



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

**John**

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[en]

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# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

**John**

## Introduction to the Gospel of John

### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of the Gospel of John

Introduction about who Jesus is (1:1–18)

Jesus is baptized, and he chooses twelve disciples (1:19–51)

Jesus preaches, teaches, and heals people (2–11)

The seven days before Jesus' death (12–19)

- Mary anoints the feet of Jesus (12:1–11)
- Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem (12:12–19)
- Some Greek men want to see Jesus (12:20–36)
- The Jewish leaders reject Jesus (12:37–50)
- Jesus teaches his disciples (13–17)
- Jesus is arrested and undergoes trial (18:1–19:15)
- Jesus is crucified and buried (19:16–42)

Jesus rises from the dead (20:1–29)

John says why he wrote his gospel (20:30–31)

Jesus meets with the disciples (21)

#### What is the Gospel of John about?

The Gospel of John is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. These books are called “Gospels,” which means “good news.” Their authors wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. John said that he wrote his Gospel “so that people might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God” (20:31). John’s Gospel repeatedly emphasizes that Jesus is God in human form.

John’s Gospel is very different from the other three Gospels. John does not include some of the teachings and events that the other writers included in their Gospels. Also, John wrote about some teachings and events that are not in the other Gospels.

John wrote much about the miraculous signs Jesus did to prove that what Jesus said about himself was true. (See: [sign, proof, reminder](#))

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

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, “The Gospel of John” or “The Gospel According to John.” Or they may choose a title that may be clearer, such as, “The Good News About Jesus That John Wrote.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### Who wrote the Gospel of John?

This book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought that the Apostle John was the author. Further evidence that the Apostle John wrote this Gospel is the fact that his name does not occur once within it. Instead, this Gospel contains the phrase “the disciple whom Jesus loved” in places where the other Gospels indicate that John was involved. The Apostle John most likely referred to himself in this manner because he wanted to humbly testify to his close relationship with Jesus as part of Jesus’ inner circle of disciples who became the “pillars” of the early church (Galatians 2:9).



## Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

### Why does John write so much about the final week of Jesus' life?

John wrote much about Jesus' final week. He wanted his readers to think deeply about Jesus' final week and his death on the cross. He wanted people to understand that Jesus willingly died on the cross so that God could forgive them for sinning against him. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

## Part 3: Important Translation Issues

### Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "Son of Man"?

In the Gospels, Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man." This is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In that passage, there is a person who is described as like a "son of man." That means that the person was someone who looked like a human being. God gave authority to this "son of man" to rule over the nations forever. All people will worship him forever.

Jews of Jesus' time did not use "Son of Man" as a title for anyone. But Jesus used it for himself to help them understand who he truly was. (See: [Son of Man](#), [son of man](#))

Translating the title "Son of Man" can be difficult in many languages. Readers may misunderstand a literal translation. Translators can consider alternatives, such as "The Human One." It may also be helpful to include a footnote to explain the title.

### What does the word "sign" mean in the Gospel of John?

While other New Testament writers use terms like "mighty works" or "wonders" to refer to the miracles that Jesus did, John prefers to use the term "sign." The miracles John calls signs were significant displays of divine power. John called them signs to emphasize that an important purpose of Jesus' miracles was to prove that Jesus was God and that what Jesus said about himself was true. John said that in his Gospel he only wrote about some of the signs that Jesus did and "these have been written so that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so that believing, you would have life in his name" ([20:30-31](#)).

### What do the words "remain," "reside," and "abide" mean in the Gospel of John?

John often used the words "remain," "reside", and "abide" as metaphors. John spoke of a believer becoming more faithful to Jesus and knowing Jesus better as if Jesus' word "remained" in the believer. John also spoke of someone being spiritually joined to someone else as if the person "remained" in the other person. Christians are said to "remain" in Christ and in God. The Father is said to "remain" in the Son, and the Son is said to "remain" in the Father. The Son is said to "remain" in believers. The Holy Spirit is also said to "remain" in the believers.

Many translators will find it impossible to represent these ideas in their languages in exactly the same way. For example, Jesus intended to express the idea of the Christian being spiritually together with him when he said, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" (John 6:56). The UST uses the idea of "will be joined to me, and I will be joined to him." But translators may have to find other ways of expressing the idea.

In the passage, "If my words remain in you" (John 15:7), the UST expresses this idea as, "If you live by my message." Translators may find it possible to use this translation as a model.

## What is double meaning in the Gospel of John?

John occasionally used words or phrases that could have two meanings (double entendre) in the language he was writing in. For example, the phrase translated “born again” in the ULT could also mean “born from above” (John 3:3, 7). In such cases, you may want to choose one meaning and put the other meaning in a footnote.

## What are the major issues in the text of the Gospel of John?

The following verses found in older versions of the Bible but are not included in most modern versions. Translators are advised not to translate these verses. However, if in the translators’ region, there are older versions of the Bible that include these verses, the translators can include them. If they are translated, they should be put inside square brackets ([ ]) to indicate that they were probably not original to John’s Gospel.

- \* “waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel of the Lord occasionally went down into the pool and stirred th
- \* “going through the midst of them, and so passed by” (8:59)

The following passage is included in most older and modern versions of the Bible. But it is not in the earliest copies of the Bible. Translators are advised to translate this passage. It should be put inside of square brackets ([ ]) to indicate that it may not have been original to John’s Gospel.

- \* The story of the adulterous woman (7:53-8:11)

(See: [Textual Variants](#))

# John 1

## John 1 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus is God (1:1–5)

John the Baptist was Jesus' witness (1:6–8)

Summary of Jesus' ministry on Earth (1:9–13)

Jesus is God in the flesh (1:14–18)

John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus (1:19–34)

Jesus meets Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel (1:35–51)

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in [1:23](#), which are words from the Old Testament.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “The Word”

John uses the phrase “the Word” to refer to Jesus ([1:1,14](#)). John is saying that God's most important message to all people is actually Jesus, a person with a physical body. (See: [word of God](#), [word of Yahweh](#), [word of the Lord](#), [word of truth](#), [scripture](#))

#### Light and Darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. In [1:4–9](#), John uses an extended metaphor in which light represents what is true and good and darkness represents what is false and evil. John applies that light metaphor to Jesus in order to show that Jesus is the embodiment of God's truth and goodness. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

#### “Children of God”

People are sometimes described as “children of God” because God created them. However, John uses this expression in a different sense in this chapter. He uses it to describe people who have entered into a father-child relationship with God by putting their faith and trust in Jesus. God indeed created all people, but people can only become children of God in this sense by believing in Jesus. “Children” in this usage does not refer to those who are young, but only to the relationship that people have at any age to their father. (See: [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Metaphors

John uses the metaphors of light and darkness and of “the Word” to tell the reader that he will be writing more about good and evil and about what God wants to tell people through Jesus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

### **“In the beginning”**

Some languages and cultures speak of the world as if it has always existed, as if it had no beginning. But “very long ago” is different from “in the beginning,” and you need to be sure that your translation communicates correctly.

### **“Son of Man”**

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” in this chapter ([1:51](#)). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man, son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 1:1

### In the beginning was (ULT)

This phrase refers to the very earliest time before God created the heavens and the earth. It does not refer to time in the distant past. Alternate translation: “Before the beginning of the universe there was” or “Before the universe began there was”

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

### the Word, and the Word...and the Word was God (ULT)

Here, **the Word** refers to Jesus. It does not refer to a spoken word. ULT indicates this by capitalizing **Word** to indicate that this is a title for Jesus. Use whatever convention your language uses to indicate that this is a name. If “word” is feminine in your language, it could be translated as “the one who is called the Word.” Alternate translation: “Jesus, who is the Word, and Jesus ... and Jesus was God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:2

### He (ULT)

**He** here refers to Jesus, whom John has called “the Word” in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus” or “the Word” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.

### in the beginning (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to the very earliest time before God created the heavens and the earth. See how you translated this phrase in verse [1](#). Alternate translation: “before the beginning of the universe” or “before the universe began”

## John 1:3

### All things came into being through him (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you can translate this with an active verb and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "God made all things through him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him came into being not one thing that has come into being.

### him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus, the one who is called "the Word." If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus" or "the Word" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### without him came into being not one thing that has come into being (ULT)

If your language does not permit double negatives, these words should communicate that the opposite of "all things were made through him" is false. Alternate translation: "with him came into being everything that came into being" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### without him came into being not one thing that has come into being (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you can translate this with an active verb and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "God did not make one thing without him" or "God made with him everything that God has made" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 1:4

### In him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus, the one who is called “the Word.” If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus” or “the Word” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

### life (ULT)

Here, it is best to use a general term for **life**. (See: [life, live, living, alive](#)) If you must use a more specific word, consider that **life** here could refer to: (1) eternal life, which is the meaning John uses for this term throughout this Gospel. Alternate translation: “the means of receiving eternal life” (2) physical life, which would mean that this verse continues the discussion about the creation of the universe in the previous verses. Alternate translation: “the life of all living things” (3) both physical life and eternal life. Alternate translation: “the life of all living things and the source of eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and the life (ULT)

Here, **the life** refers to the same life stated in the previous phrase. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “and that life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the light of men (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for what is true and good. Alternate translation: “the true and good things” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the light of men (ULT)

Here, **of** indicates to whom the **light** is given. Alternate translation: “the light given to men” (See: [Possession](#))

### of men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, John is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “of people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))



## John 1:5

### the light...shines (ULT)

Here, **the light shines** is a metaphor. John speaks figuratively of God's truth and goodness being revealed as if it were a light shining. This truth and goodness was revealed to the world by Jesus. He is the embodiment of God's truth and goodness. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "God reveals his truth and goodness" or "God's truth and goodness is like a light that shines" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

### in the darkness...and the darkness (ULT)

Here, **darkness** is a metaphor for what is false and evil. It is the spiritual **darkness** of the people in the world who do not love Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "in the false and evil world, and that evil world" or "in the evil world that is like a dark place, and that dark place" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### did not overcome it (ULT)

Here, the word translated **overcome** could also be translated as "understand." It could mean: (1) the evil forces in the world did not conquer God's truth and goodness. Alternate translation: "did not conquer it" (2) the people in the world who don't know God do not understand his truth and goodness. Alternate translation: "did not comprehend it" (3) the evil forces of this world neither conquered nor understood God's truth and goodness. Alternate translation: "did not conquer or comprehend it"

### did not overcome it (ULT)

Here, **it** refers to the light mentioned earlier in the verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "did not overcome the light" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 1:6

### having been sent from God (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could use an active verbal form in place of the passive verbal form **having been sent**. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "whom God has sent" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> There was a man having been sent from God, whose name was John.

### John (ULT)

Here, **John** refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist" or "John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:7

### He (ULT)

**He** here refers to John the Baptist, who was introduced in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “John the Baptist” or “John the Immerser” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> He came as a witness in order that he might testify about the light, so that all might believe through him.

### about the light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for the revelation of God’s truth and goodness in Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “about Jesus, who revealed the true and good things of God” (See: [Metaphor](#) )

### through him (ULT)

Here, **through** indicates the means by which everyone might believe in the light. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “by means of him”

### through him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to John the Baptist. It does not refer to Jesus or the light. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “through John the Baptist” or “through John the Immerser” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 1:8

### That one (ULT)

**That one** here refers to John the Baptist. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “John the Baptist” or “John the Immerser” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> That one was not the light, but came so that he might testify about the light.

### the light...the light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for the revelation of God’s truth and goodness in Jesus. See how you translated it in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “Jesus, who revealed the true and good things of God ... Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 1:9

### The true light, which (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor that represents Jesus as the one who both reveals the truth about God and is himself that truth. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “Jesus, who truly embodied God’s truth, who” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to all men, was coming into the world.

### which gives light to all men (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for God’s truth and goodness. Alternate translation: “which reveals the true and good things of God to all men” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, John is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

## John 1:10

### He was...through him...him (ULT)

**He** and **him** in this verse refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus was ... through Jesus ... Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, and the world did not know him.

### in the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the earth on which people live. It does not refer only to the people in the world or to the entire universe. Alternate translation: "on the earth" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the universe God created. It does not refer only to the people in the world or only to the earth. Alternate translation: "the universe" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### and the world did not know him (ULT)

Here, **and** introduces a contrast between what was expected, that the world would recognize its Creator, and what happened, that the world did not do that. Alternate translation: "but the world did not know him" or "yet the world did not know him" (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#) )

### the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the people who lived in it. Alternate translation: "the people in the world" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### did not know (ULT)

Alternate translation: "did not acknowledge"

## John 1:11

### He came to his own, and his own did not receive him

**He, his,** and **him** in this verse refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus came to his own” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

Here, **his own** could refer to: (1) his own people, the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: “his fellow Jews ... his fellow Jews” (2) his own creation. Alternate translation: “the people he created ... the people he created” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and his own did not receive him.

### and (ULT)

Here, **and** introduces a contrast between what was expected, that his own people would know their Messiah, and what happened, that his own people did not do that. Alternate translation: “but” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#) )

### did not receive him (ULT)

Here, **receive** means to accept a person into one’s presence with friendliness. Alternate translation: “did not accept him” or “did not welcome him”

## John 1:12

**But as many as received him, he gave to them the authority to become children of God, to those believing in his name (ULT)**

If it would be natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. You will also need to adjust some words to fit the new order. Alternate translation: "But as many as received him and believed in his name, he gave to them the authority to become children of God" (See: [Information Structure](#))

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, he gave to them the authority to become children of God, to those believing in his name.

### **received him (ULT)**

Here, **receive** means to accept a person into one's presence with friendliness. See how you translated this word in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "accepted him" or "welcomed him"

### **him (ULT)**

Here, **him** and all singular third person pronouns in this verse refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### **he gave to them the authority (ULT)**

Here, the word translated **authority** means either the right or ability to do something. Alternate translation: "he gave to them the right" or "he made it possible for them"

### **children of God (ULT)**

The word **children** is a metaphor that represents our relationship to God, which is like children to a father. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### **believing in his name (ULT)**

Here, **name** is a metonym that stands for Jesus' identity and everything about him. Alternate translation: "believed in him" (See: [Metonymy](#))



## John 1:13

### These (ULT)

**These** here refers to the children of God mentioned in the previous verse. If it would be misunderstood for your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “These children of God” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**13** These were not born from bloods, nor from the will of the flesh, nor from the will of a man, but from God.

### were...born (ULT)

Here, **born** is used figuratively to describe God changing a person from being dead spiritually to being alive spiritually when they believe in Jesus. John recorded Jesus referring to this change as being “born again” in [3:3](#). (See: [born again](#), [born of God](#), [new birth](#)) If your readers would misunderstand this, you could use an expression that indicates spiritual rebirth rather than physical birth. Alternate translation: “born spiritually” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### not...from bloods...were...born (ULT)

Here, **bloods** refers to the bloodlines or genetic contributions of both parents of a child. Alternate translation: “were not born from human bloodlines” or “were not born from human decent” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### from (ULT)

Here, **from** could refer to any of the following: (1) the means by which God’s children are born. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “by” (2) the source from which God’s children are born. Alternate translation: “of” (3) the cause of the birth of God’s children. Alternate translation: “as a result of”

### nor from the will of the flesh (ULT)

John is leaving out some of the words that this phrase would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “nor were they born from the will of the flesh” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### from (ULT)

Here, **from** could refer to any of the following: (1) the means by which God’s children are born. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “by” (2) the source from which God’s children are born. Alternate translation: “of” (3) the cause of the birth of God’s children. Alternate translation: “as a result of”

### from the will of the flesh (ULT)

Here, John is using the term **flesh** figuratively to refer to a human being, which is made of flesh. Alternate translation: “from the human will” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### nor from the will of a man (ULT)

John is leaving out some of the words that this phrase would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “nor were they born from the will of man” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

**from (ULT)**

Here, **from** could refer to any of the following: (1) the means by which God's children are born. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "by" (2) the source from which God's children are born. Alternate translation: "of" (3) the cause of the birth of God's children. Alternate translation: "as a result of"

**from the will...of a man (ULT)**

The term **man** used here refers specifically to an adult male person and may also be translated "husband." In this verse it refers to a father's desire to have a child like himself. Alternate translation: "from the will of a husband"

**but from God (ULT)**

John is leaving out some of the words that this phrase would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: "but they were born from God" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

**from (ULT)**

Here, **from** could refer to any of the following: (1) the means by which God's children are born. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "by" (2) the source from which God's children are born. Alternate translation: "of" (3) the cause of the birth of God's children. Alternate translation: "as a result of"

## John 1:14

### the Word (ULT)

Here, **the Word** refers to Jesus. It does not refer to a spoken word. ULT indicates this by capitalizing **Word** to indicate that this is a title for Jesus. Use whatever convention your language uses to indicate that this is a name. If “word” is feminine in your language, it could be translated as “the one who is called the Word.” See how you translated this in [John 1:1](#). Alternate translation: “Jesus, the Word” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**14** And the Word became flesh and dwelled among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the One and Only from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### became flesh (ULT)

Here, **flesh** represents “a person” or “a human being.” Alternate translation: “became human” or “became a human being” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### us, and we beheld (ULT)

Here the pronouns **us** and **we** are exclusive, since John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to the earthly life of Jesus, but the people to whom he is writing did not see Jesus. So use exclusive forms here, if your language marks that distinction. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

### his glory (ULT)

Here, **his** refers to Jesus, whom John has called “the Word” in the previous clause. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus’ glory” or “the Word’s glory” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### his glory, glory (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate both occurrences of the abstract nouns **glory** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “his glorious character, the glorious character” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### of the One and Only from the Father (ULT)

The phrase **the One and Only** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “of the One and Only from the Father, Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### of the One and Only (ULT)

Here and throughout John’s Gospel, the phrase **the One and Only** is a title for Jesus that could refer to: (1) Jesus being unique as the only member of his kind. Alternate translation: “the Unique One” (2) Jesus being the only child of his Father. Alternate translation: “the Only Begotten One”

## from the Father (ULT)

The phrase **from the Father** means that Jesus came from the presence of God the Father to the world. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “who came from the Father”

## the Father (ULT)

This is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## full of grace and truth (ULT)

Here, John uses **full of** figuratively to describe Jesus fully possessing a quality, as if grace and truth are objects that could fill a person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “fully possessing grace and truth” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## full of grace and truth (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract nouns **grace** and **truth** with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: “full of God’s gracious and faithful character” or “full of kind acts and true teachings” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 1:15

### John testifies about him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "John testified about him"

### him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus, whom John has called "the Word" in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus" or "the Word" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### ULT

**15** John testifies about him and has cried out, saying, "This was the one of whom I said, 'He who is coming after me has become greater than me, for he was before me.'"

