical Weight

Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of weight in the Bible?*

The following terms are the most common units of weight in the Bible. The term “shekel” means “weight,” and many other weights are described in terms of the shekel. Some of these weights were used for money. The metric values in the table below are not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures differed in exact amount from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are only an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Shekels	Grams	Kilograms
shekel	1 shekel	11 grams	-
bekah	1/2 shekel	5.7 grams	-
pim	2/3 shekel	7.6 grams	-
gerah	1/20 shekel	0.57 grams	-
mina	50 shekels	550 grams	1/2 kilogram
talent	3,000 shekels	-	34 kilograms

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 gerah as “.57 grams,” readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say “half a gram.”

Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word “about” to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, 2 Samuel 21:16 says that Goliath’s spear weighed 300 shekels. Instead of translating this as “3300 grams” or “3.3 kilograms,” it can be translated as “about three and one half kilograms.”

When God tells people how much something should weigh, and when people use those weights, do not say “about” in the translation. Otherwise, it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how much the thing should weigh.

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 38:29 below.

█ The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talents and 2,400 shekels**. (Exodus 38:29 ULT)

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

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talentes and 2,400 sekeles**."

(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.

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **2,400 kilograms**."

(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.

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **5,300 pounds**."

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

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talents (2,380 kilograms) and 2,400 shekels (26.4 kilograms)**."

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

█ "The bronze from the offering weighed **70 talents and 2,400 shekels**. ¹"

The footnote would look like:

█ ^[1] This was a total of about 2,400 kilograms.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-fraction\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Kings 9:14](#); [9:28](#); [10:10](#); [10:14](#); [10:16](#); [10:17](#); [10:29](#); [16:24](#); [20:39](#))

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." (Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one,**
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest ...**"

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming,**
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Pronouns

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-quotations]]

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, **“Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”** (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him to tell no one, but **to go and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.**

- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

And he commanded him **to tell no one**, but, “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him, **“Tell no one.** But go and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

Next we recommend you learn about:
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-quotesinquotes]]

(Go back to: [1 Kings 1:24](#))

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-partspeech]]
[[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: [1 Kings 16:26](#))

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: [1 Kings 2:9](#); [18:10](#); [20:7](#))

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: [1 Kings 1:1](#); [2:4](#); [2:32](#); [7:14](#); [8:28](#); [8:29](#); [8:38](#); [8:45](#); [8:47](#); [8:48](#); [8:49](#); [8:54](#); [8:57](#); [8:66](#); [9:3](#); [9:4](#); [9:6](#); [12:24](#); [13:34](#); [20:22](#); [21:15](#); [22:53](#))

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: [1 Kings 2:2](#); [18:33](#); [20:14](#); [20:18](#); [20:30](#))

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: [1 Kings 1:21](#); [Notes](#); [2:2](#); [2:10](#); [11:21](#); [11:43](#); [14:20](#); [14:31](#); [15:8](#); [15:24](#); [16:6](#); [16:28](#); [17:17](#); [Notes](#); [18:27](#); [22:20](#); [22:40](#); [22:50](#))

Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

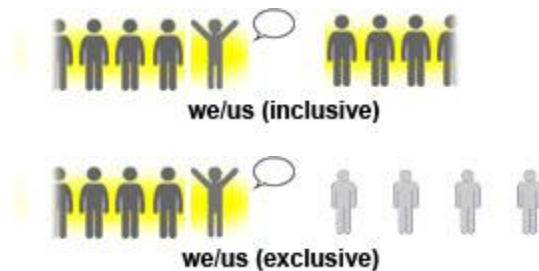
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for "us," "our," "ours," and "ourselves." Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

This page answers the question: *What are the exclusive and inclusive forms of "we"?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns](#)

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive "we" and the exclusive "we" refer to.



Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for "we." If your language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of "we," then you will need to understand what the speaker meant so that you can decide which form of "we" to use.

Examples From the Bible

Exclusive

They said, "There are not more than five loaves of bread and two fish with us—unless **we** go and buy food for all these people." (Luke 9:13 ULT)

In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food. They were speaking to Jesus, but Jesus was not going to buy food. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" would use the **exclusive** form there.

We have seen it, and **we** bear witness to it. **We** are announcing to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to **us**. (1 John 1:2 ULT)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **exclusive** forms in this verse.

Inclusive

The shepherds said one to each other, "Let **us** now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to **us**." (Luke 2:15b ULT)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said "us," they were including the people they were speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Now it happened that on one of those days, he indeed got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let **us** go over to the other side of the lake." So they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULT)

When Jesus said "us," he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations]]

(Go back to: [1 Kings 20:23](#); [22:15](#))

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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo\]\]](#)

[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:

[Forms of You](#)

(Go back to: [1 Kings 1:27](#); [8:12](#); [8:27](#); [8:29](#); [8:30](#); [16:3](#); [22:8](#))

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

- Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the **formal** form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of “You” — Formal or Informal

(Go back to: [1 Kings 18:25](#))

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-yousingular]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual]]

Generic Noun Phrases

Description

Generic noun phrases refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things. This happens frequently in proverbs, because proverbs tell about things that are true about people in general.

Can **a man** walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?
So is **the man who goes in to his neighbor's wife;**
the one who touches her will not go unpunished. (Proverbs 6:28-29 ULT)

The phrases in bold above do not refer to a specific man. They refer to any man who does these things.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of showing that noun phrases refer to something in general. You (the translator) should refer to these general ideas in ways that are natural in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The **righteous person** is kept away from trouble and it comes upon **the wicked** instead. (Proverbs 11:8 ULT)

The bold phrases above do not refer to a specific person but to anyone who does what is right or anyone who is wicked.