### and has cried out, saying (ULT)

Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: "and has cried out, and he said" (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins](#))

### This was the one of whom I said, 'He who is coming after me has become greater than me, for he was before me (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "This was the one of whom I said that he is coming after me who has become greater than me, for he was before me" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### He who is coming after me (ULT)

Here, John is speaking about Jesus. The phrase **is coming after me** means that John's ministry has already started and Jesus' ministry will start later. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "He who starts his ministry after I have done so"

### me has become greater than (ULT)

Here, **greater** refers to being more important or having a superior position. Alternate translation: "is more important than I am" or "is superior to me"

### was...me...for...before (ULT)

Here, **before me** means that Jesus existed earlier in time than John. This does not mean that Jesus is more important because he is older than John in human years. Jesus is greater and more important than John because he is God the Son, who has always existed. Alternate translation: "for he existed before I was born"

## John 1:16

### For (ULT)

Here, John is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said that Jesus is “full of grace and truth” in verse 14. Alternate translation: “We can say that Jesus is full of grace and truth because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**16** For from his fullness we have all received even grace after grace.

### his (ULT)

Here, **his** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### his fullness (ULT)

Here, **fullness** refers to the grace and truth which John said Jesus was full of in verse 14. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract noun **fullness** with an equivalent expression that says this explicitly. Alternate translation: “what he is full of” or “his full amount of grace and truth” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) )

### we...all (ULT)

Here, **we** refers to John and all believers. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “all of we believers” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#) )

### have...received even grace (ULT)

Here, **even** indicates that “grace after grace” explains what “his fullness” means. Alternate translation: “have received, that is, grace” or “have received, namely, grace”

### grace after grace (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate both occurrences of the abstract noun **grace** here with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: “kind act after kind act” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) )

### grace after grace (ULT)

Here, **after** could mean: (1) the second “grace” replaces the first “grace,” which is the most common use for this word. This meaning could indicate that the first “grace” refers to “the law” and the second “grace” refers to “Grace and truth” in the next verse. Alternate translation: “grace in place of grace” or “grace instead of grace” (2) the second “grace” is in addition to the first “grace.” Alternate translation: “grace in addition to” or “grace upon grace”

## John 1:17

### the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ (ULT)

John placed the two sentences in this verse next to each other without any connecting word in order to show a contrast between the law of Moses and the grace and truth of Jesus. This does not mean that the law of Moses did not have grace and truth. Rather, John is indicating that the grace and truth revealed by Jesus is more complete than that revealed in the law of Moses. Although God revealed himself and his will through the law of Moses, he did so much more clearly through Jesus, who is God in human form. Alternate translation: “the law was given through Moses. But grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ.

### the law was given through Moses (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and indicate who did the action. Alternate translation: “God gave the law through Moses” (See: [Active or Passive](#) )

### the law...was given (ULT)

The word **law** is a singular noun that refers to the many laws and instructions that God gave to the Israelites. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: “the group of laws was given” or “God’s laws were given” (See: [Collective Nouns](#) )

### Moses (ULT)

**Moses** is the name of a man, a prophet of God. (See: [How to Translate Names](#) )

### Grace and truth (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract nouns **grace** and **truth** with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: “God’s gracious and faithful character” or “Kind acts and true teachings” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) )

## John 1:18

### The One and Only God (ULT)

Here and throughout John's Gospel, the phrase **the One and Only** is a title for Jesus that could refer to: (1) Jesus being unique as the only member of his kind. Alternate translation: "the Unique God" (2) Jesus being the only child of his Father. Alternate translation: "the Only Begotten God"

#### ULT

**18** No one has seen God at any time. The One and Only God, who is in the bosom of the Father, that one has made him known.

### The One and Only God (ULT)

Here, **God** indicates that Jesus, who is called **the One and Only**, is God. If it would be misunderstood to you readers, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the One and Only, who is God"

### who is in the bosom of the Father (ULT)

Here, **in the bosom of** is an idiom that refers to having a close and intimate relationship with someone. Alternate translation: "who is close to the Father" (See: [Idiom](#))

### of the Father (ULT)

This is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### that one (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to Jesus in an emphatic way. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus himself" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### has made him known (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to God the Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Father" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### has made him known (ULT)

Here, the word translated **has made him known** refers to making people know something by explaining or revealing it clearly. Alternate translation: "has explained him" or "has fully revealed him"



## John 1:19

### of John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "of John the Baptist" or "of John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

**19** And this is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem so that they might ask him, "Who are you?"

### the Jews sent...from Jerusalem (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the "Jewish leaders." Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders sent ... from Jerusalem" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 1:20

### He confessed—he did not deny, but confessed

The phrase “he confessed” says in positive terms the same thing that **he did not deny** says in negative terms. This emphasizes that John was telling the truth and was strongly stating that he was not the Christ. Your language may have a different way of doing this. Alternate translation: “he strongly confessed” or “he solemnly testified”

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> And he confessed—and he did not deny, but confessed—“I am not the Christ.”

## John 1:21

### they asked (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to “the Jews” mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Jews asked” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### ULT

<sup>21</sup> And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he says, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

### What then (ULT)

Alternate translation: “If you are not the Messiah, then who are you?”

### Elijah (ULT)

**Elijah** is the name of a man. **Elijah** was a prophet whom the Jews expected to return to earth shortly before the arrival of the Messiah. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### And...he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “And he said”

### the prophet (ULT)

Here, **the prophet** refers to a prophet the Jews were waiting for, based on God’s promise to send a prophet like Moses which is recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the prophet whom God promised to send to us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:22

### they said...to him (ULT)

Here, the pronouns **they** and **him** refer to the priests and Levites and John the Baptist, respectively. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the priests and Levites ... John the Baptist" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we might give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

### Who are you, so that we might give an answer to those who sent us? What (ULT)

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the context and may require you to change the punctuation of the sentences. Alternate translation: "Who are you? Tell us so that we might give an answer to those who sent us. What" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### we might give...us (ULT)

Here, **we** and **us** refer to the priests and Levites, not to John. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### so that we might give an answer (ULT)

Alternate translation: "so that we might tell your answer"

### to those who sent us (ULT)

This phrase refers to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "to those leaders in Jerusalem who sent us" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:23

### He said (ULT)

**He** here refers to John the Baptist. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "John said" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> He said, "I am a voice, crying out in the wilderness: 'Make the way of the Lord straight,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

### a voice, crying out in the wilderness: 'Make the way of the Lord straight (ULT)

In these phrases, John quotes from the book of Isaiah. It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever other punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings](#))

### I am a voice, crying out in the wilderness (ULT)

Here, **voice** refers to the person who is crying out in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "I am the one calling out in the wilderness" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### I am a voice, crying out in the wilderness: 'Make the way of the Lord straight (ULT)

This clause is a quotation within a quotation. John is quoting from the book of Isaiah, and Isaiah is quoting the words of the person calling out in the wilderness. It would be best to indicate that by punctuating this material as a second-level quotation, since Luke is quoting from Scripture. However, if your language does not put one direct quotation within another, you could translate this material as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I am a voice crying out in the wilderness to make the way of the Lord straight" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### Make the way of the Lord straight (ULT)

This is a figurative way of telling people to get ready to listen to the Lord's message when it comes. They are to do this by repenting of their sins. Alternate translation: "Repent of your sins so that you will be ready to listen to the Lord's message when it comes" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Isaiah the prophet (ULT)

**Isaiah** is the name of a man. He wrote the Book of Isaiah in the Bible. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 1:24

### And the ones who had been sent were from the Pharisees (ULT)

This is background information about the people who questioned John. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> And the ones who had been sent were from the Pharisees,

### the ones who had been sent (ULT)

Here, **the ones** refers to the priests and Levites, as introduced in verse 19. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the priests and Levites who had been sent” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the ones who had been sent were (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the ones whom the Jewish leaders sent” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### were from the Pharisees (ULT)

This phrase could refer to: (1) the priests and Levites who had been sent. Alternate translation: “belonged to the Pharisees” (2) the leaders in Jerusalem who sent the priests and Levites. Alternate translation: “were sent from the Pharisees” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:25

### they asked (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the priests and Levites who had been sent from Jerusalem, as introduced in verse 19. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> and they asked him and said to him, “Why do you baptize then if you are not the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?”

### Elijah (ULT)

**Elijah** is the name of a man. **Elijah** was a prophet whom the Jews expected to return to earth shortly become the arrival of the Messiah. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### the prophet (ULT)

Here, **the prophet** refers to a prophet the Jews were waiting for, based on God’s promise to send a prophet like Moses which is recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the prophet whom God promised to send to us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:26

### John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist" or "John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> John answered them, saying, "I baptize in water. In the midst of you stands one you do not know,

### John answered them, saying (ULT)

Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: "John answered them, and he said" (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins](#))



## John 1:27

### the one coming after me (ULT)

Here, John is speaking about Jesus. The phrase **coming after me** means that John's ministry has already started and Jesus' ministry will start later. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the one who starts his ministry after I have done so" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> the one coming after me, of whom I am not worthy that I might untie the strap of his sandal."

### me...of whom I am not worthy that I might untie the strap of his sandal (ULT)

Untying sandals was the work of a slave or servant. These words are a metaphor for the most unpleasant work of a servant. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this plainly. Alternate translation: "me. I am not even worthy to untie the strap of his sandal" or "me, whom I am not worthy to serve in even the most unpleasant way" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 1:28

### General Information:

Verse 28 tells us background information about the setting of the story recorded in 1:19-27. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> These things came about in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

### These things (ULT)

Here, **these things** refers to the events that were described in 1:19-27. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “This conversation between John and the priests and Levites from Jerusalem” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### Bethany (ULT)

**Bethany** is the name of a village. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### the Jordan (ULT)

**Jordan** is the name of a river. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### beyond the Jordan (ULT)

Here, **beyond the Jordan** refers to the region of Judea that is on the east side of the Jordan River, which is the side opposite from Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “on the side of the Jordan River opposite from Jerusalem” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus’ cousin, often referred to as “John the Baptist.” (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “John the Baptist” or “John the Immerser” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:29

### The next day (ULT)

**The next day** here indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event it has just described in [1:19–28](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “The day after John spoke with the priests and Levites from Jerusalem” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**29** The next day he sees Jesus coming to him and says, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who is taking away the sin of the world!”

### he sees...says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he saw ... said”

### Behold (ULT)

John records John the Baptist using the term **Behold** to call his audience’s attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Behold, the Lamb of God (ULT)

The phrase **lamb of God** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Behold, Jesus, the Lamb of God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Lamb of God (ULT)

Here, John uses a metaphor to refer to Jesus as God’s perfect sacrifice. (See: [lamb](#), [Lamb of God](#)) Since this is an important title for Jesus, we recommend that you translate the words directly and not provide a non-figurative explanation in the text of your translation. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### who is taking away (ULT)

Here, John speaks figuratively of forgiving sin as if sin were an object that Jesus is **taking away**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “who is forgiving” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### of the world (ULT)

The word **world** is a metonym and refers to all the people in the world. Alternate translation: “those who live in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 1:30

**The one who comes after me is more than me,  
for he was before me**

See how you translated this in verse [15](#).

### ULT

<sup>30</sup> This is he concerning whom I said,  
'After me comes a man who has  
become greater than me, for he was  
before me.'

## John 1:31

### And I did not know him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “And I did not know Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**31** And I did not know him, but so that he might be revealed to Israel, because of this I came baptizing in water.”

### And I did not know him (ULT)

Here, John means that he did not know previously that Jesus was the Messiah. It does not mean that he didn't know who Jesus was, because Jesus was his cousin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “And I did not know that he was the Messiah” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### so that he might be revealed to Israel, because of this (ULT)

Here, John uses the redundant words **so that** and **because of this** to emphasize the reason why he was baptizing people. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could combine these phrases and indicate the emphasis. Alternate translation: “for the exact purpose that he might be revealed to Israel” (See: [Doublet](#))

### so that he might be revealed (ULT)

Here, **so that** indicates the purpose for which John was baptizing people. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of revealing him” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

### to Israel (ULT)

Here, John used the name of the nation, **Israel**, to represent the people who belong to that nation. Alternate translation: “to the Israelites” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### because of this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to the revealing of the Messiah to Israel that is mentioned in the previous clause. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because he might be revealed” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 1:32

### John testified, saying (ULT)

Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: “John testified, and he said” (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> And John testified, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and it remained upon him.”

### like a dove (ULT)

This phrase is a simile. As Luke 3:22 makes clear, the Holy Spirit came down with an appearance that resembled a **dove**. Alternate translation: “resembling a dove” (See: [Simile](#))

### upon him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “upon Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 1:33

### And I did not recognize him (ULT)

Here, John means that he did not know previously that Jesus was the Messiah. It does not mean that he didn't recognize who Jesus was when he saw him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "And I did not recognize that he was the Messiah" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**33** And I did not recognize him, but the one who sent me to baptize in water, that one said to me, 'Upon whomever you might see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, he is the one baptizing in the Holy Spirit.'

### the one who sent me to baptize in water, that one (ULT)

Here, the phrases **the one who sent me** and **that one** both refer to God. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "God, who sent me to baptize in water, he" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he is the one baptizing in the Holy Spirit (ULT)

John is using literal baptism, which puts a person under water, to speak figuratively of spiritual baptism, which puts people under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who purifies them. Alternate translation: "he is the one who will put you under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who will purify you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 1:34

### this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “this Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> And I have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

### the Son of God (ULT)

Although most copies of this text say **Son of God**, some say “chosen one of God” or “chosen Son of God.” If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the phrase it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to follow the example of the ULT. (See: [Textual Variants](#))

### Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))



## John 1:35

### The next day...again (ULT)

**The next day** here indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event it has just described in [1:29-34](#). John saw Jesus two days after his conversation with the priests and Levites that is described in verses [19-28](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “Two days after John spoke with the priests and Levites from Jerusalem” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> The next day, John was standing again with two of his disciples,

## John 1:36

### he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "he said"

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> and having seen Jesus walking by, he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

### Behold, the Lamb of God (ULT)

The phrase lamb of God refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Behold, Jesus, the Lamb of God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Behold (ULT)

John records John the Baptist using the term **Behold** to call his audience's attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Lamb of God (ULT)

Here, John uses a metaphor to refer to Jesus as God's perfect sacrifice. (See: [lamb](#), [Lamb of God](#)) See how you translated this same phrase in [John 1:29](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 1:37

### his two disciples heard him (ULT)

Here, **his** and **him** refer to John the Baptist. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John's two disciples heard him" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**37** And his two disciples heard him speaking, and they followed Jesus.

## John 1:38

### having seen them (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the two disciples John the Baptist who were mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “having seen John’s two disciples” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### having seen them following (ULT)

Here, John is leaving out a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: “having seen them following him” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### says to them (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said to them”

### where are you staying (ULT)

Alternate translation: “where are you spending the night”

### where are you staying (ULT)

This question is the answer to the question Jesus just asked in the previous sentence. It is a way for the two men to imply that they would like to have a private conversation with Jesus at the place where he was staying. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “where are you staying? We would like to speak with you privately.” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**38** But Jesus, having turned and having seen them following, says to them, “What do you seek?” And they said to him, “Rabbi (which being translated means Teacher), where are you staying?”

## John 1:39

### He says to them...he is staying (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "He said to them ... he was staying"

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> He says to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he is staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about the tenth hour.

### he is staying (ULT)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

### that day (ULT)

Here, **that day** refers to the day the two disciples left John the Baptist to follow Jesus, as indicated in verse 35. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the same day that they left John" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the...hour...tenth (ULT)

In this culture, people began counting the hours each day beginning around daybreak at six o'clock in the morning. Here, **the tenth hour** indicates a time in the late afternoon, before dark, at which it would be too late to start traveling to another town. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this in the way the people of your culture reckon time. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "about 4:00 PM"

## John 1:40

### General Information:

Verses [40–42] give background information about Andrew and how he brought his brother Peter to Jesus.

#### ULT

**40** One of the two having heard from John and having followed him was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.

### John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist" or "John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Andrew...of Simon Peter (ULT)

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

### of Simon Peter (ULT)

**Simon** was also called **Peter** by Jesus, as recorded in verse [42](#). Alternate translation: "Simon, who is also called Peter"

## John 1:41

### This one (ULT)

**This one** here refers to Andrew, who was mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Andrew” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**41** This one first finds his own brother Simon and says to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Christ).

### finds...says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “found ... said”

### Simon (ULT)

These is the name of a man, Andrew’s brother. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### which is translated Christ (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express the meaning of the passive verbal form **is translated** with an active form. Alternate translation: “which means Christ” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### which is translated Christ (ULT)

John assumes that his readers will know that he is saying what the title Messiah means when translated from the Aramaic language into Greek. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “which is ‘Christ’ in Greek” or “which is the Aramaic word for Christ” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:42

### He brought him (ULT)

**He** here refers to Andrew and **him** refers to Simon. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Andrew brought Simon" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. Jesus, having looked at him, said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

### Jesus, having looked at him, said (ULT)

Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: "Jesus looked at him, and he said" (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins](#))

### son of John (ULT)

**John** is the name of a man. This is neither John the Baptist nor John the Apostle. **John** was a common name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### You will be called Cephas (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and indicate who will do the action. Alternate translation: "People will call you Cephas" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Cephas (ULT)

**Cephas** is a word in the Aramaic language that means "rock." Here, Jesus uses the word as a name for Simon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Cephas, which means 'rock' in Aramaic" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### which is translated Peter (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express the meaning of the passive verbal form **is translated** with an active form. Alternate translation: "which means Peter" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### which is translated Peter (ULT)

John assumes that his readers will know that he is saying what the name Cephas means when translated from the Aramaic language into Greek. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "which is 'Peter' in Greek" or "which is the Aramaic word for Peter" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 1:43

### The next day (ULT)

**The next day** here indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event it has just described in the previous. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “The day after Andrew brought Simon to Jesus” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**43** The next day Jesus wanted to go away to Galilee, and he finds Philip and says to him, “Follow me.”

### Galilee (ULT)

**Galilee** is the name of a region. It occurs many times in this book. Alternate translation: “the region of Galilee” or “the region around Galilee” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “and he found Philip and said”

### Philip (ULT)

**Philip** is the name of a man, a disciple of Jesus. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### Follow me (ULT)

In this context, to **follow** someone means to become that person’s disciple. Alternate translation: “Become my disciple” or “Come, follow me as your teacher” (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 1:44

### Now Philip was from Bethsaida, from the city of Andrew and Peter (ULT)

This is background information about **Philip**. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>44</sup> Now Philip was from Bethsaida, from the city of Andrew and Peter.

## John 1:45

### Philip...Nathaniel...Moses...Jesus...of Joseph (ULT)

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

### Philip finds Nathaniel and says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “Philip found Nathaniel and said”

#### ULT

<sup>45</sup> Philip finds Nathaniel and says to him, “We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the law, and the prophets—Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth.”

### the prophets (ULT)

Here, John is leaving out a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: “the prophets wrote about” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### Nazareth (ULT)

**Nazareth** is the name of a city. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 1:46

### Nathaniel said to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Philip. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Nathaniel said to Philip" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**46** And Nathaniel said to him, "Is any good thing able to be from Nazareth?" Philip says to him, "Come and see."

### Is any good thing able to be from Nazareth (ULT)

Here, Nathaniel is using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "No good thing can come out of Nazareth!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### to him...Philip says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "Philip said to him"

## John 1:47

### and says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “and he said”

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him and says about him, “Behold, a true Israelite, in whom is no deceit!”

### Behold (ULT)

John records Jesus using the term **Behold** to call his audience’s attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### in whom is no deceit (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “a completely truthful man” (See: [Litotes](#))

## John 1:48

### Nathaniel says to him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "Nathaniel said to him"

#### ULT

**48** Nathaniel says to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, being under the fig tree, I saw you."

### Before Philip called you, being under the fig tree, I saw you (ULT)

Nathaniel's reaction to this statement in the next verse indicates that this is a display of supernatural knowledge. It appears that Jesus knew something about Nathaniel that no one else could have known. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in some way. Alternate translation: "Before Philip called you, being completely alone under the fig tree, I saw you." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### being under the fig tree (ULT)

The subject of this clause is Philip, not Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "while you were under the fig tree" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 1:49

### Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>49</sup> Nathaniel replied to him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

## John 1:50

### Because I said to you that I saw you underneath the fig tree, do you believe (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the result for the reason that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “Do you believe because I said to you that I saw you underneath the fig tree” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> Jesus replied and said to him,  
“Because I said to you that I saw you  
underneath the fig tree, do you believe?  
You will see greater things than these.”

### Because I said to you that I saw you underneath the fig tree, do you believe (ULT)

John records Jesus using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “You believe because I said, ‘I saw you underneath the fig tree!’” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### do you believe (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that this phrase would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the context. Alternate translation: “do you believe that I am the Messiah” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### greater things than these (ULT)

Jesus uses the plural pronoun **these** to refer to a general category of something, in this case the miraculous display of supernatural knowledge that took place in verse [48](#). Alternate translation: “greater things than this category of thing” or “greater things than this kind of miracle” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )



## John 1:51

### And he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "And he said"

#### ULT

**51** And he says to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus repeats **Truly** in order to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "What I am about to tell you is very true" (See: [Doublet](#))

### I say to you (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the plural form of **you** to indicate that he is speaking to all those who are with him at that moment. He is not only speaking to Nathaniel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "I say to all of you here" (See: [Forms of You](#))

### you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending (ULT)

Here, Jesus refers to an event described in the Book of Genesis. While fleeing from his brother, Jacob had a dream in which he saw angels descending from and ascending to heaven. If it would be helpful to your readers who may not be familiar with the story, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "just as Jacob saw in his vision, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "me, the Son of Man" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

The title **Son of Man** is equivalent to "Messiah." Jesus uses it to claim that role subtly and implicitly. You may want to translate this title directly into your language. On the other hand, if you think it would be helpful to your readers, you could state what it means. See the discussion of this phrase in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: "the Messiah" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 2

### John 2 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus' first sign: he turns water into wine (2:1-12)

Jesus causes controversy in the Temple (2:13-22)

Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem at Passover (2:23-25)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Wine

The Jews drank wine at many meals and especially when they were celebrating special events. They did not believe that it was a sin to drink wine.

#### Driving out the money changers

Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple to show that he had authority over the temple and over all of Israel. As the Son of God, it was his Father's temple that was being used inappropriately for making money. Therefore, he had the authority to drive out those who were misusing the temple.

#### "He knew what was in man"

Jesus knew what other people were thinking only because he was and is the Son of Man and the Son of God. As the Son of God, he had supernatural insight into what other people were thinking and could correctly judge their intentions.

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### "His disciples remembered"

John used this phrase to stop telling the main historical narrative and to tell about something that happened much later. It was right after he scolded the sellers in the temple in (John 2:16) that the Jewish authorities spoke to him. It was after Jesus became alive again that his disciples remembered what the prophet had written long before and that Jesus was talking about the temple of his body (John 2:17 and John 2:22).

## John 2:1

### General Information:

Jesus and his disciples were invited to a wedding. This verse gives background information about the setting of the story. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> And on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

### on the third day (ULT)

This time reference introduces a new event. The **third day** could refer to: (1) the third day from when Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel to follow him in [1:43](#). According to the Jewish way of counting days, the first day would have been the day in [1:43](#), making **the third day** occur two days afterward. Alternate translation: “two days after Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel” (2) the day after Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel to follow him in [1:43](#). In this case, the first day would have occurred in [1:35](#) and the second day in [1:43](#). Alternate translation: “on the day after Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

### Cana (ULT)

**Cana** is the name of a town in the region of Galilee. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 2:2

### was invited...Jesus also...and his disciples, to the wedding (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in an active form. Alternate translation: “they also invited Jesus and his disciples to the wedding” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now Jesus also was invited, and his disciples, to the wedding.

## John 2:3

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> And having run out of wine, the mother of Jesus says to him, “They do not have wine.”

### They do not have wine (ULT)

John records Jesus’ mother using a declarative statement to give an indirect request. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for a request. Alternate translation: “They ran out of wine. Could you do something to solve this problem?” (See: [Statements — Other Uses](#) )

### wine (ULT)

Regarding the drinking of **wine** in Jewish culture, see the discussion in the General Notes to this chapter.

## John 2:4

### Jesus says to her (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "Jesus said to her"

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus says to her, "Woman, what to me and to you? My hour is not yet come."

### Woman (ULT)

**Woman** here refers to Mary. If it is impolite for a son to call his mother "woman" in your language, you can use another word that is polite, or leave it out.

### Woman, what to me and to you (ULT)

Jesus is using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Woman, this has nothing to do with me or you" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### My hour is not yet come (ULT)

The word **hour** refers to the right occasion for Jesus to show that he is the Messiah by working miracles. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "It is not yet the right time for me to perform a mighty act" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 2:5

### His mother says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "His mother said"

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> His mother says to the servants,  
"Whatever he might say to you, do."

## John 2:6

### two or three metretes (ULT)

A **metretes** was equivalent to about 40 liters. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the quantity in modern measurements. Alternatively, to help your readers recognize that the biblical writings come from long ago when people used different measurements, you could express the amount using the ancient measurement, the metrete, and explain the equivalent in modern measurements in a footnote. Alternate translation: “80 to 120 liters” (See: [Biblical Volume](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Now there were six stone water pots standing there for the ceremonial washing of the Jews, each containing two or three metretes.



## John 2:7

### Jesus says to them (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “Jesus said to them”

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Jesus says to them, “Fill the water pots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.

### to them (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the servants at the wedding. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to the servants” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### up to the brim (ULT)

The **brim** is the top edge of the water pot. Alternate translation: “to the very top”

## John 2:8

### he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he said”

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> And he says to them, “Draw now and take it to the head waiter.” And they carried it.

### to them...And they carried (ULT)

Here, **them** and **they** refer to the servants at the wedding. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to the servants ... And the servants carried” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### to the head waiter (ULT)

The term **head waiter** refers to the person in charge of the servants who served the food and drink at meals and feasts.

## John 2:9

### the head waiter...the head waiter (ULT)

See how you translated this term in the previous verse.

### and he did not know where it was from, but the servants—those who had drawn the water—knew (ULT)

John provides this background information about who knew where the wine came from in order to emphasize the veracity of this miracle. The head waiter did not know that the wine was originally water from the water pots. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> But as the head waiter tasted the water that had become wine (and he did not know where it was from, but the servants—those who had drawn the water—knew), the head waiter calls the bridegroom

### the head waiter...calls the bridegroom (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “the head waiter called the bridegroom”

## John 2:10

### Every man (ULT)

**Every man** here is an exaggeration that refers to something being a common practice. If this is not clear in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "A man usually" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### Every man (ULT)

Here, **man** is used in a generic sense that includes all people. Alternate translation: "Every person" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

#### ULT

**10** and says to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and the cheaper wine when they have become drunk. You have kept the good wine until now."

### and the cheaper wine when they have become drunk (ULT)

This means that guests were given the cheaper wine, which is of lower quality and inferior flavor, after their senses had been dulled by drinking too much alcohol and were thus unable to tell that it was inferior wine. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "and the cheaper wine when they have become drunk and unable to discern the quality of the wine" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 2:11

In this verse, John provides background information about the events described in [2:1–10](#). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### beginning of the signs (ULT)

John wrote much about the miraculous **signs** Jesus did. Turning water into wine at the wedding is the first of those **signs**. See the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** This beginning of the signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

### Cana (ULT)

**Cana** is the name of a town in the region of Galilee. See how you translated this in verse [1](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### he revealed his glory (ULT)

Here, **glory** refers to the mighty power of Jesus that enabled him to do miracles. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this abstract noun with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “revealed his glorious power” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 2:12

### After this (ULT)

**After this** introduces a new event that happened some time after the events the story has just related. The story does not say how long after those events this new event happened. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "Some time afterward" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> After this he and his mother and brothers and his disciples went down to Capernaum, and they stayed there not many days.

### After this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to the what took place in Cana that was described in [2:1–11](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "After Jesus' first sign in Cana" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### he and his mother (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his mother" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### went down (ULT)

This indicates that they went from a higher place to a lower place. Capernaum is at a lower elevation than Cana.

### Capernaum (ULT)

**Capernaum** is the name of a town in the region of Galilee. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 2:13

### went up to Jerusalem (ULT)

This indicates that Jesus went from a lower place to a higher place. Jerusalem is built on a hill.

#### ULT

**13** And the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

## John 2:14

### those selling oxen and sheep and pigeons (ULT)

These animals were used for sacrifices in the temple. People were buying animals in the temple courtyard in order to sacrifice them to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “those selling oxen and sheep and pigeons for people to sacrifice to God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> And he found in the temple those selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting there.

### money changers (ULT)

Jewish authorities required people who wanted to buy animals for sacrifices in the temple to exchange their money for special money from the **money changers**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “people who exchanged money for special money approved for temple use” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### sitting there (ULT)

The next verse makes it clear that these people are in the temple courtyard. That area was intended for worship and not for commerce. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “sitting in the temple courtyard that was intended for worship” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 2:15

### And (ULT)

Here John is telling his readers what Jesus did as a result of the commerce he saw going on in the temple. Alternate translation: “Consequently” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### them all (ULT)

Here, **them all** refers to the people selling the animals and the money changers. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “all the sellers and money changers” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### ULT

**15** And having made a whip from cords, he drove them all out from the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and he scattered the coins of the money changers and overthrew their tables.

## John 2:16

### the house of my Father a house of commerce (ULT)

Jesus uses **the house of my Father** to refer to the temple. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the house of my Father, which is the temple, a house of commerce” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> And to those selling pigeons, he said, “Take these things away from here. Do not make the house of my Father a house of commerce.”

### of my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title that Jesus uses for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 2:17

### it is written (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in an active form. Alternate translation: “someone had written” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**17** His disciples remembered that it is written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

### it is written (ULT)

This phrase introduces a quotation from the Old Testament. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly and designate which Old Testament author wrote this. Alternate translation: “it had been written in the scriptures” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### for your house (ULT)

Here, **your** refers to God and is singular. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “for God’s house” (See: [Forms of ‘You’ — Singular](#))

### for your house (ULT)

Here, **house** refers to the temple, which is often called God’s **house** in the Bible. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “for your house, the temple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will consume (ULT)

Here, **consume** is used figuratively to refer to Jesus’ intense love for the temple, as if it was a fire that burned within him. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “will be intense within” or “will be like a fire that consumes” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 2:18

### these things (ULT)

Here, **these things** refers to Jesus' actions against the animal sellers and money changers in the temple. (See the discussion of this event in the General Notes to this chapter.) If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "these disruptive activities in the temple" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**18** Then the Jews responded and said to him, "What sign do you show us, since you are doing these things?"

## John 2:19

### Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up (ULT)

This is an imperative, but it should be translated as introducing a hypothetical situation rather than as a command. Jesus is stating a hypothetical situation in which the event in the second clause would happen if the event in the first clause took place. In this case, Jesus would certainly **raise** the **temple** up if the Jewish authorities were to **destroy** it. Alternate translation: "If you destroy this temple, then in three days I will raise it up" (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered and said to them,  
"Destroy this temple, and in three days I  
will raise it up."

### Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the words **Destroy** and **raise** figuratively to describe his killing and resurrection, as if tearing down and rebuilding a building. However, the Jewish leaders did not understand this and Jesus does not explain the metaphor to them. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

## John 2:20

### you will raise it up in three days (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders are using the question form for emphasis. They think that Jesus wants to tear down the temple and rebuild it in three days. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "you cannot possibly rebuild it in three days!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Then the Jews said, "This temple was built in 46 years, and you will raise it up in three days?"

## John 2:21

### General Information:

Verses 21 and 22 are a comment John made about the story that was described in [2:13–20](#). These verses tell about something that happened later. (See: [End of Story](#))

### ULT

**21** But that one was speaking about the temple of his body.

### But that one was speaking (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “But Jesus was speaking” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 2:22

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** indicates that in this verse John is giving the result of Jesus making the statement in [2:19](#). Alternate translation: “Because Jesus said this about his body” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### he was raised from the dead (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: “God raised him from the dead” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### his disciples remembered (ULT)

Here, John is speaking about something that happened long after the event described in the previous verses. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to this chapter.

### this...the word that Jesus had spoken (ULT)

Here, **this** and **the word** refer back to Jesus’ statement in [2:19](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “this statement about his body ... the word about his body that Jesus had spoken” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Scripture (ULT)

Here, John is speaking of **the Scripture** in general, not of one particular book within the Bible. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “the scriptures” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.



## John 2:23

### Now when he was in Jerusalem (ULT)

**Now** here introduces a new event that happened some time after the events the story has just related. The story does not say how long after the previous events this new event happened. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "Some time later" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, at the festival, many believed in his name, seeing his signs that he was doing.

### Now when he was (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his mother" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

These two phrases could refer to: (1) two different parts of the festival, **the Passover** referring to the first day of **the festival**, and **the festival** referring to the Festival of Unleavened Bread that begins at Passover and was one week long. Alternate translation: "at the Passover, during the Festival of Unleavened Bread" (2) the same event. Alternate translation: "at the Passover Festival"

### believed in his name (ULT)

Here, **name** represents the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "believed in him" or "trusted in him" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### seeing his signs (ULT)

Here, **seeing** indicates the reason why the people were believing in Jesus. These people had a superficial faith, only believing in Jesus because of the miracles he performed. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because they saw his signs" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated **signs** in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: "significant miracles"

## John 2:24

### did not trust himself to them (ULT)

Although many people were believing in him, Jesus knew that their belief was superficial and only lasted as long as he performed miracles for them. Therefore, he did not trust them the way he trusted his true disciples. Alternate translation: “did not trust them as true disciples” or “did not believe their belief in him”

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> But Jesus himself did not trust himself to them because he knew all men,

### he knew all men (ULT)

Here, the word **men** represents people in general. Alternate translation: “he knew all people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

## John 2:25

### about man...what was in man (ULT)

Here, both instances of the word **man** represent people in general. Alternate translation: “about mankind ... what was in mankind” or “about people ... what was in people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> and because he did not have need that anyone would testify about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

### what was in man (ULT)

This refers to the inner thoughts and desires of people, which some cultures refer to as “the heart.” (See the discussion of this in the General Notes to this chapter.) If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “what people think” or “the thoughts and desires people have” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3

### John 3 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus teaches Nicodemus about being born again (3:1–21)

John the Baptist testifies about Jesus (3:22–36)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Light and Darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong, and to begin to obey God. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

#### Born again

A major idea in this chapter is the spiritual new birth that Jesus says is necessary in order for someone to enter the kingdom of God [3:3–8](#). Jesus also uses the following expressions to refer to being born again: “born from water and the Spirit” ([3:4](#)) and “born from the Spirit” ([3:6,8](#)). (See: [born again](#), [born of God](#), [new birth](#))

### Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### “Son of Man”

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” twice in this chapter ([3:13–14](#)). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man](#), [son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 3:1

### Now (ULT)

**Now** here introduces a new event that happened some time after the events the story has just related in the previous chapter. The story does not say how long after those events this new event happened. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "Some time later" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a man from the Pharisees, Nicodemus was his name, a ruler of the Jews.

### there was...a man from the Pharisees, Nicodemus was his name (ULT)

Here, **there was a man** is used to introduce Nicodemus as a new character in the story. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new character. The phrase **from the Pharisees** identifies him as member of a strict Jewish religious sect. Alternate translation: "there was a man named Nicodemus, who was a member of a strict Jewish religious group" (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

### a ruler of the Jews (ULT)

This phrase means that Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish religious leadership, specifically the Jewish council called the Sanhedrin which made decisions about Jewish law. (See: [council](#)) If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "a member of the Jewish ruling council" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:2

### This one (ULT)

**This one** here refers to Nicodemus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Nicodemus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### we know (ULT)

Here, **we** is exclusive. Nicodemus is only referring to himself and the other members of the Jewish council. Your language may require you to mark this form. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#) )

### unless God is with him (ULT)

Here, **with him** is used figuratively to refer to God’s help. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “without God’s help” (See: [Metaphor](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> This one came to him at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, for no one is able to do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”

## John 3:3

### Truly, truly I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in 1:51. (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Jesus replied and said to him, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless someone would be born again, he is not able to see the kingdom of God."

### would be born again (ULT)

The phrase **born again** is a metaphor that refers to spiritual rebirth. See the discussion of this expression in the General Notes to this chapter. Nicodemus does not understand this metaphor and Jesus does not explain it to him in this verse. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### would be born again (ULT)

Here, the word translated **again** could also be translated as "from above." It could refer to: (1) spiritual rebirth as a second birth that takes place in addition to physical birth. Alternate translation, as in the ULT: "would be born again" (2) spiritual rebirth as a birth that is caused by God, in which case "above" is a euphemism for God. Alternate translation: "would be born from above" (3) spiritual rebirth as both a second birth and a birth caused by God. See the discussion of John's use of double meaning in Part 3 of the Introduction to this book. Alternate translation: "would be born again by God"

### to see the kingdom of God (ULT)

Here, **see** is used figuratively to refer to experiencing an event or state. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "to experience the kingdom of God" or "to participate in the kingdom of God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the kingdom of God (ULT)

This phrase is a metaphor for the rule of God. (See: [kingdom of God](#), [kingdom of heaven](#)) Alternate translation: "the place where God rules" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 3:4

### says to him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said to him”

### How is a man able to be born, being an old man (ULT)

Nicodemus uses this question to emphasize that this cannot happen. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “A man certainly cannot be born again when he is old!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### He is not able to enter a second time into the womb of his mother and to be born, is he (ULT)

Nicodemus uses this question to emphasize his belief that a second birth is impossible. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “He surely cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus says to him, “How is a man able to be born, being an old man? He is not able to enter a second time into the womb of his mother and to be born, is he?”