People curse **the man who refuses to sell grain**. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

This does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who refuses to sell grain.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

The phrase "a good man" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who is good. The phrase "a man who makes evil plans" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who makes evil plans.

Translation Strategies

If your language can use the same wording as in the ULT to refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things, consider using the same wording. If not, here are some strategies you might use.

- (1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.
- (2) Use the word "a" in the noun phrase.
- (3) Use the word "any," as in "any person" or "anyone."
- (4) Use the plural form, as in "people."

This page answers the question: *What are generic noun phrases and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the word “the” in the noun phrase.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

“Yahweh gives favor to **the good man**, but he condemns **the man who makes evil plans**.” (Proverbs 12:2)

(2) Use the word “a” in the noun phrase.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **a man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(3) Use the word “any,” as in “any person” or “anyone.”

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **any man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(4) Use the plural form, as in “people” (or in this sentence, “men”).

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **men** who refuse to sell grain”

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **whoever** refuses to sell grain.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Kings 17:18](#))

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: [1 Kings 6:1](#); [6:37](#); [6:38](#); [8:2](#); [12:32](#))

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:** [1 Kings 10:6](#))

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: [Introduction to 1 Kings](#); [1 Kings 1:3](#); [1:5](#); [1:7](#); [1:8](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:33](#); [1:38](#); [1:44](#); [2:7](#); [2:8](#); [2:39](#); [4:2](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:11](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [4:14](#); [4:15](#); [4:16](#); [4:17](#); [4:18](#); [4:19](#); [4:31](#); [6:1](#); [6:37](#); [6:38](#); [7:21](#); [7:46](#); [8:2](#); [10:28](#); [11:1](#); [11:5](#); [11:7](#); [11:14](#); [11:18](#); [11:19](#); [11:20](#); [11:23](#); [11:24](#); [11:25](#); [11:26](#); [11:29](#); [11:33](#); [11:40](#); [12:2](#); [12:15](#); [12:18](#); [12:22](#); [14:17](#); [14:21](#); [14:25](#); [14:31](#); [15:27](#); [16:24](#); [17:1](#); [17:3](#); [17:5](#); [17:9](#); [19:19](#); [20:1](#); [20:26](#); [20:30](#); [21:1](#))

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: 1 Kings 1:3; 1:9; 1:31; 1:39; 1:52; 2:15; 3:28; 4:20; 8:2; 8:5; 8:62; 8:63; 8:65; 10:2; 10:24; 10:27; 12:1; 12:16; 12:18; 12:20; 14:13; 14:18; 14:23; 14:26; 15:27; 16:16; 18:10; 18:19)

Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining ...” “What if the sun stopped shining ...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining ...” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples From the Bible

Hypothetical Situations in the Past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! **If the mighty deeds had been done** in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

Hypothetical Situations in the Present

And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed.** (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out?**” (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

Hypothetical Situation in the Future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

The Israelites said to them, “**If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

(Go back to: [1 Kings 8:44](#); [8:46](#); [8:47](#); [8:48](#); [22:28](#))

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: [1 Kings 1 General Notes](#); [1:20](#); [1:25](#); [1:49](#); [1:50](#); [2:3](#); [2:4](#); [2:23](#); [2:32](#); [2:33](#); [2:40](#); [3:7](#); [4:29](#); [5:3](#); [6:11](#); [Notes](#); [8:20](#); [8:48](#); [8:58](#); [10:5](#); [10:8](#); [11:2](#); [11:9](#); [11:26](#); [11:33](#); [11:38](#); [12:6](#); [12:15](#); [12:22](#); [12:32](#); [12:33](#); [13:2](#); [13:20](#); [13:21](#); [14:5](#); [14:25](#); [16:1](#); [16:7](#); [16:9](#); [16:12](#); [16:24](#); [16:31](#); [17:1](#); [17:2](#); [17:8](#); [17:14](#); [17:21](#); [18:1](#); [18:15](#); [18:20](#); [19:9](#); [19:11](#); [20:4](#); [20:7](#); [20:39](#); [20:40](#); [21:17](#); [21:28](#); [22:4](#))

Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages, people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

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]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-events]]

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](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-participants\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [1 Kings 21:1](#))

Litotes

Description

Litotes is a figure of speech in which the speaker expresses a strong positive meaning by using two negative words or a negative word with a word that means the opposite of the meaning he intends. A few examples of negative words are “no,” “not,” “none,” and “never.” The opposite of “good” is “bad.” Someone could say that something is “not bad” to mean that it is extremely good.

This page answers the question: *What is litotes?*

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

Some languages do not use litotes. People who speak those languages might not understand that a statement using litotes actually strengthens the positive meaning. Instead, they might think that it weakens or even cancels the positive meaning.

Examples From the Bible

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was **not useless**, (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULT)

By using litotes, Paul emphasized that his visit with them was **very** useful.

Now when it became day, there was **no small disturbance** among the soldiers over what therefore had happened to Peter. (Acts 12:18 ULT)

By using litotes, Luke emphasized that there was a **lot** of excitement or anxiety among the soldiers about what happened to Peter. (Peter had been in prison, and even though there were soldiers guarding him, he escaped when an angel let him out. So they were very agitated.)

But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are **not the least** among the leaders of Judah,
for from you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel. (Matthew 2:6 ULT)

By using litotes, the prophet emphasized that Bethlehem would be a **very important city**.

Translation Strategies

If the litotes would be understood correctly, consider using it.

(1) If the meaning with the negative would not be clear, give the **positive** meaning in a strong way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the meaning with the negative would not be clear, give the **positive** meaning in a strong way.

For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was **not useless**. (1 Thessalonians 2:1 ULT)

“For you yourselves know, brothers, our visit to you **did much good**.”

Now when it became day, there was **no small disturbance** among the soldiers over what therefore had happened to Peter. (Acts 12:18 ULT)

“Now when it became day, there was **great excitement** among the soldiers, regarding what had happened to Peter.”

or:

“Now when it became day, the soldiers were **very concerned** because of what had happened to Peter.”

(Go back to: [1 Kings 2:4](#); [4:27](#); [8:56](#); [9:5](#))

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: [1 Kings 4:25](#); [4:33](#); [5:4](#); [8:29](#); [8:59](#); [22:31](#))

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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[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: 1 Kings 1:52; 3:3; 3:6; 3:7; 3:14; 3:26; 5:3; 6:12; 7:14; 8:17; 8:18; 8:20; 8:23; 8:25; 8:35; 8:36; 8:38; 8:58; 8:61; 9:4; 9:7; 11:6; 11:11; 11:31; 11:38; 11:43; Notes; 12:4; 12:9; 12:10; 12:11; 12:14; 14:8; 14:9; 14:10; 14:13; 14:14; 14:15; 14:20; 14:22; 14:31; 15:3; 15:4; 15:5; 15:8; 15:11; 15:19; 15:24; 15:26; 15:28; 15:30; 15:34; 16:2; 16:3; 16:6; 16:7; 16:9; 16:10; 16:13; 16:19; 16:21; 16:25; 16:26; 16:28; 16:30; 16:31; 16:34; 17:20; 20:10; 20:32; 21:3; 21:9; 21:12; 21:20; 21:21; 21:25; 22:11; 22:13; 22:17; 22:20; 22:40; 22:43; 22:50; 22:52)

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: 1 Kings 1:13; 1:17; 1:27; 1:30; 1:37; 1:46; 1:48; 2:4; 2:5; 2:6; 2:7; 2:9; 2:12; 2:16; 2:17; 2:20; 2:24; 2:28; 2:31; 2:32; 2:33; 2:34; 2:37; 2:45; 2:46; 3:2; 3:6; 3:11; 3:12; 4:20; 4:25; 5:3; 5:5; 6:1; 6:4; 6:5; 6:6; 6:9; 6:10; 6:12; 6:14; 6:15; 6:16; 6:19; 6:20; 6:21; 6:22; 6:23; 6:27; 6:28; 6:29; 6:30; 6:31; 6:32; 6:33; 6:35; 6:36; 6:38; 7:1; 7:2; 7:7; 7:8; 7:18; 7:21; 7:23; 7:27; 7:36; 7:37; 7:38; 7:39; 7:40; 7:42; 7:44; 7:45; 7:46; 7:47; 7:48; 8:15; 8:16; 8:17; 8:18; 8:20; 8:21; 8:24; 8:25; 8:29; 8:38; 8:44; 8:48; 8:58; 9:3; 9:5; 9:7; 9:16; 9:25; 10:1; 10:7; 10:9; 10:24; 11:2; 11:3; 11:4; 11:9; 11:12; 11:26; 11:28; 11:31; 11:32; 11:33; 11:34; 11:36; 11:38; 12:16; 12:18; 12:19; 12:21; 12:23; 12:26; 12:27; 12:28; 12:31; 13:2; 14:8; 14:13; 14:21; 14:22; 14:23; 14:24; 14:26; 14:27; 15:13; 15:18; 15:21; 15:29; 16:9; 16:24; 16:34; 17:5; 17:16; 17:22; 17:24; 18:9; 18:19; 18:20; 18:24; 18:29; 18:32; 18:37; 18:46; 19:17; 19:18; 20:7; 20:11; 20:13; 20:22; 20:28; 20:33; 20:36; 20:42; 21:8; 22:3; 22:6; 22:12; 22:15; 22:16; 22:22; 22:23; 22:36; 22:38)

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

The rich must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **righteous people**.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

Blessed are **people who are meek**.

(Go back to: [1 Kings 21:8; 21:11](#))

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: 1 Kings 5:15; 5:16; 6:2; 7:20; 7:30; 7:42; 8:63; 8:65; 9:14; 9:23; 9:28; 10:10; 10:14; 10:16; 10:17; 10:26; 10:29; 11:3; 12:21; 14:20; 14:21; 15:1; 15:9; 15:10; 17:12; 18:4; 18:13; 18:19; 18:22; 18:31; 18:33; 18:43; 19:8; 19:18; 19:19; 20:1; 20:15; 20:29; 20:30; 22:1; 22:6; 22:31; 22:42; 22:51)

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: [1 Kings 6:1](#); [6:37](#); [6:38](#); [8:2](#); [8:66](#); [12:32](#); [14:25](#))

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: [1 Kings 2 General Notes](#); [6:12](#); [8:47](#); [8:50](#); [9:6](#); [9:9](#); [10:13](#); [12:27](#); [14:10](#); [15:29](#); [16:31](#); [17:22](#); [18:5](#); [18:26](#); [18:29](#); [19:18](#); [20:15](#); [22:36](#))

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:

[Apostrophe](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [1 Kings 13:2; 18:38](#))

Pronouns

Description

Pronouns are words that people might use instead of using a noun when referring to someone or something. Some examples are “I,” “you,” “he,” “it,” “this,” “that,” “himself,” “someone,” and others. The personal pronoun is the most common type of pronoun.

This page answers the question: *What are pronouns, and what kinds of pronouns are in some languages?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people or things and show whether the speaker is referring to himself, the person he is speaking to, or someone or something else. The following are kinds of information that personal pronouns may provide. Other types of pronouns may give some of this information, as well.