## John 3:5

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [3:3](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### would be born from water and Spirit (ULT)

The phrase **born from water and Spirit** could refer to: (1) spiritual birth that includes cleansing from sin and spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit. In this case, Jesus' words would be understood as a reference to Ezekiel 36:25–27, which Nicodemus would have been familiar with. Alternate translation: “would be born again by cleansing and the Spirit.” (2) physical birth and spiritual birth. Alternate translation: “would be born physically and spiritually” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone would be born from water and Spirit, he is not able to enter into the kingdom of God.”

### to enter into the kingdom of God (ULT)

Here, **enter into** is used figuratively to refer to experiencing something. The meaning is similar to the meaning of “see” in [3:3](#). Alternate translation: “to experience the kingdom of God” or “to participate in the kingdom of God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the kingdom of God (ULT)

This phrase is a metaphor for the rule of God. See how you translated this in [3:3](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 3:6

### What has been born from the flesh (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this in an active form. Alternate translation: “What flesh has given birth to” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

6 What has been born from the flesh is flesh, and what has been born from the Spirit is spirit.

### the flesh is flesh (ULT)

Here, Jesus is describing human beings figuratively by referring to something associated with them, the **flesh** they are made of. The word **flesh** here does not refer to sinful human nature as it does in other verses in the New Testament. Alternate translation: “a human being is a human being” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### what has been born from the Spirit (ULT)

Here, **the Spirit** refers to the Holy Spirit, who enables people to be born again. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “what has been born again by means of the Holy Spirit” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### spirit (ULT)

Here, **spirit** refers to the new spiritual nature that God gives a person when they are born again. (See: [born again, born of God, new birth](#)) If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “a new spiritual nature” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:7

### to be born again (ULT)

See how you translated this in 3:3. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Do not be amazed that I said to you,  
'It is necessary for you to be born  
again.'

## John 3:8

### The wind blows where it wishes (ULT)

The word translated **wind** can also mean spirit. Jesus here speaks figuratively of the Holy Spirit, as if he is **wind**. Just like people in Jesus' time could not understand how the **wind** blew but could observe the effects of the wind, people cannot understand how the Holy Spirit works but can witness the effects of his work. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit is like the wind that blows wherever it wants" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So is everyone who has been born from the Spirit."

### So is (ULT)

This phrase connects this sentence with the previous sentence. In the same way that people cannot understand the wind but recognize its effects, people who are not born from the Spirit cannot understand those who are born from the Spirit but can recognize the effects of the new birth. Alternate translation: "So it is with" or "So it happens with"

### who has been born from the Spirit (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [3:6](#).

### the Spirit (ULT)

Here, **the Spirit** refers to the Holy Spirit, who enables people to be born again. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:9

### How are these things able to happen (ULT)

This question could be: (1) a genuine question that shows that Nicodemus is confused. Alternate translation: "How are these things possible" (2) a rhetorical question Nicodemus uses to add emphasis to the statement. Alternate translation: "These things cannot be!" or "These things are impossible!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Nicodemus replied and said to him,  
"How are these things able to happen?"

### these things (ULT)

Here, **these things** refers to all that Jesus had spoken in [3:3-8](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "these things you have just told me" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 3:10

### Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things (ULT)

Jesus is not asking Nicodemus a question in order to get information. He is using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “You are a teacher of Israel, so I am surprised you do not understand these things!” or “You are a teacher of Israel, so you should understand these things!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?”

### Are you the teacher...you do not understand (ULT)

The word **you** is singular and refers to Nicodemus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Are you, Nicodemus, the teacher ... you do not understand” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### the teacher of Israel (ULT)

Here, **the teacher** indicates that Nicodemus was recognized as a master teacher and religious authority in the land of Israel. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the renowned religious teacher in Israel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### these things (ULT)

Here, **these things** refers to all that Jesus had spoken in [3:3–8](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “these things you have just told me” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 3:11

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [3:3](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### we speak what we know...our testimony (ULT)

When Jesus said **we** and **our** in this verse, he was not including Nicodemus. Jesus used these pronouns as a contrast to Nicodemus saying **we** in [3:2](#). While Nicodemus used **we** to refer to him and the other Jewish religious leaders, Jesus could have been referring to: (1) himself and his disciples. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "my disciples and I speak what we know ... our testimony" (2) himself and the other members of the Godhead. Alternate translation: "the Father, Spirit, and I speak what we know ... our testimony" (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### you do not receive (ULT)

The word **you** is plural and could refer to: (1) the Jewish people in general. Alternate translation: "you Jews" (2) Nicodemus and his fellow Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "you Jewish leaders" (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**11** Truly, truly, I say to you that we speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen, and you do not receive our testimony.

## John 3:12

### If I told you earthly things (ULT)

John records Jesus speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Jesus is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement.

Alternate translation: "Since I told you earthly things" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

**12** If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

### I told you...you do not believe, how...if I tell you...will you believe (ULT)

Throughout this verse, **you** is plural and could refer to: (1) the Jewish people in general. Alternate translation: "you Jews" (2) Nicodemus and his fellow Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "you Jewish leaders" See how you translated this word in the previous verse. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### earthly things (ULT)

Here, **earthly things** refers to what Jesus had spoken in [3:3-8](#). Those things are called **earthly** because they are about things that take place on earth. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "these truths about what takes place on earth" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses a question to emphasize the disbelief of Nicodemus and the Jews. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "you certainly will not believe if I tell you about heavenly things!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### heavenly things (ULT)

Here, **heavenly things** refers to things that take place in heaven or are related to heaven. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "truths about what takes place in heaven" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 3:13

### the one who descended from heaven (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person.

Alternate translation: “me, the one who descended from heaven”  
(See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

**13** And no one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven—the Son of Man.

### the Son of Man (ULT)

The title **Son of Man** is equivalent to “Messiah.” Jesus uses it to claim that role subtly and implicitly. You may want to translate this title directly into your language. On the other hand, if you think it would be helpful to your readers, you could state what it means. See the discussion of this phrase in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “the Messiah” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:14

### And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (ULT)

In this verse, John records Jesus comparing his crucifixion to Moses lifting up a bronze snake. John assumes that his readers will know that Jesus is referring to a story recorded in the Old Testament book of Numbers. In that story, the Israelites complained against God and God punished them by sending poisonous snakes to kill them. God then told Moses to make a bronze snake and raise it up on a pole so that whoever was bitten by one of the poisonous snakes and looked at the bronze snake would not die. You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they would not know the story. Alternate translation: "And just as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent on a pole when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness" (See: [Simile](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, thus it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up

### it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in an active form and you could indicate who will do the action. Alternate translation: "it is necessary for people to lift up the Son of Man" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to be lifted up...the Son of Man (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man, to be lifted up" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:15

### so that (ULT)

Here, **so that** indicates that Jesus is stating the purpose for which he would be crucified. In your translation, follow the conventions of your language for purpose clauses. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “in order that” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**15** so that all who believe in him may have eternal life.

## John 3:16

### For (ULT)

**For** here indicates that Jesus is giving a reason why the statement in the previous two verses is true. Alternate translation: “This is true because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### so...God...loved the world (ULT)

Here, **so** could refer to: (1) the manner in which God loved the world. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “God loved the world in this way” (2) the degree to which God loved the world. Alternate translation: “God loved the world so much” (3) both the manner in which and the degree to which God loved the world. For this interpretation, see the discussion of John’s use of double meaning in Part 3 of the Introduction to this book. Alternate translation: “in this way God loved the world so much”

### the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the people who live in it. Alternate translation: “the people in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### that (ULT)

Here, **that** introduces the result of what the previous clause stated. Alternate translation: “as a result” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### his One and Only Son (ULT)

Here, **One and Only Son** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “his One and Only Son, Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### his One and Only Son (ULT)

Here and throughout John’s Gospel, the phrase **One and Only** is a title for Jesus that could refer to: (1) Jesus being unique as the only member of his kind. Alternate translation: “his Unique Son” (2) Jesus being the only child of his Father. Alternate translation: “his only begotten Son” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### his One and Only Son (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### in him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “in Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in him would not perish but would have eternal life.

## John 3:17

### For (ULT)

**For** here indicates that Jesus is giving a reason why the statement in the previous verse is true. Alternate translation: “God gave his One and Only Son because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### ULT

**17** For God did not send the Son into the world so that he might condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through him.

### For God did not send the Son into the world so that he might condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through him (ULT)

These two clauses mean nearly the same thing, said twice for emphasis, first in the negative and then in the positive. Use whatever form your language uses for emphasis. Alternate translation: “For God truly sent his Son into the world so that he might save it” (See: [Parallelism](#))

### the Son (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Son...through him (ULT)

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: “me ... through me” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the universe God created. It does not refer only to the people in the world or only to the earth. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the universe” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### so that he might condemn (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to God. It does not refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “so that God might condemn” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### the...world so that he might condemn (ULT)

The word translated **condemn** means to judge someone to be guilty and deserving of punishment. Alternate translation: “so that he might judge the world as guilty”

### the world...the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to the people who live in it. Alternate translation: “the people in the world ... the people in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## **so that the world might be saved (ULT)**

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and indicate who did the action.  
Alternate translation: "so that God might save the world" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## **through him (ULT)**

This phrase indicates the means by which God would save the world. Alternate translation: "by means of him"

## John 3:18

### is not condemned...has already been condemned (ULT)

The word translated **condemn** means to judge someone to be guilty and deserving of punishment. See how you translated it in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "is not judged as guilty ... has already been judged as guilty"

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> The one who believes in him is not condemned, but the one who does not believe has already been condemned because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God.

### in him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "in Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### The one who believes in him is not condemned (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and indicate who did the action. Alternate translation: "God did not condemn the one who believes" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### but the one who does not believe has already been condemned (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form and indicate who did the action. Alternate translation: "but God has already condemned the one who does not believe" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God (ULT)

Here, **name** stands for Jesus' identity and everything about him. Alternate translation: "he has not believed in the One and Only Son of God" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Here and throughout John's Gospel, the phrase **One and Only** is a title for Jesus that could refer to: (1) Jesus being unique as the only member of his kind. Alternate translation: "of the Unique Son of God" (2) Jesus being the only child of his Father. Alternate translation: "of the Only Begotten Son of God"

### of...Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 3:19

### the judgment (ULT)

Here, **judgment** could refer to: (1) a verdict a judge pronounces in a court trial. Alternate translation: “the verdict” (2) the reason for a condemning judgment. Alternate translation: “the basis for condemnation”

#### ULT

**19** Now this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil.

### the light has come into the world...than the light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for the revelation of God’s truth and goodness in Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. See how you translated it in those places where **the light** also refers to Jesus in the [1:7–9](#). Alternate translation: “Jesus, who revealed the true and good things of God, has come into the world ... than Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the light has come into the world...than the light (ULT)

If your language does not allow people to speak of themselves in the third person, you may need to specify who **the light** is. Alternate translation: “I, the light, have come into the world ... than me” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, John records Jesus using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

### men loved...the darkness (ULT)

Here, **darkness** is a metaphor for what is false and evil. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. See the discussion of light and darkness in the General Notes for chapter 1. Alternate translation: “men loved evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))



## John 3:20

### For (ULT)

**For** here indicates another reason why men love the darkness, as stated in the previous verse. People who do evil things hate the light. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “This is because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> For everyone who is doing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, so that his deeds might not be exposed.

### everyone...who is doing evil (ULT)

This phrase refers to someone who habitually does evil things. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “everyone who habitually does evil”

### the light and...to the light (ULT)

Here, **the light** is a metaphor for the revelation of God’s truth and goodness in Jesus. See how you translated this word in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “Jesus, who revealed the true and good things of God, and ... to Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the light and...to the light (ULT)

If your language does not allow people to speak of themselves in the third person, you may need to specify who **the light** is. Alternate translation: “me, the light, and ... to me” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### so that his deeds might not be exposed (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in an active form and say who would do the action. Alternate translation: “so that the light might not expose his deeds” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 3:21

### the one...who does the truth (ULT)

This phrase refers to someone who habitually does true things. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "everyone who habitually does the truth"

#### ULT

**21** But the one who does the truth comes to the light, so that his deeds might be revealed, that they have been worked in God."

### the one...who does the truth (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract noun **truth** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "the one who does true things" or "the one who does what is true" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### comes to the light (ULT)

Here, **the light** is a metaphor for the revelation of God's truth and goodness in Jesus. See how you translated this word in the previous two verses. Alternate translation: "comes to Jesus, who revealed the true and good things of God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### comes to the light (ULT)

If your language does not allow people to speak of themselves in the third person, you may need to specify who **the light** is. See how you translated this expression in the previous two verses. Alternate translation: "comes to me, the light" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### his deeds might be revealed (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in an active form and say who would do the action. Alternate translation: "the light might reveal his deeds" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### that they have been worked in God (ULT)

This clause indicates what the light will reveal about the deeds of those who come to the light. The phrase **in God** indicates that the works these people have done were done with God's help and not by their own strength or effort. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "that they have been done with God's help"

## John 3:22

### After this (ULT)

This phrase indicates that what follows occurred after Jesus had spoken with Nicodemus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “After this conversation with Nicodemus” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the land of Judea, and he tarried there with them and was baptizing.

## John 3:23

### John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist" or "John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Now John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because much water was there, and they were coming and were being baptized—

### Aenon (ULT)

This is the name of a town near the Jordan River close to Samaria. **Aenon** is the Aramaic word for springs of water, which explains John's comment in the next clause about there being much water there. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### Salim (ULT)

This is the name of a town near the Jordan River close to Samaria. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### were being baptized (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form and say who was doing the action. Alternate translation: "John was baptizing them" or "he was baptizing them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 3:24

### not yet...had...been thrown (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form. You can also say who did the action, which is indicated to be Herod in Mark 6:17. Alternate translation: "Herod had not yet thrown" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> for John had not yet been thrown into prison.

## John 3:25

### Then a dispute came about from the disciples of John (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract noun **dispute** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "Then the disciples of John began arguing" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Then a dispute came about from the disciples of John with a Jew concerning ceremonial washing.

### Then a dispute came about from the disciples of John with a Jew (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Then John's disciples and a Jew began to dispute" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### of John (ULT)

Here, John refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "of John the Baptist" or "of John the Immerser" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 3:26

### they went (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to John the Baptist's disciples who were disputing in the previous verse. If it would be misunderstood in your language, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "John's disciples went" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### the one who was with you beyond the Jordan, about whom you had testified (ULT)

This phrase refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus, who was with you beyond the Jordan, about whom you had testified" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### behold, he is baptizing (ULT)

John the Baptist's disciples used the term **behold** to call John's attention to what Jesus was doing. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. Alternate translation: "look! He is baptizing" or "see how he is baptizing" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### they are all going to him (ULT)

Here John the Baptist's disciples use the word **all** as a generalization for emphasis. Alternate translation: "it seems like everyone is going to him" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**26** And they went to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you beyond the Jordan, about whom you had testified, behold, he is baptizing, and they are all going to him."

## John 3:27

### A man is not able (ULT)

John is speaking of people in general, not of one particular man. Alternate translation: "A person is not able" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> John replied and said, "A man is not able to receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven."

### it has been given to him from heaven (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "heaven has given it to him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### it has been given to him from heaven (ULT)

Here, **heaven** is used figuratively to refer to God. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "it has been given to him by God" (See: [Metonymy](#))



## John 3:28

### You yourselves (ULT)

**You** here is plural and refers to all the people John is talking to.  
Alternate translation: “You all” or “All of you” (See: [Forms of You](#))

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “that I said that I am not the Christ but that I have been sent before that one” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

#### ULT

**28** You yourselves testify to me that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent before that one.’

### I have been sent before that one (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form and say who did the action.  
Alternate translation: “God sent me before that one” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### that one (ULT)

Here, **that** refers to Jesus, whom John has called “the Christ” in the previous clause. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus” or “the Christ” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 3:29

### **The one who has the bride is the bridegroom...of the bridegroom...of the voice of the bridegroom (ULT)**

Here, the words **bride** and **bridegroom** are used figuratively to refer to people who believe in Jesus and Jesus himself, respectively. Since these are important terms for Christians and for Jesus, we recommend that you translate the words directly and not provide a non-figurative explanation in the text of your translation. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate these words with similes. Alternate translation: "The one who is like one who has a bride is like a bridegroom ... of the one who is like a bridegroom ... of the voice of one who is like a bridegroom" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>29</sup> The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the voice of the bridegroom. Therefore, this my joy has been made complete.

### **But the friend of the bridegroom (ULT)**

John the Baptist is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "But me, the friend of the bridegroom" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### **rejoices with joy (ULT)**

These words mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how much joy John had because Jesus had come. Alternate translation: "rejoices greatly" (See: [Doublet](#))

### **this...my joy has been made complete (ULT)**

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state this in active form. Alternate translation: "I rejoice greatly" or "I rejoice with complete joy" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **this...my joy (ULT)**

Here, **my** refers to John the Baptist, the one who is speaking. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "this joy that I, John, have" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 3:30

### It is necessary for that one to increase (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to Jesus, whom John the Baptist called “the bridegroom” in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “It is necessary for Jesus to increase” or “It is necessary for the bridegroom to increase” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> It is necessary for that one to increase, but for me to decrease.

### to increase...to decrease (ULT)

Here, **increase** is used figuratively to refer to growing in importance and influence, while **decrease** refers to diminishing in importance and influence. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “to be more influential ... to be less influential” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 3:31

### **The one who comes from above is above all things...The one...who comes from heaven is above all things (ULT)**

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. John repeats himself to emphasize that Jesus is greater than every person and every thing. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could combine these phrases and include words that show emphasis.

Alternate translation: "The one who comes from heaven is certainly above all things" (See: [Doublet](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>31</sup> The one who comes from above is above all things. The one who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all things.