Person

- First Person — The speaker and possibly others (I, me, we, us)
 - [Exclusive and Inclusive “We”](#)
- Second Person — The person or people that the speaker is talking to and possibly others (you)
 - [Forms of You](#)
- Third Person — Someone or something other than the speaker and those he is talking to (he, she, it, they)

Number

- Singular — one (I, you, he, she, it)
- Plural — more than one (we, you, they)
 - [Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups](#)
- Dual — two (Some languages have pronouns specifically for two people or two things.)

Gender

- Masculine — he
- Feminine — she
- Neuter — it

Relationship to other words in the sentence

- Subject of the verb: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
- Object of the verb or preposition: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
- Possessor with a noun: my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Possessor without a noun: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs

Other Types of pronouns

Reflexive Pronouns refer to another noun or pronoun in the same sentence: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

- John saw **himself** in the mirror. The word “himself” refers to John.

Interrogative Pronouns are used to make a question that needs more than just a yes or no for an answer: what, which, who, whom, whose.

- **Who** built the house?

Relative Pronouns mark a relative clause. The relative pronouns, who, whom, whose, which and that give more information about a noun in the main part of the sentence. Sometimes, the relative adverbs when and where can also be used as relative pronouns.

- I saw the house **that John built**. The clause “that John built” tells which house I saw.
- I saw the man **who built the house**. The clause “who built the house” tells which man I saw.

Demonstrative Pronouns are used to draw attention to someone or something and to show distance from the speaker or something else. The demonstrative pronouns are: this, these, that, and those.

- Have you seen **this** here?
- Who is **that** over there?

Indefinite pronouns are used when no particular noun is being referred to. The indefinite pronouns are: any, anyone, someone, anything, something, and some. Sometimes a personal pronoun is used in a generic way to do this: you, they, he or it.

- He does not want to talk to **anyone**.
- **Someone** fixed it, but I do not know who.
- **They** say that **you** should not wake a sleeping dog.

In the last example, “they” and “you” just refer to people in general.

(Go back to: [1 Kings 1:13](#); [1:21](#); [1:33](#); [1:36](#); [1:37](#); [1:51](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:20](#); [8:28](#))

Proverbs

Description

Proverbs are short sayings that give wise advice or teach something that is generally true about life. People enjoy proverbs because they give a lot of wisdom in few words. Proverbs in the Bible often use metaphor and parallelism. Proverbs should not be understood as absolute and unchangeable laws. Rather, proverbs offer general advice to a person about how to live his life.

Hatred stirs up conflicts, but love covers over all offenses. (Proverbs 10:12 ULT)

Here is another example from the book of Proverbs.

Look at the ant, you lazy person, consider her ways, and be wise. It has no commander, officer, or ruler, yet it prepares its food in the summer, and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat. (Proverbs 6:6-8 ULT)

This page answers the question: *What are proverbs, and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Metaphor](#)

[Parallelism](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying proverbs. There are many proverbs in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say proverbs in your language so that people recognize them as proverbs and understand what they teach.

Examples From the Bible

A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

This means that it is better to be a good person and to have a good reputation than it is to have a lot of money.

Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes,
so is the sluggard to those who send him. (Proverbs 10:26 ULT)

This means that a lazy person is very annoying to those who send him to do something.

The way of Yahweh protects those who have integrity,
but it is destruction for the wicked. (Proverbs 10:29 ULT)

This means that Yahweh protects people who do what is right, but he destroys those who are wicked.

Translation Strategies

If translating a proverb literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

- (1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.
- (2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing

them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.

A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

Here are some ideas for ways that people might say a proverb in their language.

It is better to have a good name than to have great riches,
and to be favored by people than to have silver and gold.

Wise people choose a good name over great riches,
and favor over silver and gold.

Try to have a good reputation rather than great riches.

Will riches really help you?

I would rather have a good reputation.

(2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

Like **snow in summer** or rain in harvest,
so a fool does not deserve honor. (Proverbs 26:1 ULT)

It is not natural for **a cold wind to blow in the hot season** or for it to rain
in the harvest season;

And it is not natural to honor a foolish person.

(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring. (Proverbs 27:1a ULT)

Do not count your chickens before they hatch.

(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

There is a generation that curses their father
and does not bless their mother.
There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,

and yet they are not washed of their filth. (Proverbs 30:11-12 ULT)

People who do not respect their parents think that they are righteous,
and they do not turn away from their sin.

(Go back to: [1 Kings 20:11](#))

Reflexive Pronouns

Description

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. English does this by using reflexive pronouns. These are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: "myself," "yourself," "himself," "herself," "itself," "ourselves," "yourselves," and "themselves." Other languages may have other ways to show this.

This page answers the question: *What are reflexive pronouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences]]

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. For those languages, translators will need to know how to translate the English reflexive pronouns.
- The reflexive pronouns in English also have other functions.

Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- To show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- To show that someone did something alone
- To show that someone or something was alone

Examples From the Bible

Reflexive pronouns are used to show the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence.

If **I** should testify about **myself**, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31 ULT)

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and **many** went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify **themselves**. (John 11:55 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence.

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2 ULT)

So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There also were other boats with him. Then a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full of water. But **Jesus himself** was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:36-38a ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone did something alone.

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone or something was alone.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. **It** was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.
- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.
- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.
- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”
- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) In some languages people modify the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

If I should testify about **myself** alone, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31)

“If I should **self-testify** alone, my testimony would not be true.”

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to **purify themselves**. (John 11:55)

“Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out from country before the Passover in order to **self-purify**.”

- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

He himself took our sickness and bore our diseases. (Matthew 8:17 ULT)

“**It was he who** took our sickness and bore our diseases.”

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)

“**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples were.”

- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. English adds the reflexive pronoun.

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)

- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15)

“When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again **alone** up the mountain.”

- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

“He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up and lying **in its own place.**”

(Go back to: [1 Kings 13:7](#); [14:23](#); [19:4](#); [19:18](#); [19:19](#))

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: 1 Kings 1:6; 1:11; 1:13; 2:22; 2:42; 2:43; 3:9; 8:27; 9:13; 11:41; 12:16; 14:6; 14:29; 15:7; 15:23; 15:31; 16:5; 16:14; 16:20; 16:27; 17:20; 18:9; 18:17; 18:21; 19:9; 20:13; 20:32; 21:7; 21:19; 21:20; 21:29; 22:3; 22:16; 22:18; 22:24; 22:39; 22:45)

Simile

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. The simile focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as,” or “than.”

This page answers the question: *What is a simile?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged, **like sheep not having a shepherd**. (Matthew 9:36)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, so be as wise **as the serpents** and harmless **as the doves**. (Matthew 10:16 ULT)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep; Jesus' enemies would attack his disciples.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

God's word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person's flesh. God's word is very effective in showing what is in a person's heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people's attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with both of the items being compared.

Examples From the Bible

Suffer hardship with me, **as a good soldier** of Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULT)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

Just as the lightning flashing from a place under the sky shines to another place under the sky, so will the Son of Man be. (Luke 17:24b ULT)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But in context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lighting flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

- (1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.
- (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.
- (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.

See, I send **you out among wicked people** and you will be in danger from them **as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves**.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

For the word of God is living and active and **more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword**.

- (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.

See, I send you out **as chickens in the midst of wild dogs**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to gather your children together, **as a mother closely watches over her infants**, but you refused!

If you have faith **as a grain of mustard** ... (Matthew 17:20)

If you have faith even as small **as a tiny seed**,

- (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT)

See, I send you out among **people who will want to harm you**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to **protect you**, but you refused!

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Metaphor](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [1 Kings 4:29](#); [7:26](#); [7:41](#); [14:10](#); [14:15](#); [Notes](#); [20:27](#); [22:17](#))

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: [1 Kings 22:11](#))

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/bit-part2]]

(Go back to: 1 Kings 1:20; 2:9; 2:44; 8:32; 8:52; 9:3; 9:10; 9:17; 9:26; 10:12; 10:16; 10:17; 10:18; 11:16; 11:24; 12:1; 12:16; 12:20; 13:31; 14:12; 14:25; 14:26; 14:30; 15:3; 15:6; 15:7; 15:14; 15:27; 16:7; 16:16; 18:6; 18:20; 18:26; 20:6; 20:20; 20:21; 20:26; 21:1; 21:5; 21:7; 22:17; 22:29)

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: [1 Kings 4:23](#); [4:33](#); [5:18](#); [6:15](#); [10:11](#); [10:18](#); [10:22](#); [17:4](#); [19:4](#))



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 27

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: 1 Kings 12 General Notes](#))

believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

Definition:

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

1. believe

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

2. believe in

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

3. believer

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

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

4. unbelief

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”
- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”

- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

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

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:6
- Genesis 45:26
- Job 9:16-18
- Habakkuk 1:5-7
- Mark 6:4-6
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 9:41
- John 1:12
- Acts 6:5
- Acts 9:42
- Acts 28:23-24
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Corinthians 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 9:5
- 2 Corinthians 6:15
- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **4:8** Abram **believed** God’s promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God’s promise.
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:6** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **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. Do you **believe** this?”
- **43:1** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:3** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:1** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:9** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- **46:9** It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called “Christians.”
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

(**Go back to:** [1 Kings 11 General Notes](#))

bless, blessed, blessing

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 10:16
- Acts 13:34
- Ephesians 1:3
- Genesis 14:20
- Isaiah 44:3
- James 1:25
- Luke 6:20
- Matthew 26:26
- Nehemiah 9:5
- Romans 4:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:7** God saw that it was good and he **blessed** them.
- **1:15** God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He **blessed** them and told them, “Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.”
- **1:16** So God rested from all he had been doing. He **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **4:4** “I will make your name great. I will **bless** those who **bless** you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be **blessed** because of you.”

- **4:7** Melchizedek **blessed** Abram and said, "May God Most High who owns heaven and earth **bless** Abram."
- **7:3** Isaac wanted to give his **blessing** to Esau.
- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0833, H0835, H1288, H1289, H1293, G17570, G21270, G21280, G21290, G31060, G31070, G31080, G60500

([Go back to: 1 Kings 3 General Notes](#))

curse, cursed, cursing

Definition:

The term “curse” means to cause negative things to happen to the person or thing that is being cursed.

- A curse can be a statement that harm will happen to someone or something.
- To curse someone can also be an expression of desire that bad things will happen to them.
- It can also refer to the punishment or other negative things that someone causes to happen to someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “cause bad things to happen to” or “declare that something bad will happen to” or “swear to cause evil things to happen to.”
- In the context of God sending curses on his disobedient people, it could be translated as “punish by allowing bad things to happen.”
- The term “cursed” when used to describe people could be translated as “(this person) will experience much trouble.”
- The phrase “cursed be” could be translated as “May (this person) experience great difficulties.”
- The phrase, “Cursed is the ground” could be translated as “The soil will not be very fertile.”
- However, if the target language has the phrase “cursed be” and it has the same meaning, then it is good to keep the same phrase.