### **The one who comes from above is above all things...The one...who comes from heaven is above all things (ULT)**

Both of these phrases refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "Jesus, the one who comes from above, is above all things ... Jesus, the one who comes from heaven, is above all things" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **from above (ULT)**

Here, **above** is used figuratively to refer to heaven, the place where God dwells. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "from heaven" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### **is above all things (ULT)**

Here, **above** is used figuratively to refer to having superior status. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "is superior to all things" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### **The one who is from the earth is from the earth (ULT)**

Here, John the Baptist is referring to himself in the third person, but the statement is also true for all humans other than Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "I, the one who is from the earth, am from the earth" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### **is from the earth (ULT)**

This phrase refers figuratively to having an earthly origin, which is the case for John the Baptist and every human being other than Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "originates from the earth" or "has an earthly origin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### **and speaks from the earth (ULT)**

This phrase refers figuratively to speaking based on an earthly perspective, which is the perspective of John the Baptist and every human being other than Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "and speaks from an earthly perspective" or "and speaks as someone from the earth" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## is above all things (ULT)

Here, **above** is used figuratively to refer to having superior status. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “is superior to all things” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 3:32

### He testifies about that which he has seen and heard...his...testimony (ULT)

**He** and **his** in this verse refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus testifies about that which he has seen and heard ... Jesus' testimony" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> He testifies about that which he has seen and heard, but no one receives his testimony.

### which he has seen and heard (ULT)

This phrase refers to what Jesus saw and heard while he was in heaven. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "which he has seen and heard in heaven" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### no one receives his testimony (ULT)

Here, John the Baptist exaggerates to emphasize that only a few people believed Jesus. Alternate translation: "very few people receive his testimony" or "it seems like no one receives his testimony" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

## John 3:33

### The one who has received his testimony (ULT)

This phrase does not refer to a specific person, but to any person who does this thing. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Anyone who has received his testimony” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> The one who has received his testimony has set his seal that God is true.

### his testimony (ULT)

Here, **his** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus’ testimony” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### has set his seal (ULT)

This expression refers to placing a seal on a document in order to certify that what is written in the document is true. (See: [seal](#), [sealed](#), [unsealed](#)) Here, this meaning is extended to refer to certifying that God is true. If your readers would not be familiar with this practice of sealing documents, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “has certified” or “has attested” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

## John 3:34

### the one whom...God has sent (ULT)

This phrase refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus, whom God has sent" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God. For he does not give the Spirit by measure.

### For (ULT)

**For** here indicates that what follows is the reason why the previous sentence is true. We know that Jesus speaks the words of God because God has given him the Holy Spirit. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "We know this because" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

### not...he does...give (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to God. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "God does not give" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### not...he does...give the Spirit by measure (ULT)

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context, especially this discussion of God giving to his Son in the next verse. Alternate translation: "he does not give the Spirit to him by measure" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### not...he does...give the Spirit by measure (ULT)

This clause is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "he certainly gives the Spirit without measure" (See: [Litotes](#))



## John 3:35

### Father...Son (ULT)

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.

### has given all things into his hand (ULT)

Here, giving **into his hand** means putting under his power or control. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “has given him control over everything” (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 3:36

### The one who believes (ULT)

This phrase does not refer to a specific person, but to any person who does this thing. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Anyone who believes” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

### in the Son...the Son (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the one...who disobeys (ULT)

This phrase does not refer to a specific person, but to any person who does this thing. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Anyone who disobeys” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

### the one...who disobeys (ULT)

The word translated **disobeys** can also be translated “does not believe.” Alternate translation: “the one who does not believe”

### will not see life (ULT)

Here, **see** is used metaphorically to refer to experiencing or participating in something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “will not experience life” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### will not see life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life, as indicated by the previous clause. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “will not see eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the wrath of God remains on him (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract noun **wrath** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “God will continue to be angry against him” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 4

### John 4 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Jesus leaves Judea for Galilee (4:1–6)

Jesus meets a Samaritan woman (4:7–14)

Jesus teaches the Samaritan woman about worship (4:15–26)

Jesus teaches his disciples about evangelism (4:27–38)

Jesus' ministry in Samaria (4:39–42)

Jesus goes to Galilee (4:43–45)

Jesus' second sign: he heals an official's son (4:46–54)

[John 4:7–38](#) forms one story centered on the teaching of Jesus as the “living water” who gives eternal life to all who believe in him. (See: [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#))

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### “It was necessary for him to pass through Samaria”

Jews avoided traveling through the region of Samaria because Jews and Samaritans were longtime enemies who hated each other. So Jesus did what most Jews did not want to do. (See: [Samaria](#), [Samaritan](#))

##### “an hour is coming”

Jesus used these words to begin prophecies about events that could be shorter or longer than sixty minutes. In such instances, “hour” refers to a point in time when something happens, not a set length of time. For example, “an hour ... when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” refers to the point in time when people begin to do so ([4:23](#)).

##### The proper place of worship

Long before Jesus came to earth, the Samaritan people had broken the law of Moses by setting up their own temple on Mount Gerizim in their land ([4:20](#)). Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman that in the near future it would no longer be important where people worshiped ([4:21–24](#)).

##### Harvest

Harvest refers to the time when people go out to get the food they have planted so they can bring it to their houses and eat it. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about Jesus so those people can be part of God's kingdom. (See: [faith](#))

##### “The Samaritan woman”

John probably told this story to show the difference between the Samaritan woman, who believed, and the Jews, who did not believe and later killed Jesus. (See: [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#))

## **Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

### **“in spirit and truth”**

The people who truly know who God is and enjoy worshiping him for who the Bible says he is are the ones who truly please him. The place where they worship him is not important.

## John 4:1

### General Information:

John 4:1–6 gives the background to the next event, which is Jesus' conversation with a Samaritan woman. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Connecting Statement:

John 4:1–3 is one long sentence. It may be necessary in your language to divide this long sentence into several shorter sentences.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Then when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John

### Then when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John (ULT)

If it would be natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Now Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John. When he knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was doing this" (See: [Information Structure](#))

### Then when Jesus knew (ULT)

**Then** here introduces a new event that happened some time after the events the story has just related. The story does not say how long after those events this new event happened. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "Some time later, when Jesus knew" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

## John 4:2

### Jesus himself was not baptizing (ULT)

Here, **himself** is used to emphasize that Jesus was not baptizing disciples, but his disciples were. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples),

### but his disciples (ULT)

Here, John is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the previous clause. Alternate translation: “but his disciples were baptizing people” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 4:3

### he left (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus left” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> he left Judea and went back again to Galilee.

### Judea...Galilee (ULT)

These are two main regions in the land of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 4:4

### Samaria (ULT)

This is a region in the land of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Now it was necessary for him to go through Samaria.



## John 4:5

### Then he comes (ULT)

**Then** here indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event just described in verse 3. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “After leaving Judea, he comes” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Then he comes to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

### he comes (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he came”

### Sychar (ULT)

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

## John 4:6

### there (ULT)

Here, **there** refers to the town of Sychar mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “there at Sychar” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Now the well of Jacob was there. Then Jesus, having grown weary from the journey, was sitting right beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

### Then Jesus (ULT)

**Then** here indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event just described in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “When Jesus came to Sychar” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

### having grown weary (ULT)

This clause indicates the reason why Jesus sat by the well. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because he had grown weary” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

### from the journey (ULT)

This phrase indicates the reason why Jesus had grown weary. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because of the journey” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

### was...about the sixth hour (ULT)

In this culture, people began counting the hours each day beginning around daybreak at six o'clock in the morning. Here, **the sixth hour** indicates a time in the middle of the day, when it would be the hottest. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this in the way the people of your culture reckon time. Alternate translation: “about 12:00 PM”

## John 4:7

### comes...says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “came ... said”

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> A woman from Samaria comes to draw water. Jesus says to her, “Give me to drink,”

### Give me to drink (ULT)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: “Please give me to drink” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#) )

### Give me to drink (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus leaving out a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply the word from the context. Alternate translation: “Give me something to drink” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 4:8

### for his disciples had gone away (ULT)

This phrase indicates the reason why Jesus asked the woman for water. The disciples had gone away and brought the tools for drawing water with them, so that Jesus could not draw the water himself. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because his disciples had gone away” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> for his disciples had gone away into the city so that they might buy food.

## John 4:9

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

### to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### How do you, being a Jew, ask from me to drink, being a Samaritan woman (ULT)

John records the woman using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate her words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “I cannot believe that you, being a Jew, are asking a Samaritan woman for a drink!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### not...do...have dealings with (ULT)

Alternate translation: “do not associate with” or “have nothing to do with”

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Then the Samaritan woman says to him, “How do you, being a Jew, ask from me to drink, being a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews do not have dealings with Samaritans.)

## John 4:10

### If you had known the gift of God and who it is who is saying to you...you would have asked him (ULT)

Jesus is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he knows that the condition is not true. He knows that the woman does not know the gift of God or who he is. Alternate translation: "You surely do not know the gift of God and who it is who is saying to you ... Otherwise, you would have asked him" (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered and said to her, "If you had known the gift of God and who it is who is saying to you, 'Give me to drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

### the gift of God (ULT)

Here, **the gift of God** refers to the "living water" that Jesus mentions at the end of the verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "God's gift of living water"

### the gift of God (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe a **gift** that comes from God. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the gift from God" (See: [Possession](#) )

### who it is who is saying to you...would have asked...him, and he would have given (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "who I am who is saying to you ... would have asked me, and I would have given" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) )

### who is saying to you, 'Give me to drink (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "who is asking you to give him a drink" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#) )

### living water (ULT)

The phrase **living water** usually refers to moving or flowing water. However, Jesus uses **living water** here figuratively to refer to the Holy Spirit who works in a person to save and transform them. However, the woman does not understand this and Jesus does not explain the metaphor to her in this verse. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#) )

## John 4:11

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

### ULT

**11** The woman says to him, “Sir, you do not have a vessel and the well is deep. From where then do you have the living water?”

### Sir (ULT)

The Samaritan woman calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

## John 4:12

**You are not greater, are you, than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, and his sons and his cattle (ULT)**

The woman is using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate her words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in

another way. Alternate translation: “You are certainly not greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, and his sons and his cattle!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> You are not greater, are you, than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, and his sons and his cattle?”

### **drank from it (ULT)**

Here, John records the woman leaving out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: “drank water from it” (See: [Ellipsis](#))



## John 4:13

### will thirst again (ULT)

Alternate translation: "will need to drink water again"

#### ULT

**13** Jesus answered and said to her,  
"Everyone who drinks from this water  
will thirst again,

## John 4:14

**but whoever may drink from the water that I will give him will never thirst...the water that I will give him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up to eternal life (ULT)**

Jesus speaks about receiving the Holy Spirit by continuing the metaphor of water. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this metaphor as a simile. Alternate translation: “but whoever is like one who drinks from the water that I will give him will be like one who never thirsts ... the water that I will give him will become like a fountain of water in him, resulting in eternal life” (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> but whoever may drink from the water that I will give him will never thirst into eternity. Instead, the water that I will give him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up to eternal life.”

## John 4:15

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**15** The woman says to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I might not thirst and might not come here to draw water.”

### Sir (ULT)

The Samaritan woman calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

### to draw water (ULT)

Here, **draw** refers to scooping water out of a well using a container that can hold water. Alternate translation: “get water” or “pull water up from the well”

## John 4:16

### He says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "He said"

#### ULT

**16** He says to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

## John 4:17

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "said"

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "You have rightly said that you do not have a husband" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

#### ULT

**17** The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus says to her, "You have rightly said, 'I do not have a husband,'"

## John 4:18

### This you have said is true (ULT)

**This you have said** refers to the Samaritan woman's statement in the previous verse that she did not have a husband. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "You have spoken the truth when you said you do not have a husband" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**18** for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband. This you have said is true."

## John 4:19

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**19** The woman says to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet.”

### to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### Sir (ULT)

The Samaritan woman calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

### I see that you are a prophet (ULT)

Here, **see** is used figuratively to refer to understanding something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “I understand that you are a prophet” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 4:20

### on this mountain (ULT)

Here, **this mountain** refers to Mount Gerizim, the mountain where the Samaritans built their own temple. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “here on Mount Gerizim” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where it is necessary to worship.”

### you say (ULT)

The word **you** is plural and refers to the Jewish people. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “you Jewish people say” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### the place (ULT)

Here, **the place** refers to the Jewish temple, the place where God commanded his people to worship at that time. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Jewish temple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 4:21

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Jesus says to her, “Believe me, woman, that an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.”

### woman (ULT)

Here, **woman** refers to the Samaritan woman. If it is impolite to call someone “woman” in your language, you can use another word that is polite, or leave it out.

### an hour is coming (ULT)

Here, **hour** refers to a point in time when something happens. It does not refer to a 60-minute length of time. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to this chapter. Alternate translation: “a point in time is coming” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

This is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### on this mountain (ULT)

Here, **this mountain** refers to Mount Gerizim. See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “here on Mount Gerizim” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 4:22

### You...you do not know (ULT)

**You** is plural in this verse and refers to the Samaritan people. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "you Samaritan people ... you all do not know" (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**22** You worship what you do not know.  
We worship what we know, for salvation  
is from the Jews.

### We...we know (ULT)

**We** here is exclusive. Jesus is only referring to himself and the Jewish people. Your language may require you to mark this form. Alternate translation: "We Jewish people ... we all know" (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### for salvation is from the Jews (ULT)

The phrase **from the Jews** indicates that the Jewish people were the people group from which **salvation** came. This is true because the Savior Jesus was from the Jewish people. This phrase does not mean that the Jewish people themselves will save others from their sins. Alternate translation: "for salvation comes from among the Jewish people" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### salvation (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract noun **salvation** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "the way to be saved" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 4:23

### an hour is coming (ULT)

Here, **hour** refers to a point in time when something happens. It does not refer to a 60-minute length of time. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to this chapter and see how you translated it in verse 21. Alternate translation: “a point in time is coming” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> However, an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father also is seeking such ones who are worshiping him.

### the Father...the Father (ULT)

This is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### in spirit (ULT)

Here, **spirit** could refer to: (1) the inner person, which is what a person thinks and feels. Alternate translation: “with their spirits” (2) the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “in the Holy Spirit”

### in spirit and truth (ULT)

Here, **truth** refers to thinking correctly of what is true about God, which is revealed in the Bible. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “in spirit and in accordance with God’s Word” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 4:24

### and...in spirit...truth (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse.

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those worshiping him, it is necessary to worship in spirit and truth."

## John 4:25

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**25** The woman says to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming (the one called Christ). When he may come, that one will declare everything to us.”

### the one called Christ (ULT)

**Christ** is the Greek translation of **Messiah**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the one called Christ in the Greek language” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### When he may come, that one (ULT)

Here, **he** and **that one** refer to the Messiah. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “When the Messiah may come, the Messiah” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### that one will declare everything to us (ULT)

The words **declare everything** imply all that the people need to know. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “he will tell us all that we need to know” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to us (ULT)

When the woman said “us,” she was including who she was speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the inclusive form in this verse. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

## John 4:26

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "said"

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Jesus says to her, "I am, the one speaking to you."

### the one speaking to you (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person form. Alternate translation: "I who am speaking to you" (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

## John 4:27

### at this (ULT)

Alternate translation: "at the time he said this" or "just as Jesus was saying this"

### and they were amazed that he was speaking with a woman (ULT)

In the culture of that time, it was very unusual for a Jew to speak with a **woman** he did not know, especially if they were alone or if that woman was a Samaritan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "and they were amazed that he was speaking alone with an unknown woman because people didn't usually do that" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**27** And at this, his disciples came, and they were amazed that he was speaking with a woman. Nevertheless, no one said, "What are you seeking?" or "Why are you speaking with her?"

### What are you seeking (ULT)

This question could be spoken to: (1) Jesus. Alternate translation: "What do you want from this woman?" (2) the woman. Alternate translation: "What do you want from him?"

## John 4:28

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**28** Then the woman left her water pot and went back into the town and says to the men,

### to the men (ULT)

Here, **the men** could refer to: (1) the men who lived in the nearby town and would have been working out in the fields at that time. Alternate translation: “to the men of the town” (2) the people who lived in the nearby town. Alternate translation: “to the people of the town” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))



## John 4:29

### **Come, see a man who told me all things, as much as I have done (ULT)**

The Samaritan woman exaggerates to show that she is impressed by how much Jesus knows about her. Alternate translation: “Come see a man who knows very much about me, even though I have never met him before” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>29</sup> “Come, see a man who told me all things, as much as I have done. This is not the Christ, is it?”

### **This is not the Christ, is it (ULT)**

This question is not a rhetorical question. The woman is not sure that Jesus is the **Christ**, so she asks a question that expects “no” for an answer. However, the fact that she asked the question instead of making a statement indicates that she is uncertain. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in a way that shows her uncertainty. Alternate translation: “Is it even possible that this is the Christ?”

## John 4:30

### They went out (ULT)

**They** here refers to the men or people from the town that the woman had spoken to. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Your translation will depend on how you translated “the men” in verse 28. Alternate translation: “The men of the town went out” or “The nearby townspeople went out” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> They went out from the town and came to him.

### to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 4:31

### In the meantime (ULT)

Alternate translation: "While the woman was going into town" or "During the time that the woman was in the town"

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> In the meantime, the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

### Rabbi, eat (ULT)

Here, **eat** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: "Rabbi, please eat" (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#) )

## John 4:32

### I have food to eat (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **food** figuratively to refer to doing Gods will, as he states in verse 34. However, his disciples do not understand this and Jesus does not explain the metaphor to them in this verse. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know."

## John 4:33

### No one brought him to eat, did he (ULT)

The disciples think Jesus is literally talking about something **to eat**. They begin asking each other this question, expecting a “no” response. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in a way that shows their uncertainty. Alternate translation: “Is it even possible that someone brought him food to eat?”

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> So the disciples said to each other,  
“No one brought him to eat, did he?”

## John 4:34

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Jesus says to them, “My food is that I might do the will of the one who sent me and might complete his work.”

### My food is that I might do the will of the one who sent me and might complete his work (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **food** as a metaphor that represents obeying God’s **will**. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: “Like food satisfies a hungry person, doing the will of the one who sent me and completing his work satisfies me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “of God, the one who sent me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 4:35

### Do you not say (ULT)

John records Jesus using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “You surely say” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Do you not say, ‘There are still four months, and the harvest comes’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and see the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

### Behold (ULT)

John records Jesus using the term **Behold** to call the disciples’ attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### lift up your eyes (ULT)

This phrase is a common idiom in the Bible that is used to describe the act of looking at something or direct one’s own attention toward something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “look” (See: [Idiom](#))

### see the fields (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **fields** figuratively to refer to people. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile or plainly. Alternate translation: “see these people who are like fields” or “see these people” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### they are already white for harvest (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase **white for harvest** figuratively to say that people are ready to receive the message of Jesus, like fields that are ready to be harvested. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile or plainly. Alternate translation: “they are like a field that is ready to be harvested” or “they are already ready to believe my message” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 4:36

### The one who is harvesting...and the one who is harvesting (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. The act of **harvesting** crops is used figuratively to refer to the act of proclaiming Jesus' message to those who are ready to receive it. You could express this metaphor as a simile in your translation. Alternate translation: "The one who is proclaiming the message to those who are being saved is like one who is harvesting ... and the one who is like a harvester" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> The one who is harvesting receives wages and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the one who is sowing and the one who is harvesting might rejoice together.

### receives wages (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. Those who proclaim Jesus' message are described as those who receive **wages** for their labor. Here, **wages** refers the joy those who proclaim the message will receive, as indicated by the last clause in this verse. You could express this metaphor as a simile in your translation. Alternate translation: "has great joy that is like wages" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

### and gathers fruit for eternal life (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. Jesus uses the phrase **fruit for eternal life** figuratively to refer to people who believe his message and are forgiven for their sins, so that they can have eternal life with God in heaven. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this as a simile. Alternate translation: "and the people who believe the message and receive eternal life are like the fruit that the one who is harvesting gathers" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

### the one who is sowing (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. The act of **sowing** seed is used figuratively to refer to the act of preparing people to receive Jesus' message. You could express this metaphor as a simile in your translation. Alternate translation: "the one who is preparing people to receive the message is like one who is sowing seed" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )



## John 4:37

### in...this (ULT)

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) the statements in the rest of this verse and the next verse. Alternate translation: “regarding what I am about to say” (2) the statement in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “regarding what I have just said” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> For in this the saying is true, ‘One is the one sowing, and another, the one harvesting.’

### One is the one sowing (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. This is part of an extended metaphor in verses [35–38](#). Here, **sowing** is used figuratively to refer to preparing people to receive the message of Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: “One preparing people to receive the message is like one sowing” (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#))

### the one harvesting (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. This is part of an extended metaphor in verses [35–38](#). Here, **harvesting** refers to proclaiming the message of Jesus to those already prepared to receive it. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: “the one proclaiming the message to those who are receiving it is like one harvesting” (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#))

## John 4:38

### you...you...you (ULT)

In this verse, **you** is plural and refers to the disciples whom Jesus is speaking to. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “you who are my disciples ... you ... you disciples” (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**38** I sent you to harvest that on which you have not labored. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

### I sent you to harvest (ULT)

Jesus continues to speak figuratively to describe people proclaiming and receiving his message. This is part of an extended metaphor in verses [35–38](#). Here, **harvest** refers to proclaiming the message of Jesus to those already prepared to receive it. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: “I sent you to successfully proclaim my message like those who harvest” (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#))

### that on which you have not labored (ULT)

This phrase refers to those who received Jesus’ message when his disciples proclaimed it to them. Although the disciples did not prepare those people to receive the message, they enjoyed the benefits of seeing those people trust in Jesus for salvation. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “those people whom you previously did not prepare to receive the message” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Others have labored (ULT)

**Others** here refers to those people who prepared people to receive Jesus’ message before Jesus’ disciples successfully proclaimed that message to them. This would include Jesus, John the Baptist, and possibly the Old Testament prophets as well. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Others such as myself and the prophets have labored” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### you...have entered into their labor (ULT)

Here, **entered into** means to join others or participate with others in doing something. Alternate translation: “you are joining in doing their work”

## John 4:39

### from...that city (ULT)

Here, **that city** refers to the the Samaritan city of Sychar. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "from Sychar" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> Now many of the Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the report of the woman, testifying, "He told me everything that I have done."

### He told me everything that I have done (ULT)

Here, **everything** is an exaggeration. The woman was impressed by how much Jesus knew about her. If this is not clear in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: "He told me many things that I have done" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

## John 4:40

### to him...him...he stayed (ULT)

In this verse **him** and **he** refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "to Jesus ... Jesus ... Jesus stayed" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**40** So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.

## John 4:41

### his word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to the message that Jesus proclaimed. Alternate translation: "his message" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**41** And many more believed because of his word.

## John 4:42

### they said (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the Samaritans from Sychar. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the local Samaritans said" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### We...believe...we...have heard...we know (ULT)

**We** throughout this verse refers to the Samaritan townspeople who came to Jesus apart from the Samaritan woman, so the pronoun would be exclusive. Your language may require you to mark this form. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### this one (ULT)

Here, **this one** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "this man, Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### of...world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers to everyone throughout the world who believes in Jesus. Alternate translation: "all the believers in the world" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> And they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your speech, for we ourselves have heard, and we know that this one is truly the Savior of the world."

## John 4:43

### Now after those two days (ULT)

This phrase introduces a new event that happened after the events the story has just related. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: “After he had spent two days in Samaria” (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

#### ULT

<sup>43</sup> Now after those two days, he departed from there into Galilee;

### he departed (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus departed” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### from there (ULT)

Here, **there** could refer to: (1) the Samaritan city of Sychar. Alternate translation: “from Sychar” (2) the region of Samaria in general. Alternate translation: “from Samaria” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 4:44

### for (ULT)

**For** here indicates that this verse provides one reason why Jesus wanted to go to Galilee. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “He went to Galilee because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### ULT

**44** for Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

### for Jesus himself testified (ULT)

The reflexive pronoun **himself** is added to emphasize that Jesus had **testified** or said this. You can translate this in your language in a way that will give emphasis to a person. (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

### a prophet has no honor in his own country

Alternate translation: “people do not show respect or honor to a prophet of their own country” or “a prophet is not respected by the people in his own community”

This could refer to: (1) the whole region of Galilee where Jesus came from. Alternate translation: “in the Galilee region where he was from” (2) the specific town Jesus grew up in, which is Nazareth. Alternate translation: “in his hometown of Nazareth”



## John 4:45

### When therefore (ULT)

Here, **therefore** indicates that what follows is the result of what Jesus had testified in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “As a result of this being true, when” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**45** When therefore he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all the things, as much as he had done in Jerusalem at the festival, for they had also gone to the festival.

### the Galileans welcomed him (ULT)

Since this verse gives the result of Jesus saying in the previous verse that a prophet was not honored in his own country, it is important to indicate that welcoming Jesus was not the same as honoring him. They **welcomed him** because he did miracles, not because they honored him as a prophet. Alternate translation: “the Galileans only welcomed him”

### having seen all the things (ULT)

This clause indicates the reason why the Galileans welcomed Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because they had seen all the things” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### having seen all the things (ULT)

Here, **all** is an exaggeration that refers to the Galileans having seen many of Jesus’ miracles. If this is not clear in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “having seen many of the things” (See: [Hyperbole](#) )

### at the festival...to the festival (ULT)

Here, **the festival** refers the Passover festival, as indicated in [2:12-25](#). If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “at the Passover festival ... to the Passover” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) )

## John 4:46

### Then (ULT)

**Then** indicates that the events the story will now relate came after the event it has just described. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: "After Jesus entered Galilee and the Galileans welcomed him" (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**46** Then he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine, and there was a certain royal official whose son in Capernaum was ill.

### he came (ULT)

In this verse **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus came" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### Cana...Capernaum (ULT)

**Cana** is the name of a town and **Capernaum** is the name of a city. Both were in the region of Galilee. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### and there was a certain royal official (ULT)

This phrase introduces a new character in the story. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new character. The expression "royal official" identifies this man as a someone who was in the service of the king. Since he is a new participant, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could call him something like "a man who was a government official who served the king" (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

## John 4:47

### He (ULT)

**He** here refers to the royal official. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The official" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### Judea...Galilee (ULT)

These are two main regions in the land of Israel. (See: [How to Translate Names](#) )

### he was about (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to the royal official's son. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the official's son was about" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> He, having heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, went to him and asked that he would come down and heal his son, for he was about to die.

## John 4:48

### Unless you would see signs and wonders, you would certainly not believe (ULT)

This statement is a double negative. In some languages it is more natural to translate this statement in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Only if you see signs and wonders will you believe" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### ULT

<sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you would see signs and wonders, you would certainly not believe."

### you would see...you would...believe (ULT)

The word **you** is plural in this verse. This means that Jesus was not only speaking to the royal official, but also to the other people who were there. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you all would see ... you all would ... believe" (See: [Forms of You](#))

### signs and wonders (ULT)

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **wonders** describes the character of Jesus' miraculous **signs**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "wonderful miraculous signs" (See: [Hendiadys](#))

## John 4:49

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**49** The royal official says to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”

### Sir (ULT)

The royal official calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. See how you translated this word in [4:11](#). (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

### come down (ULT)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “please come down” (See: [Imperatives — Other Uses](#) )

## John 4:50

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> Jesus says to him, “Go. Your son lives.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went away.

### The man (ULT)

Here, **the man** refers to the royal official who was introduced in verse 46. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The royal official” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### believed...the word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to all that Jesus said to the man. It does not refer to one specific word that Jesus said. Alternate translation: “believed the words” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 4:51

### he (ULT)

In this verse **he**, **his**, and **him** refer to the royal official who was introduced in verse 46. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the royal official” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### ULT

<sup>51</sup> Now while he was going down, his servants met him and reported to him, saying that his son lives.

### saying that his son lives (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this as a direct quotation. You will also need to adjust the sentence to indicate whom they are speaking to. Alternate translation: “saying, ‘Your son lives’” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

## John 4:52

### So he asked from them the hour in which he began to improve (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "So he asked from them, 'In what hour did he begin to improve?'" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

#### ULT

<sup>52</sup> So he asked from them the hour in which he began to improve. Therefore, they replied to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

### he began to improve (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to the royal official's son who was ill. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "his son" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### hour...seventh (ULT)

In this culture, people began counting the hours each day beginning around daybreak at six o'clock in the morning. Here, the seventh hour indicates a time in the middle of the day. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this in the way the people of your culture reckon time. Alternate translation: "about one o'clock in the afternoon"



## John 4:53

### the father (ULT)

Here, **the father** refers to the royal official who was introduced in verse 46. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the royal official” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**53** Then the father realized that it was at that hour in which Jesus had said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself and his whole household believed.

### Jesus had said to him, “Your son lives (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “Jesus had said to him that his son lives” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

### he himself...believed (ULT)

John uses the word **himself** to emphasize the importance of this event. Alternate translation: “that same royal official ... believed” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

## John 4:54

### Now Jesus again did this second sign (ULT)

This verse is a comment about the events described in [4:46–53](#). John wrote much about the miraculous signs Jesus did. This is the second of those signs. Alternate translation: “That was the second sign Jesus did”

#### ULT

<sup>54</sup> Now Jesus again did this second sign, having come from Judea to Galilee.

### sign (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of signs in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracle”

## John 5

### John 5 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Jesus' third sign: he heals a paralyzed man (5:1–9)

Jewish leaders oppose Jesus' ministry (5:10–18)

Jesus says he is equal with God (5:19–30)

Jesus' witnesses are John the Baptist, Jesus' works, God, and the Scriptures (5:31–47)

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Healing water

Many of the Jews believed that God would heal people who got into some of the pools in Jerusalem when the waters were “stirred up.” The man Jesus healed in this chapter was one of those people (5:2–7).

##### Testimony

In the Bible, a testimony is what one person says about another person. What a person says about himself is not as important as what other people say about that person. In this chapter, Jesus tells the Jews that God had told them who Jesus was, so he did not need to tell them who he was (5:34–37). This was because God had told the writers of the Old Testament what his Messiah would do, and Jesus had done everything they had written that he would do (5:44–47).

##### The resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment

In this chapter, Jesus mentions two resurrections, the resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment (5:28–29). Regarding the resurrection of life, God will make some people alive again and they will live with him forever because he gives them his grace. Regarding the resurrection of judgment, God will make some people alive again and they will live apart from him forever because he will treat them justly.

##### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### The Son, the Son of God, and the Son of Man

Jesus refers to himself in this chapter as the “Son” (5:19), the “Son of God” (John 5:25), and the “Son of Man” (5:27). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

##### “Son of Man”

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” in this chapter (5:27). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man, son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 5:1

### After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem (ULT)

This is the next event in the story, in which Jesus goes up to Jerusalem and heals a man. These verses give background information about the setting of the story. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “After this Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a festival of the Jews” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

### After this (ULT)

This phrase indicates that what follows occurred after Jesus healed the royal official’s son. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “After Jesus healed the official’s son” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

### went up...to Jerusalem (ULT)

**Jerusalem** is located on the top of a hill. Therefore, roads to **Jerusalem** went **up**. If your language has a different word for going up a hill than for walking on level ground or going down a hill, you should use it here.

## John 5:2

### a pool (ULT)

This **pool** was a large manmade hole in the ground that people filled with water and used for bathing. Sometimes they lined these pools with tiles or stones.

### Bethesda (ULT)

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

### roofed porches (ULT)

These **porches** were structures with roofs that had at least one wall missing and were attached to the sides of buildings.

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, which in Hebrew is called Bethesda, having five roofed porches.

## John 5:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> In these were lying a crowd of those who are sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed.  
[\[1\]](#)

## John 5:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4/2]</sup> [For an angel of the Lord went down into the pool and stirred up the water at certain times, and whoever then first stepped in after the water was stirred was healed from whatever disease he suffered from.]

## John 5:5

### Now a certain man was there (ULT)

This verse introduces the man lying beside the pool as a new character to the story. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new character. (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Now a certain man was there, having 38 years in his illness.

### was...there (ULT)

Here, **there** refers to the pool called Bethesda in verse 2. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “was at the Bethesda pool” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 5:6

### says to him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said to him”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Jesus, having seen this one lying there and having known that he already is there a long time, says to him, “Do you want to be healthy?”

## John 5:7

### Sir (ULT)

The man calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. (See: [lord, Lord, master, sir](#))

### when the water is stirred up (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in an active form and say who did the action. Verse 4 indicates who the man believed was doing the action. Alternate translation: “when an angel moves the water” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### into the pool (ULT)

See how you translated **pool** in verse 2.

### another goes down before me (ULT)

The man believed that only the first person to enter the water after the water stirred would be healed. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “another goes down before me and is healed”

#### ULT

7 The sick man replied to him, “Sir, I do not have a man so that, when the water is stirred up, he might put me into the pool. But as I am going into it, another goes down before me.”

## John 5:8

### says to him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said to him”

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Jesus says to him, “Get up, take up your mat, and walk.”

## John 5:9

### Now...that...day (ULT)

John uses the word **Now** to show that the words that follow provide background information for a new event in the story that takes place in verses [10–13](#). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “On the day that Jesus healed the man” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> And immediately the man became healthy, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a Sabbath.

## John 5:10

### So the Jews said (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: "So the Jewish authorities said" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**10** So the Jews said to the one who was healed, "It is the Sabbath and not permitted for you to carry your mat."

### to the one who was healed (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this in an active form and you could say who did the action, as is indicated in the previous verses. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "to the one whom Jesus had healed" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### It is the Sabbath (ULT)

Your language might use an indefinite article rather than the definite article here, since the synagogue ruler is not speaking of a specific Sabbath. Alternate translation: "It is a Sabbath day"

### not permitted for you to carry your mat (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders (who were probably Pharisees) said this because they thought that the man was doing work by carrying his mat, and so he was disobeying God's command to rest and not work on the Sabbath. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#) and [work](#), [works](#), [deeds](#) and [Sabbath](#)) If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "it is not permitted for you, according to our law, to carry your mat" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:11

### he...who made me healthy (ULT)

Alternate translation: "The one who made me well" or "The one who healed me of my illness"

### that one said to me, 'Pick up your mat (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "that one said to me to pick up my mat" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

#### ULT

**11** But he replied to them, "The one who made me healthy, that one said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

## John 5:12

### They asked him (ULT)

**They** here refers to the Jewish leaders and **him** refers to the man Jesus had healed. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The Jewish leaders asked the man who was healed” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Pick it up and walk’?”

### who said to you, ‘Pick it up (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “who said to you to pick it up” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

## John 5:13

### the one...who was healed (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this in an active form and you could say who did the action, as is indicated in the previous verses. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “the one whom Jesus had healed” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**13** But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had gone away secretly, a crowd being in the place.

### who it was (ULT)

John is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “who it was who had healed him” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### a crowd being in the place (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) the reason why Jesus left secretly. Alternate translation: “because a crowd was in the place” (2) the time when Jesus left secretly. Alternate translation: “while a crowd was in the place” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### a crowd (ULT)

The word **crowd** is a singular noun that refers to a group of people. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: “a group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))



## John 5:14

### After this (ULT)

This phrase indicates that what follows occurred after the Jewish leaders had spoken with the man who had been healed. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "After this conversation between the Jewish leaders and this man" (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

#### ULT

**14** After this, Jesus finds him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have become healthy! No longer sin, so that something worse might not happen to you."

### Jesus finds him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "Jesus found him"

### him...to him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to the man whom Jesus had healed. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the healed man ... that man" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### Behold (ULT)

John records Jesus using the term **Behold** to call the man's attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 5:15

### to the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [5:10](#). Alternate translation: “to the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**15** The man went away and announced to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him healthy.

## John 5:16

### And because of this, the Jews began to persecute Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath (ULT)

The writer uses the word **And** to show that the words this verse gives background information. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "Now the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he was doing these things on the Sabbath." (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> And because of this, the Jews began to persecute Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

### because of this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to what the man whom Jesus had healed told the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders began to persecute Jesus because he had healed the man on the Sabbath, which was something they believed was against the law of Moses. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because Jesus had healed him on the Sabbath" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche which represent the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "the Jewish authorities" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### because he was doing these things (ULT)

This phrase indicates a second reason why the Jewish leaders began persecuting Jesus. Here, **these things** refers to Jesus healing people on the Sabbath. The plural **things** indicates that he healed on the Sabbath multiple times, not just on the occasion recorded in verses 5–9. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "because he was doing these healings" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### on the Sabbath (ULT)

Your language might use an indefinite article rather than the definite article here, since the synagogue ruler is not speaking of a specific Sabbath. Alternate translation: "on a Sabbath day"

## John 5:17

### But he replied to them (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “But Jesus replied to them” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**17** But he replied to them, “My Father is working even now, and I am working.”