(See also: [bless](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 14:24-26
- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Galatians 3:10
- Galatians 3:14
- Genesis 3:14
- Genesis 3:17
- James 3:10
- Numbers 22:6
- Psalms 109:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:9** God said to the snake, “You are **cursed!**”
- **2:11** “Now the ground is **cursed**, and you will need to work hard to grow food.”
- **4:4** “I will bless those who bless you and **curse** those who **curse** you.”
- **39:7** Then Peter vowed, saying, “May God **curse** me if I know this man!”
- **50:16** Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God **cursed** it and decided to destroy it.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0422, H0423, H0779, H1288, H2763, H2764, H3994, H5344, H6895, H7043, H7045, H7621, H8381, G03310, G03320, G06850, G19440, G25510, G26520, G26530, G26710, G26720, G60350

(Go back to: [1 Kings 2 General Notes](#))

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: [1 Kings 14 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

exalt, exalted, exaltation

Definition:

To exalt is to highly praise and honor someone. It can also mean to put someone in a high position.

- In the Bible, the term “exalt” is most often used for exalting God.
- When a person exalts himself, it means he is thinking about himself in a proud or arrogant way.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “exalt” could include “highly praise” or “honor greatly” or “extol” or “speak highly of.”
- In some contexts it could be translated by a word or phrase that means “put in a higher position” or “give more honor to” or “talk about proudly.”
- “Do not exalt yourself” could also be translated as “Do not think of yourself too highly” or “Do not brag about yourself.”
- “Those that exalt themselves” could also be translated as “Those who think proudly about themselves” or “Those who boast about themselves.”

(See also: praise, worship, glory, boast, proud)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:5-7
- 2 Samuel 22:47
- Acts 5:31
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 18:46

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1361, H4984, H5375, H5549, H5927, H7311, H7426, H7682, G18690, G52290, G52510, G53110, G53120

(Go back to: [1 Kings 2 General Notes](#))

faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

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

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40
- Numbers 12:7
- Joshua 2:14
- Judges 2:16-17
- 1 Samuel 2:9
- Psalm 12:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 1:26
- Jeremiah 9:7-9
- Hosea 5:7
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 1:7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 1:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- **14:12** Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **15:13** The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- **17:9** David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **35:12** “The older son said to his father, ‘All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!’”
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:4** “If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, H0539, H0540, H0571, H0898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G05690, G05710, G41030

(**Go back to:** [1 Kings 9 General Notes](#))

fool, foolish, folly

Definition:

The term “fool” refers to a person who often makes wrong choices, especially choosing to disobey. The term “foolish” describes a person or behavior that is not wise.

- In the Bible, the term “fool” usually refers to a person who does not believe or obey God. This is often contrasted to the wise person, who trusts in God and obeys God.
- In the Psalms, David describes a fool as a person who does not believe in God, one who ignores all the evidence of God in his creation.
- The Old Testament book of Proverbs also gives many descriptions of what a fool, or foolish person, is like.
- The term “folly” refers to an action that is not wise because it is against God’s will. Often “folly” also includes the meaning of something that is ridiculous or dangerous.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “fool” could be translated as “foolish person” or “unwise person” or “senseless person” or “ungodly person.”
- Ways to translate “foolish” could include “lacking understanding” or “unwise” or “senseless.”

(See also: [wise](#))

Bible References:

- Ecclesiastes 1:17
- Ephesians 5:15
- Galatians 3:3
- Genesis 31:28
- Matthew 7:26
- Matthew 25:8
- Proverbs 13:16
- Psalms 49:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0191, H0196, H0200, H1198, H1984, H2973, H3684, H3687, H3688, H3689, H3690, H5014, H5034, H5036, H5039, H5528, H5529, H5530, H5531, H6612, H8417, H8602, H8604, G04530, G04540, G07810, G08010, G08770, G08780, G27570, G31500, G31540, G34710, G34720, G34730, G34740, G39120

(Go back to: [1 Kings 11 General Notes](#))

forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. "Forgiveness" is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean "cancel," as in the expression "forgive a debt."
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term "pardon" means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as "forgive" but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "forgive" could be translated as "pardon" or "cancel" or "release" or "not hold against" (someone).
- The term "forgiveness" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "practice of not resenting" or "declaring (someone) as not guilty" or "the act of pardoning."
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate "pardon."

(See also: guilt)

Bible References:

- Genesis 50:17
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Deuteronomy 29:20-21
- Joshua 24:19-20
- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11
- Psalms 25:17-19
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Isaiah 40:2
- Luke 5:21
- Acts 8:22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-14
- 1 John 2:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **7:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.

- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:8** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

Word Data:

- H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G859, G863, G5483

(Go back to: [1 Kings 21 General Notes](#))

god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry

Definition:

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

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

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- Genesis 35:2
- Exodus 32:1
- Psalms 31:6
- Psalms 81:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 7:41
- Acts 7:43
- Acts 15:20
- Acts 19:27
- Romans 2:22
- Galatians 4:8-9
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **10:2** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's **gods**.
- **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** They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- **18:13** But most of Judah's kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0367, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0457, H1322, H1544, H1892, H2553, H3649, H4656, H4906, H5236, H5566, H6089, H6090, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6673, H6736, H6754, H7723, H8163, H8251, H8267, H8441, H8655, G14930, G14940, G14950, G14960, G14970, G22990, G27120

(Go back to: [1 Kings 16 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

house of God, Yahweh's house

Definition:

In the Bible, the phrases "house of God" (God's house) and "house of Yahweh (Yahweh's house)" refer to a place where God is worshiped.