### My Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 5:18

### Because of this, therefore (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to what Jesus had said in the previous verse. One of the reasons why the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus was that Jesus called God his Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Because Jesus said this, therefore” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**18** Because of this, therefore, the Jews sought even more to kill him, because he not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche which represent the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### because he not only was breaking the Sabbath (ULT)

The phrase **breaking the Sabbath** is an idiom that means to disobey the regulations for the Sabbath that God gave in the law of Moses. The Pharisees added many regulations which they considered to be equal with those God had given. It was the additional Jewish regulations that Jesus was disobeying, thereby making the Jewish leaders very angry with him. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because he not only was disobeying their Sabbath regulations” (See: [Idiom](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### making himself equal to God (ULT)

This clause is the result of what Jesus had said in the previous clause. The result of Jesus calling God Father is that he was claiming to be equal with God. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the result being that he was making himself equal to God” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

## John 5:19

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** indicates that what Jesus is about to say is a response to the accusations of the Jewish leaders that were mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Because the Jewish leaders had made these accusations” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### to them (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the Jewish leaders who wanted to kill Jesus and made accusations against him in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to the Jewish authorities” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). Alternate translation: “What I am about to tell you is very true” (See: [Doublet](#))

### I say to you (ULT)

Since Jesus is speaking to a group of Jewish leaders, **you** is plural here and through [5:47](#). If your language does not have a different form for plural **you**, you can use another way to express it. Alternate translation: “I say to you Jews” or “I say to you all” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### Son...Father (ULT)

**Son** and **Father** are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Son...also the Son...does (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “I, the Son ... I, the Son, do” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### from himself (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate the source of Jesus’ teaching and ability to do miracles. His teaching and miracles could only have authority if they came from God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “on his own authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### what he would see the Father doing (ULT)

Here, **see** is used figuratively to refer to knowing something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “what he would perceive the Father doing” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**19** Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son is able to do nothing from himself except only what he would see the Father doing, for whatever that one would do, these things also the Son does in the same way.

## John 5:20

### the...Father...the Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Son (ULT)

As in the previous verse, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "I, the Son" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son and he shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these so that you might be amazed.

### he shows him...he will show him (ULT)

Here, **shows** and **show** are used figuratively to refer to revealing or making something known. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "he reveals to him ... he will reveal to him" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he will show him (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to God the Father and **him** refers to Jesus the Son. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Father will reveal to the Son" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### greater...than these...works (ULT)

Here, **works** refers specifically to miracles. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "greater miracles than these" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### greater...than these...works (ULT)

Here, **these** refers to the miracles that Jesus had already performed by the time he spoke these words. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "greater works than these miracles I have already performed" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 5:21

### Father...Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### makes them alive...makes alive whom he desires (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) eternal life. Alternate translation: “makes them have eternal life ... makes whom he desires have eternal life” (2) physical life, in which case it would repeat the idea of “raises the dead” in the previous phrase. Alternate translation: “makes them live again ... makes alive again whom he desires” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Son (ULT)

As in the previous two verses, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “I, the Son” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> For just as the Father raises the dead and makes them alive, so also the Son makes alive whom he desires.



## John 5:22

### the Father...to the Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### judgment (ULT)

Here, **judgment** refers to the legal authority to judge people as guilty or innocent. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this abstract noun with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “power to judge others” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### to the Son (ULT)

As in the previous three verses, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “to me, the Son” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> For not even the Father judges anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son

## John 5:23

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Son...The one not honoring the Son (ULT)

As in the previous four verses, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST:

“me, the Son...The one not honoring me, the Son” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> so that all will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one not honoring the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

### the Father who sent him (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “of God, the Father who sent me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:24

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). Alternate translation: “What I am about to tell you is very true” (See: [Doublet](#))

### I say to you (ULT)

Since Jesus is speaking to a group of Jewish leaders, **you** is plural here and through [5:47](#). If your language does not have a different form for plural **you**, you can use another way to express it. Alternate translation: “I say to you Jews” or “I say to you all” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### the one hearing my word (ULT)

Here, **hearing** means listening to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. It does not mean simply to hear what someone says. If this meaning for **hearing** would be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one heeding my word” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to the message or teachings of Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “my message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### does not come into judgment (ULT)

Jesus speaks figuratively of **judgment** as if it was a place a person could enter. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this phrase plainly. Alternate translation: “will not be judged” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### into...he has passed from death...life (ULT)

Here, **passed** means to move from one state to another. Alternate translation: “he has moved from death to life”

#### ULT

**24** Truly, truly, I say to you that the one hearing my word and believing the one who sent me has eternal life and does not come into judgment, but he has passed from death to life.

## John 5:25

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "What I am about to tell you is very true" (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you that an hour is coming, and is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have heard will live.

### I say to you (ULT)

Since Jesus is speaking to a group of Jewish leaders, **you** is plural here and through [5:47](#). If your language does not have a different form for plural **you**, you can use another way to express it. Alternate translation: "I say to you Jews" or "I say to you all" (See: [Forms of You](#))

### an hour is coming (ULT)

Here, **hour** refers to a point in time when something happens. It does not refer to a 60-minute length of time. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to chapter four and see how you translated it in [4:21](#). Alternate translation: "a point in time is coming" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the dead (ULT)

Here, **the dead** could refer to: (1) people who are spiritually dead. Alternate translation: "the spiritually dead" (2) people who are physically dead. Alternate translation: "the physically dead" (3) both the spiritually dead and physically dead. In this case, **an hour that is coming** would refer to the future resurrection of the dead while **is now** would refer to those spiritually dead people who were listening to Jesus when he spoke these words. Alternate translation: "the spiritually dead and physically dead" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### of the Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### of the Son of God (ULT)

As in the previous verses in this paragraph, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "of me, the Son of God" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### will hear...those who have heard (ULT)

Here, **heard** means to listen to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. See how you translated "hearing" in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "will heed ... those who have heeded" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will live (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) having eternal life. Alternate translation: "will have eternal life" (2) physical life, as in being resurrected after death. Alternate translation: "will become alive again" (3) both eternal life and physical life.

Alternate translation: "will have eternal life and become alive again" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:26

### the Father...to the Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### has life in himself...to have life in himself (ULT)

Here, the phrases **has life** and **have life** refer to being the source of life or having the ability to create life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “is the source of life ... the right to be the source of life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to the Son...to have life in himself (ULT)

As in the previous verses in this paragraph, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “to me, the Son, to have life in myself” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to the Son to have life in himself,

## John 5:27

### he gave him...he is (ULT)

The first occurrence of **he** refers to God the Father, but **him** and the second occurrence of **he** refer to the Son of Man. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Father gave the Son ... the Son is" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> and he gave him authority to do judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

### he gave him...he is the Son of Man (ULT)

As in the previous verses in this paragraph, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "he gave me ... I am the Son of Man" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### he gave him authority to do judgment (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract nouns **authority** and **judgment** with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: "he authorized him to act as judge" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 1:51. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:28

### Do not be amazed at this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to the the Son of Mans authority to give eternal life and to carry out judgment, as stated in the previous two verses. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Do not be amazed that the Father has given the Son this authority” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**28** Do not be amazed at this, for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice

### an hour is coming (ULT)

Here, **hour** refers to a point in time when something happens. It does not refer to a 60-minute length of time. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to chapter four and see how you translated it in verse [25](#). Alternate translation: “a point in time is coming” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will hear his voice (ULT)

As in the previous verses in this paragraph, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “will hear my voice” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))



## John 5:29

### a resurrection of life (ULT)

In this phrase, John records Jesus using the possessive form to describe a **resurrection** that results in eternal **life**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. For further discussion of this phrase, see the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “a resurrection that results in life” (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> and will come out—those who have done good, to a resurrection of life, but those who have practiced evil, to a resurrection of judgment.

### a resurrection of judgment (ULT)

In this phrase, John records Jesus using the possessive form to describe a **resurrection** that results in eternal **judgment**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. For further discussion of this phrase, see the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “a resurrection that results in judgment” (See: [Possession](#))

## John 5:30

### from myself (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate the source of Jesus' teaching and ability to do miracles. His teaching and miracles could only have authority if they came from God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "on my own authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> I am able to do nothing from myself. Just as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is righteous because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.

### Just as I hear, I judge (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "Just as I hear from the Father, I judge" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### my judgment is righteous (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate the abstract nouns **judgment** and **righteous** with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: "I judge rightly" or "I judge justly" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:31

### If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true (ULT)

Here Jesus is referring to a rule in the law of Moses. According to Deuteronomy 19:15, a statement had to be confirmed by at least two witnesses in order to be considered true in legal decisions. If your audience is not familiar with the law of Moses in the Old Testament, then you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "You know that the law of Moses states that if I testify about myself, my testimony is not true" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true.

### If I testify about myself (ULT)

Jesus assumed that his listeners understood that he was referring to testifying about himself without any other witnesses. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "If I testify about myself without any other witnesses" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:32

### There is another who is testifying about me (ULT)

Here, **another** refers to God the Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "There is another who is testifying about me, the Father" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> There is another who is testifying about me, and I know that the testimony that he testifies about me is true.

## John 5:33

### You have sent to John (ULT)

Here and through [5:47](#), **You** is plural and refers to the Jewish leaders whom Jesus is speaking to. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “You Jewish authorities sent to John” (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**33** You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

### You have sent to John (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “You have sent messengers to John” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### to John (ULT)

Here, **John** refers to Jesus’ cousin, often referred to as “John the Baptist.” (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to John the Baptist” or “to John the Immerser” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:34

### from man (ULT)

Here, **man** does not refer to any specific man, but to any human being. Alternate translation: “from mankind” or “from anyone” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> But I do not receive the testimony from man, but I say these things so that you might be saved.

### I say these things (ULT)

Here, **these things** could refer to: (1) what Jesus said about John the Baptist in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “I say this about John” (2) all that Jesus has said in verses [17-33](#). Alternate translation: “I say these things about myself and John” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### so that you might be saved (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this with an active form and say who would do the action. Alternate translation: “so that God might save you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 5:35

### That one (ULT)

**That one** here refers to Jesus' cousin, often referred to as "John the Baptist." (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist" or "John the Immerser" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> That one was the lamp that was burning and shining, but you desired to exult in his light for an hour.

### That one was the lamp that was burning and shining (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **lamp** figuratively to refer to John the Baptist. In the way that lamps in those days burned oil and shined light, so John's teaching helped people understand God's truth and prepared them to receive Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "That one taught you the truth about God" or "That one was like a lamp that was burning and shining" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### in his light (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **light** figuratively to refer to John the Baptist's teaching. In the way that light enables people to see in the dark, so John's teaching helped people understand God's truth and prepared them to receive Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "in his teaching" or "in his teaching that was like a light" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### for an hour (ULT)

Here, **hour** refers to a short amount of time. It does not mean a 60-minute period of time or a specific point in time. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "for a moment" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:36

### for (ULT)

Here, **for** indicates that what follows is an explanation of the “testimony” Jesus has mentioned in the previous clause. Alternate translation: “that testimony is”

### the...works (ULT)

Here, **works** could refer to: (1) the miracles that Jesus did. Alternate translation: “the miracles” (2) Jesus’ miracles and teaching. Alternate translation: “the miracles and teaching”

### the Father...that the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the very works that I do—testify about me (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus speaking of **works** figuratively as though they were a person who could **testify** about who he is. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “the very works that I do—are evidence for who I am” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> But I have the testimony that is greater than that of John: for the works that the Father has given me so that I would accomplish them—the very works that I do—testify about me that the Father has sent me.



## John 5:37

### the Father who sent me has himself testified (ULT)

The reflexive pronoun **himself** emphasizes that it is the Father, not someone less important, who has testified about who Jesus is. Alternate translation: "none other than the Father himself who sent me has testified" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> And the Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You have neither heard his voice nor have seen his form at any time.

### the Father who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in [5:23](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:38

### his word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to the teachings that God gave to his people in the Scriptures. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “his teachings” or “the Scriptures he gave us” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> And you do not have his word remaining in you, for the one whom he has sent, this one you do not believe.

### you do not have his word remaining in you (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus speaking of God’s **word** as if it was an object that could remain inside people. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “you do not live according to his word” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the one whom he has sent, this one (ULT)

This phrase refers to Jesus. He is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “me, the one whom he has sent ... me whom” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 5:39

### in them you have eternal life (ULT)

Some Jews in Jesus' time believed that a person could earn their way to heaven by studying the Scriptures and doing good deeds. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "you will get eternal life if you study them" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**39** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and these are the ones testifying about me,

### in them...these are the ones (ULT)

In this verse **them**, **these**, and **the ones** all refer to the Scriptures. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say some of these words explicitly. Alternate translation: "in the Scriptures ... these Scriptures are the ones" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### these are the ones testifying about me (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus speaking of the Scriptures figuratively as though they were a person who are **testifying** about who he is. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "these indicate who I am" (See: [Personification](#))

## John 5:40

### you are not willing to come to me (ULT)

Here, **come** does not mean to merely come near Jesus, but it means to follow him and be his disciple. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “you are not willing to come and by my disciples” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> and you are not willing to come to me so that you might have life.

### you might have life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “you might have eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 5:41

### from men (ULT)

Here, **men** is used in a generic sense that includes all people.  
 Alternate translation: "people" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

#### ULT

**41** I do not receive glory from men,

## John 5:42

### the love of God (ULT)

This could mean: (1) they did not **love God**. Alternate translation: "love for God" (2) they had not received God's love. Alternate translation: "love from God" (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

## John 5:43

### in the name of my Father (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **name** figuratively to refer to God's power and authority. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "with the authority of my Father" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**43** I have come in the name of my Father, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you receive that one.

### of...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### you do not receive me (ULT)

Here, **receive** means to accept a person into one's presence with friendliness. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1:11](#). Alternate translation: "you do not welcome me"

### If another should come in his own name

Here, John records Jesus using the word **name** figuratively to refer to authority. Alternate translation: "If another comes in his own authority" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 5:44

### How are you able to believe, receiving glory from one another, and are not seeking the glory that is from the only God (ULT)

John records Jesus using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "There is no way you are able to believe, receiving glory from one another, and are not seeking the glory that is from the only God!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>44</sup> How are you able to believe, receiving glory from one another, and are not seeking the glory that is from the only God?

### to believe (ULT)

John records Jesus leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "to believe me" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### receiving glory from one another (ULT)

Here, **receiving** could refer to: (1) the time they are receiving glory. Alternate translation: "while receiving glory from one another" (2) a causal statement. Alternate translation: "since receiving glory from one another"



## John 5:45

### The one accusing you is Moses, in whom you have hoped (ULT)

**Moses** here could refer to: (1) the person named Moses who gave the Israelites the law of Moses. (2) the law of Moses itself. Alternate translation: "Moses accuses you in the Law, the very Law in which you have hoped" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>45</sup> Do not think that I myself will accuse you before the Father. The one accusing you is Moses, in whom you have hoped.

## John 5:46

### if (ULT)

John records Jesus making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. Jesus knows that the Jewish leaders do not truly believe Moses. Alternate translation: "you must not believe Moses since you do not believe me" (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#) )

### ULT

**46** For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, because that one wrote about me.

## John 5:47

### if...you do not believe (ULT)

John records Jesus speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Jesus is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement.

Alternate translation: "Since you do not believe" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> But if you do not believe the writings of that one, how will you believe my words?"

### how will you believe my words (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to provide emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way.

Alternate translation: "you will certainly never believe my words!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) )

### my words (ULT)

Here, **words** refers to what Jesus said to these Jewish leaders. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "what I have told you" (See: [Metonymy](#) )

## John 6

### John 6 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Jesus' fourth sign: Jesus feeds a large crowd (6:1–14)

Jesus' fifth sign: Jesus walks on the Sea of Galilee (6:15–21)

Jesus says he is the bread of life (6:22–71)

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### King

The king of any nation was the richest and most powerful person in that nation. The people wanted Jesus to be their king because he gave them food so they thought he would make the Jews into the richest and most powerful nation in the world. They did not understand that Jesus came to die so God could forgive his people's sins and that the world would persecute his people.

#### Important metaphors in this chapter

##### Bread

Bread was the most common and important food in Jesus' day, so the word "bread" was their general word for "food." It is often difficult to translate the word "bread" into the languages of people who do not eat bread because the general word for food in some languages refers to food that did not exist in Jesus' culture. Jesus used the word "bread" to refer to himself. He wanted them to understand that they need him so they can have eternal life, just as people need food to sustain physical life. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

##### Eating the flesh and drinking the blood

When Jesus said, "unless you would eat the flesh of the Son of Man and would drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves," he was speaking figuratively of believing in his sacrificial death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. He also knew that before he died he would tell his followers to commemorate this sacrifice by eating bread and drinking wine. In the event this chapter describes, he expected that his hearers would understand that he was using a metaphor but would not understand what the metaphor referred to. (See: [flesh](#) and [blood](#))

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### Parenthetical Ideas

Several times in this passage, John explains something or gives the reader some background information to better understand the story. These explanations are intended to give the reader some additional knowledge without interrupting the flow of the narrative. This information is placed inside parentheses.

## **“Son of Man”**

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” several times in this chapter. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man, son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 6:1

### General Information:

Jesus had traveled from Jerusalem to Galilee. A crowd has followed him up a mountainside. Verses 1–4 tell the setting of this part of the story. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> After these things, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (of Tiberias).

### After these things (ULT)

This phrase indicates that what follows occurred after Jesus fed the crowd and talked to the Jewish leaders, as described in the previous chapter. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “After Jesus fed the crowd and spoke with the Jewish leaders” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

### of...Sea of Galilee (of Tiberias (ULT)

The **Sea of Galilee** was called by several names, one of which was Sea **of Tiberias**. (See: [Sea of Galilee](#), [Sea of Kinnereth](#), [lake of Gennesaret](#), [Sea of Tiberias](#)) If having two different names for the same place would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “of the Sea of Galilee (also known as the Sea of Tiberias)” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:2

### a great crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a large group of people” or “very many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now a great crowd was following him because they were seeing the signs that he was doing on those being sick.

## John 6:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Now Jesus went up on the mountain,  
and there he sat down with his  
disciples.



## John 6:4

### Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near (ULT)

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about when the events happened. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “This event took place near the time of the Passover, the festival of the Jews” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> (Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near.)

## John 6:5

### Then (ULT)

**Then** here could mean: (1) what follows is the next event in the story. Alternate translation: “Next” (2) what follows is the result of what happened in the previous verses. Alternate translation: “Therefore” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Then Jesus, having lifted up his eyes and having seen that a great crowd is coming to him, says to Philip, “From where might we buy bread so that these might eat?”

### having lifted up...eyes (ULT)

Here, “lifted up his eyes” is an idiom that means to look upward. Alternate translation: “looking up” (See: [Idiom](#))

### a great crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a large group of people” or “very many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

### Philip (ULT)

**Philip** is the name of a man who was one of Jesus’ disciples. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

## John 6:6

### But he said this, testing him, for he himself knew what he was going to do (ULT)

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to explain why Jesus asked Philip where to buy bread. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “Now he said this at that time to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> (But he said this, testing him, for he himself knew what he was going to do.)