- This term is also used more specifically to refer to the tabernacle or the temple.
- Sometimes "God's house" is used to refer to the people of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a place of worship, this term could be translated as "a house for worshiping God" or "a place for worshiping God."
- If it is referring to the temple or tabernacle, this could be translated as "the temple (or tabernacle) where God is worshiped" (or "where God is present" or "where God meets with his people").
- The word "house" may be important to use in the translation in order to communicate that God "dwells" there, that is, his spirit is in that place to meet with his people and to be worshiped by them.

(See also: people of God, tabernacle, [temple](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 3:14-15
- 2 Chronicles 23:8-9
- Ezra 5:13
- Genesis 28:17
- Judges 18:30-31
- Mark 2:26
- Matthew 12:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1004, H1005, H3068, G23160, G36240

([Go back to: 1 Kings 7 General Notes](#))

Israel, Israelites

Facts:

The term “Israel” is the name that God gave to Jacob. Often it refers to the nation that is descended from him.

- The name Israel probably means “He struggles with God.”
- The descendants of Jacob became known as the “sons of Israel” or the “people of Israel” or the “nation of Israel” or the “Israelites.”
- God formed his covenant with the people of Israel. They were his chosen people.
- The nation of Israel consisted of twelve tribes.
- Soon after King Solomon died, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: the southern kingdom, called “Judah,” and the northern kingdom, called “Israel.”
- Often the term “Israel” can be translated as “the people of Israel” or “the nation of Israel,” depending on the context.

(See also: Jacob, kingdom of Israel, Judah, nation, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:1
- 1 Kings 8:2
- Acts 2:36
- Acts 7:24
- Acts 13:23
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 24:21
- Mark 12:29
- Matthew 2:6
- Matthew 27:9
- Philippians 3:4-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:15** The descendants of the twelve sons became the twelve tribes of **Israel**.
- **9:3** The Egyptians forced the **Israelites** to build many buildings and even whole cities.
- **9:5** A certain **Israelite** woman gave birth to a baby boy.
- **10:1** They said, “This is what the God of **Israel** says, ‘Let my people go!’”
- **14:12** But despite all this, the people of *_Israel_* complained and grumbled against God and against Moses.
- **15:9** God fought for **Israel** that day. He caused the Amorites to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the Amorites.
- **15:12** After this battle, God gave each tribe of **Israel** *its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave _Israel_ peace along all its borders.*
- **16:16** So God punished *_Israel_* again for worshipping idols.
- **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.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3478, H3479, H3481, H3482, G09350, G24740, G24750

(**Go back to:** [Introduction to 1 Kings](#))

law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God

Definition:

Most simply, the term “law” refers to a rule or instruction that should be followed. In the Bible, the term “law” is often used generally to refer to anything and everything God wants his people to obey and do. The specific term “law of Moses” refers to the commandments and instructions that God gave Moses for the Israelites to obey.

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- Acts 15:6
- Daniel 9:13
- Exodus 28:42-43
- Ezra 7:25-26
- Galatians 2:15
- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 5:18
- Nehemiah 10:29
- Romans 3:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:7** God also gave many other **laws** and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these **laws**, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would punish them.
- **13:9** Anyone who disobeyed **God’s law** could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God.
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.
- **16:1** After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God’s laws**.

- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write **his law** on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins.
- **27:1** Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"
- **28:1** Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2710, H3068, H4687, H4872, H4941, H8451, G23160, G35510, G35650

([Go back to: 1 Kings 11 General Notes](#))

oppress, oppressed, oppression, oppressor, dominate

Definition:

The terms “oppress” and “oppression” refer to treating people harshly. An “oppressor” is a person who oppresses people.

- The term “oppression” especially refers to a situation where people of greater strength mistreat or enslave people who are under their power or rule.
- The term “oppressed” describes the people who are being harshly treated.
- Often enemy nations and their rulers were oppressors to the people of Israel.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “oppress” could be translated as “severely mistreat” or “cause to be heavily burdened” or “put under miserable bondage” or “rule harshly.”
- Ways to translate “oppression” could include “heavy suppression and bondage” or “burdensome control.”
- The phrase “the oppressed” could be translated as “oppressed people” or “people in terrible bondage” or “those who are treated harshly.”
- The term “oppressor” could be translated as “person who oppresses” or “nation who controls and rules harshly” or “persecutor.”

(See also: bind, enslave, persecute)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:17-19
- Deuteronomy 26:7
- Ecclesiastes 4:1
- Job 10:3
- Judges 2:18-19
- Nehemiah 5:14-15
- Psalms 119:134

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1790, H1792, H2541, H2555, H3238, H3905, H3906, H4642, H5065, H6031, H6125, H6184, H6206, H6216, H6217, H6231, H6233, H6234, H6693, H7429, H7533, H7701, G26160, G26690

(Go back to: [1 Kings 12 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

promise, promised

Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: covenant, oath, vow)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”
- **3:16** God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- **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. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- **5:4** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- **8:15** The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.
- **17:14** Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- **50:1** Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

(Go back to: [1 Kings 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: [synecdoche](#))
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: Baal, divination, [false god](#), false prophet, fulfill, [law](#), vision)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- Acts 3:25
- John 1:43-45
- Malachi 4:4-6
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 2:18
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalm 51:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:12** When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- **17:13** God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- **19:1** Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God’s messages.

- **19:6** All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- **19:17** Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- **21:9** The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- **43:5** "This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- **43:7** "This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- **48:12** Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2372, H2374, H4853, H5012, H5013, H5016, H5017, H5029, H5030, H5031, H5197, G24950, G43940, G43950, G43960, G43970, G43980, G55780

(Go back to: [1 Kings 13 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

repent, repentance

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [forgive](#), [sin](#), [turn](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 3:19-20
- Luke 3:3
- Luke 3:8
- Luke 5:32
- Luke 24:47
- Mark 1:14-15
- Matthew 3:3
- Matthew 3:11
- Matthew 4:17
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:2** After many years of disobeying God and being oppressed by their enemies, the Israelites **repented** and asked God to rescue them.
- **17:13** David **repented** of his sin and God forgave him.
- **19:18** They (prophets) warned people that God would destroy them if they did not **repent**.
- **24:2** Many people came out to the wilderness to listen to John. He preached to them, saying, “**Repent**, for the kingdom of God is near!”
- **42:8** “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to **receive** forgiveness for their sins.”
- **44:5** “So now, **repent** and turn to God so that your sins will be washed away.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5150, H5162, H5164, G02780, G33380, G33400, G33410

(**Go back to:** [1 Kings 21 General Notes](#))

reward, prize, deserve

Definition:

The term “reward” refers to what a person receives because of something he has done, either good or bad. To “reward” someone is to give someone something he deserves. However, this is different than the concept of “wages,” which refers to payment (often money) given in exchange for work performed.

- A reward can be a good or positive thing that a person receives because he has done something well or because he has obeyed God.
- Sometimes a reward can refer to negative things that may result from bad behavior, such as the statement “the reward of the wicked.” In this context “reward” refers to the punishment or negative consequences they receive because of their sinful actions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “reward” could be translated as “payment” or “something that is deserved” or “punishment.”
- To “reward” someone could be translated by to “repay” or to “punish” or to “give what is deserved.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not refer to wages. A reward is not specifically about earning money as part of a job.

(See also: punish)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 32:6
- Isaiah 40:10
- Luke 6:35
- Mark 9:40-41
- Matthew 5:11-12
- Matthew 6:3-4
- Psalms 127:3-5
- Revelation 11:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H0866, H0868, H1576, H1578, H1580, H4909, H4991, H5023, H6118, H6468, H6529, H7938, H7939, H7999, G04690, G05140, G05910, G26030, G34050, G34060, G34080

(Go back to: [1 Kings 13 General Notes](#))

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- To “sin” could also be translated as to “disobey God” or to “do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: disobey, [evil](#), flesh, tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31

- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

(Go back to: [1 Kings 14 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

temple, house, house of God

Facts:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

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

Bible References:

- Acts 3:2
- Acts 3:8
- Ezekiel 45:18-20
- Luke 19:46
- Nehemiah 10:28
- Psalm 79:1-3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:6** David wanted to build a **temple** where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- **18:2** In Jerusalem, Solomon built the **Temple** for which his father David had planned and gathered materials. Instead of at the Tent of Meeting, people now worshiped God and offered sacrifices to him at the **Temple**. God came and was present in the **Temple**, and he lived there with his people.
- **20:7** They (Babylonians) captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the **Temple**, and took away all the treasures.
- **20:13** When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they rebuilt the **Temple** and the wall around the city of the city and the **Temple**.
- **25:4** Then Satan took Jesus to the highest point on the **Temple** and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘God will command his angels to carry you so your foot does not hit a stone.’”
- **40:7** When he died, there was an earthquake and the large curtain that separated the people from the presence of God in the **Temple** was torn in two, from the top to the bottom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1964, H1965, G14930, G24110, G34850

(Go back to: [1 Kings 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

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: [1 Kings 14 General Notes](#))

walk, walked

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, honor)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Kings 2:4
- Colossians 2:7
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 17:1
- Isaiah 2:5
- Jeremiah 13:10
- Micah 4:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1869, H1980, H1981, H3212, H4108, G17040, G40430, G41980, G47480

(Go back to: [1 Kings 9 General Notes](#))

will of God

Definition:

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

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

Translation Suggestions:

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

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6
- Colossians 4:12-14
- Ephesians 1:1-2
- John 5:30-32
- Mark 3:33-35
- Matthew 6:8-10
- Psalms 103:21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6310, H6634, H7522, G10120, G10130, G23070, G23080, G23090, G25960

(Go back to: [1 Kings 13 General Notes](#))

wise, wisdom

Definition:

The term “wise” describes someone who understands what is the right and moral thing to do and then does that. “Wisdom” is the understanding and practice of what is true and morally right.

- Being wise includes the ability to make good decisions, especially choosing to do what pleases God.
- People become wise by listening to God and humbly obeying his will.
- A wise person will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life, such as joy, kindness, love, and patience.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “wise” could include “obedient to God” or “sensible and obedient” or “God-fearing.”
- “Wisdom” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “wise living” or “sensible and obedient living” or “good judgment.”
- It is best to translate “wise” and “wisdom” in such a way that they are different terms from other key terms like righteous or obedient.

(See also: obey, fruit)

Bible References:

- Acts 6:3
- Colossians 3:15-17
- Exodus 31:6
- Genesis 3:6
- Isaiah 19:12
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Matthew 7:24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:5** She also wanted to be **wise**, so she picked some of the fruit and ate it.
- **18:1** When Solomon asked for **wisdom**, God was pleased and made him the **wisest** man in the world.
- **23:9** Some time later, **wise** men from countries far to the east saw an unusual star in the sky.
- **45:1** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the Holy Spirit and of **wisdom**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0998, H1350, H2445, H2449, H2450, H2451, H2452, H2454, H2942, H3820, H3823, H6195, H6493, H6912, H7535, H7919, H7922, H8454, G46780, G46790, G46800, G49200, G54280, G54290, G54300

(Go back to: [1 Kings 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

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