### testing him (ULT)

John is stating the purpose for which Jesus asked Philip the question in the previous verse. In your translation, follow the conventions of your language for purpose clauses. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “so that he could test Philip” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

### him (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Philip. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “Philip” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### himself...he...knew (ULT)

Here, John uses the reflexive pronoun **himself** to make clear that the word **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus himself knew” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

## John 6:7

### Two hundred denarii worth of bread (ULT)

The word **denarii** is the plural form of “denarius,” which was a denomination of money in the Roman Empire that was equivalent to one days’ wages. Alternate translation: “The amount of bread that cost two hundred days’ wages” (See: [Biblical Money](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, so that each one might receive a little.”

## John 6:8

### to him...his (ULT)

Here, **his** and **him** refer to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus' ... to Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, says to him,

### Andrew...of Simon Peter (ULT)

**Andrew** and **Simon Peter** are names of men who were Jesus' disciples. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "said"

## John 6:9

### five barley bread loaves (ULT)

The grain **barley** was a common grain eaten by the poor in Israel because it was cheaper than wheat. (See: [barley](#)) They would bake the barley into **bread loaves**, which are lumps of flour dough that a person has shaped and baked. Alternate translation: “five loaves of barley bread” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> “Here is a little boy who has five barley bread loaves and two small fish, but what are these to so many?”

### what are these to so many (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that they do not have enough food to feed everyone. Alternate translation: “these are not enough to feed so many!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 6:10

### Jesus said, “Make the men sit down (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “Jesus said to make the men sit down” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Make the men sit down.”  
(Now there was a lot of grass in the place.) So the men sat down, about 5,000 in number.

### the men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, John records Jesus using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “the people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

### Now there was a lot of grass in the place.) So the men sat down, about 5,000 in number (ULT)

If it would be natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “So the men sat down, about 5,000 in number. (Now there was a lot of grass in the place.)” (See: [Information Structure](#))

### Now there was a lot of grass in the place (ULT)

John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about the place where this event happened. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “The place where the people were all coming together had a lot of grass” (See: [Background Information](#))

### So the men sat down, about 5,000 in number (ULT)

Here, **men** refers specifically to adult males. Although the term for “men” used earlier in this verse refers to a group that included men, women, and children, here John is counting only the **men**.

## John 6:11

### the loaves (ULT)

This means **loaves** of bread, which are lumps of flour dough that a person has shaped and baked. These **loaves** are those five barley **loaves** mentioned in verse 9. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the five loaves of barley bread” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

#### ULT

**11** Then Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks, he gave them to those reclining to eat; likewise also with the fish, as much as they wanted.

### having given thanks (ULT)

John leaves out some words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “having given thanks to God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### he gave (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to “Jesus and his disciples.” Alternate translation: “Jesus and his disciples gave them” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### the fish (ULT)

These **fish** are the two **fish** mentioned in verse 9. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “the two fish” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 6:12

### they were filled (ULT)

If your language does not use passive voice, you could say this in an active or reflexive form. Alternate translation: “they had finished eating” or “they had filled themselves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he said”

### he says to his disciples, “Gather up (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “he says to his disciples to gather up” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> But as they were filled, he says to his disciples, “Gather up the remaining broken pieces, so that nothing might be lost.”

## John 6:13

### baskets (ULT)

Here, **baskets** refers to large baskets that were used for carrying food and goods while traveling. If your language has a word for this kind of basket, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “large traveling baskets” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### ULT

**13** So they gathered them up and filled 12 baskets of broken pieces from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

## John 6:14

### the...men (ULT)

Although the term **men** is masculine, John uses the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “the people” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

#### ULT

**14** Therefore, the men, having seen the sign he did, said, “This truly is the prophet who is coming into the world.”

### having seen the sign he did (ULT)

This clause could refer to: (1) the time that they said what follows in the verse. Alternate translation: “at the time they saw the sign he did” (2) the reason that they said what follows in the verse. Alternate translation: “because they saw the sign he did”

### the...sign (ULT)

Here, **sign** refers to the Jesus miraculously feeding the large crowd that was described in verses [5-13](#). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the sign of miraculously feeding the large crowd” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the prophet who is coming into the world (ULT)

Here, **the prophet** refers to a prophet the Jews were waiting for, based on God’s promise to send a prophet like Moses, which is recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15. If your readers will not be familiar with this Old Testament reference, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the prophet whom God said he would send into the world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:15

### having realized that they were about to come (ULT)

This clause could refer to: (1) the time that Jesus decided to withdraw. Alternate translation: "at the time he realized that they were about to come" (2) the reason that Jesus decided to withdraw. Alternate translation: "because he realized that they were about to come"

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> Then Jesus, having realized that they were about to come and to seize him so that they might make him king, withdrew again onto the mountain by himself alone.

### by himself alone (ULT)

Here, John uses the reflexive pronoun **himself** to emphasize that Jesus was completely alone. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "completely alone" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

## John 6:16

### Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the story. Jesus' disciples go out onto the Sea of Galilee in a boat.

### the sea (ULT)

Here and throughout this chapter, **sea** refers to the Sea of Galilee. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "the Sea of Galilee" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**16** Now as it became evening, his disciples went down to the sea,

## John 6:17

### to Capernaum (ULT)

Capernaum is the name of a town in the region of Galilee. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### and darkness had already happened, but Jesus had not yet come to them (ULT)

In these clauses, John provides background information about the situation in order to help readers understand what happens in this story. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** and having gotten into a boat, they were going over the sea to Capernaum, and darkness had already happened, but Jesus had not yet come to them.

## John 6:18

### A strong wind was blowing (ULT)

This clause indicates the reason for what happens in the next clause. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Because a strong wind was blowing” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**18** A strong wind was blowing, and the sea was being aroused.

### was being aroused (ULT)

John uses **aroused** figuratively to refer to the wind causing the sea to become turbulent. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this with a non-figurative expression. Alternate translation: “was being stirred up” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the...sea...was being aroused (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: “the wind was causing the sea to be aroused” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 6:19

### having rowed (ULT)

The boats used on the Sea of Galilee usually had two, four, or six people who **rowed** with oars together on each side side of the boat. If your readers would not be familiar with rowed boats, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “having pushed the boat through the water by using oars” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

#### ULT

**19** Then, having rowed about 25 or 30 stadia, they see Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened.

### about 25 or 30 stadia (ULT)

The word **stadia** is the plural of “stadium,” which is a Roman measurement of distance equivalent to about 185 meters or a little over 600 feet. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this in terms of modern measurements, either in the text or a footnote. Alternate translation: “about four and one half or five and one half kilometers” or “about three or three and one half miles” (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

### they see (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “they saw”



## John 6:20

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "he said"

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> But he says to them, "It is I! Do not be afraid."

## John 6:21

### they were willing...to receive him into the boat (ULT)

It is implied that Jesus got **into the boat**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "they gladly received him into the boat" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Then they were willing to receive him into the boat, and immediately the boat came to the land to which they were going.

## John 6:22

### the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “the group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### on the other side of the sea (ULT)

Here, **the other side of the sea** refers to the side of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus had fed the crowd. It does not refer to the side of the Sea of Galilee that he and his disciples arrived at in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “on the side of the sea where Jesus performed the miracle” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>22</sup> The next day, the crowd that had been standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there except one and that Jesus had not entered into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had departed alone.

### there was no other boat there except one (ULT)

Here, **one** refers to the boat that the disciples had taken to cross the Sea of Galilee. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “there was no other boat there except the one that the disciples had taken” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:23

### Other boats came from Tiberias close to the place where they had eaten the bread loaves (ULT)

In this verse, John provides background information about the story. The day after Jesus miraculously fed the crowd, some **boats** with people from **Tiberias** came to see Jesus. However, Jesus and his disciples had left that place the night before. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “Other boats came with people from Tiberias close to the place where the crowd had eaten the bread loaves” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Other boats came from Tiberias close to the place where they had eaten the bread loaves after the Lord had given thanks.

### the Lord (ULT)

Here, **the Lord** refers to Jesus. It does not refer to God the Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “the Lord Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### after the Lord had given thanks (ULT)

John leaves out some words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “after the Lord had given thanks to God” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 6:24

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** indicates that this verse is the result of what happened in verse 22. This verse resumes the narrative that was interrupted by the background information in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Because Jesus and his disciples had gone to the other side of the Sea of Galilee” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**24** Therefore, when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples are there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

### the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “the group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#) )

### are there (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “were there”

### into the boats (ULT)

These **boats** are the **boats** mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “into the boats that had come from Tiberias” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) )

### seeking Jesus (ULT)

John is stating the purpose for which the crowd went to Capernaum. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “so that they could seek Jesus” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

## John 6:25

### on the other side of the sea (ULT)

Here, **on the other side** refers to the side of the Sea of Galilee that is opposite the side where Jesus had miraculously fed the crowd. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "on the opposite side of the sea from where Jesus had fed the crowd" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> And having found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"

## John 6:26

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

### were filled (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this in an active or reflexive form. Alternate translation: “filled yourselves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Jesus replied to them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me not because you saw signs, but because you ate from the bread loaves and were filled.”

## John 6:27

### for the food that endures to eternal life (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **food** figuratively to refer to himself because he is the source of salvation who gives **eternal life** to all who trust him. Jesus lasts forever and so does the **eternal life** that he gives. However, the crowd does not understand this and Jesus does not tell them this plainly at this time. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give you, for God the Father has set his seal on this one."

### for the food that endures to eternal life (ULT)

John records Jesus leaving out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "work for the food that endures to eternal life" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### the Son of Man...will give...this one (ULT)

These two expressions are all refer to Jesus. He is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will give ... me" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### which the Son of Man will give you (ULT)

This phrase could give further information about: (1) "the food that endures to eternal life." Alternate translation: "that is, the food the Son of Man will give you" (2) "eternal life." Alternate translation: "that is, the life the Son of Man will give you" (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

### Son of Man...the Father...God (ULT)

\* *Son of Man*\* and **God the Father** are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 1:51. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### this one...has set his seal on (ULT)

To "**set a seal**" on something means to place a mark on it in order to show to whom it belongs or to certify its authenticity. Here, the phrase is used as an idiom and could mean: (1) that the Father approves of the Son in every way. Alternate translation: "has affirmed his approval of him" (2) that the Son belongs to the Father. Alternate translation: "has affirmed that the Son belongs to him" (See: [Idiom](#))



## John 6:28

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>28</sup> Then they said to him, "What should we do, so that we might work the works of God?"

## John 6:29

### **This is the work of God: that you would believe in the one whom that one has sent (ULT)**

Here, Jesus says which **work** one must do in order to receive “the food that endures to eternal life” that was mentioned in verse 27.

This **work** is not any kind of labor or deed that can be done, but faith in Jesus, which is a gift from God ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “This is the work of God that is required to receive the food that endures to eternal life: that you believe in the one whom that one has sent” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>29</sup> Jesus replied and said to them, “This is the work of God: that you would believe in the one whom that one has sent.”

### **the one whom that one has sent (ULT)**

This phrase refers to Jesus. He is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “me, the one whom he has sent” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### **that one has sent (ULT)**

Here, **that one** refers to God the Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “God has sent” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 6:30

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>30</sup> So they said to him, "What sign then do you do, so that we might see and might believe you? What will you work?"

## John 6:31

### Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness (ULT)

In this verse, John assumes that his readers will know that the crowd is referring to a story recorded in the Old Testament book of Exodus.

In that story, the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron because they were hungry. God responded by providing a flake-like food that fell from the sky and could be baked into bread. The people called this flake-like food “manna.” (See: [manna](#)) You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they would not know the story. Alternate translation: “Our fathers ate the manna when they were wandering in the wilderness after leaving Egypt” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

### Our fathers (ULT)

Here, the word **fathers** figuratively means “ancestors.” If that use of **fathers** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Our ancestors” or “Our forefathers” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### it is written (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this in an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: “the prophets wrote in the Scriptures” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “it is written that he gave them bread from heaven to eat” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### He gave them bread from heaven to eat (ULT)

**He** here could refer to: (1) Moses, in which case the crowd was mistakenly quoting a scripture about God and applying it to Moses. This is possible because Jesus says in the next verse, “Moses has not given you the bread from heaven.” Alternate translation: “Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat” (2) God, which is who it referred to in the scripture the crowd is quoting. Alternate translation: “God gave them bread from heaven to eat” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### bread (ULT)

Here, John records the crowd using the word **bread** figuratively to represent food in general that is needed to sustain life. The manna that God gave the Israelites from heaven was not **bread**, but a food that could be baked into **bread**. Alternate translation: “food” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 6:32

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### to you, Moses has not given (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus speaking in a way that emphasizes that **Moses** was not the source of manna in the wilderness. He seems to be correcting the crowd's incorrect understanding of the scripture they quoted in the previous verse. Use whatever form best communicates this kind of negative emphasis in your language. Alternate translation: "Moses was not the one who has given you"

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Then Jesus replied to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses has not given you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven."

### the bread (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **bread** figuratively to represent food in general that is needed to sustain life. The manna that God gave the Israelites from heaven was not **bread**, but a food that could be baked into **bread**. See how you translated this word in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "food" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### but my Father gives (ULT)

This phrase serves two purposes. First, it implies that the **Father** was the source of the bread from heaven mentioned by the crowd in the previous verse, not Moses. Second, it indicates that the **Father** is still giving bread from heaven, although not the kind of bread the crowd is expecting. If it would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly and you may also want to start a new sentence. Alternate translation: "Rather, my Father has given that bread and now gives" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### my Father gives you the true bread from heaven (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **true bread** figuratively to refer to himself. However, the crowd does not understand this and Jesus does not tell them this plainly until verse [35](#). Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### my Father (ULT)

**Father** an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### bread (ULT)

See how you translated this word earlier in this verse and in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "food" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 6:33

### the...bread of God is (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **bread** figuratively to refer to himself. However, the crowd does not understand this and Jesus does not tell them this plainly until verse 35. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

**33** For the bread of God is the one coming down from heaven and giving life to the world."

### the...bread of God (ULT)

This phrase could mean: (1) the bread came from God. Alternate translation: "the bread that God gives" (2) the bread belongs to God. Alternate translation: "God's bread" (See: [Possession](#))

### the one coming down from heaven (ULT)

This phrase refers to Jesus. However, the crowd does not understand this and Jesus does not tell them this plainly at this time. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** refers to the people who live in it. Alternate translation: "the people living in the world" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 6:34

### Sir (ULT)

The crowd calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

### bread (ULT)

Here, **bread** could refer to: (1) food in general, as the word was used by the crowd in verse [31](#). This would mean that the crowd did not understand that Jesus was calling himself the bread from heaven. Alternate translation: "food" (2) some gift from God that the crowd was uncertain of. This would mean that the crowd recognized that Jesus was talking about something more spiritual than mere food, but did not understand that he was talking about himself. Alternate translation: "heavenly food" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 6:35

### I am the bread of life (ULT)

John records Jesus continuing the **bread** metaphor to refer figuratively to himself. In Jesus' culture, **bread** was the primary food people ate to stay alive. Just as **bread** is necessary for sustaining physical life, Jesus is necessary for giving spiritual life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "Just as food keeps you physically alive, I can give you spiritual life" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. The one coming to me will certainly not hunger, and the one believing in me will certainly not ever thirst."

### the bread of life (ULT)

John records Jesus using the possessive form to describe what produces **life**. If this is not clear in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the bread that produces life" (See: [Possession](#))

### of life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "of eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### The one coming to me will certainly not hunger, and the one believing in me will certainly not ever thirst (ULT)

Jesus speaks about the person who trusts in him by continuing the metaphor of food that he began in verse 32. You could express this metaphor as a simile if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "The one coming to me will be like a person who never gets hungry, and the one believing in me will be like a person who never gets thirsty" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

### The one coming to me will certainly not hunger, and the one believing in me will certainly not ever thirst (ULT)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that anyone who trusts in Jesus will never lack spiritual satisfaction. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "The one who trusts me will certainly never lack spiritual satisfaction again" (See: [Doublet](#))

### The one coming to me (ULT)

Here, **coming** does not mean to merely come near Jesus. It means to believe in him and be his disciple. If this use of **coming** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The one coming to be my disciple" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will certainly not hunger...will certainly not ever thirst (ULT)

John records Jesus using a figure of speech twice in the same verse to express a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in



your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “will always be full ... will always have his thirst quenched” (See: [Litotes](#))

## John 6:36

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>36</sup> But I told you that you have both  
seen me and do not believe.

## John 6:37

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and the one coming to me I will certainly not throw out.

### will come to me...the one coming to me (ULT)

In this verse, **come** and **coming** do not mean to merely come near Jesus, but they mean to believe in him and be his disciple. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “will come to be my disciples ... the one coming to be my disciple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one coming to me I will certainly not throw out (ULT)

John records Jesus using a figure of speech here to express a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “I will keep everyone who comes to me” (See: [Litotes](#))

## John 6:38

### For (ULT)

**For** introduces the reason why Jesus will not throw out anyone who comes to him. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “This is true because” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### ULT

**38** For I have come down from heaven, not in order that I might do my own will, but the will of the one who sent me.

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:39

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in 4:34. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### anyone whom he has given...I would not lose from it (ULT)

John records Jesus using a figure of speech here to express a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "I should keep all of them whom he has given" (See: [Litotes](#))

### I would not lose from it...but will raise it up (ULT)

Here, **it** refers to the whole group of believers as a whole. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly or use a plural pronoun. Alternate translation: "I would not lose from the group of believers ... but will raise that group up" or "I would not lose from them ... but will raise them up" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### will raise it up (ULT)

Here, to **raise** up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "will cause them to live again" (See: [Idiom](#))

### on the last day (ULT)

Here, **the last day** refers to "the day of the Lord," which is the time when God judges everyone, Jesus returns to earth, and the bodies of those who are dead are raised from their graves. (See: [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "on the day when I return and judge everyone" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> But this is the will of the one who sent me, that I would not lose from it anyone whom he has given me, but will raise it up on the last day.

## John 6:40

### For this is the will of my Father, that everyone (ULT)

**For** introduces the reason for the Father's will that Jesus stated in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "What I have just said is my Father's will because his will is also that everyone" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him would have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

### of my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### everyone who sees the Son (ULT)

Here, **sees** is used figuratively to refer to understanding something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "everyone who understands who the Son is" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### I will raise him up (ULT)

Here, to **raise** up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. See how you translated this in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "will cause them to live again" (See: [Idiom](#))

### on the last day (ULT)

Here, **the last day** refers to "the day of the Lord," which is the time when God judges everyone, Jesus returns to earth, and the bodies of those who are dead are raised from their graves. (See: [day of the Lord](#), [day of Yahweh](#)) See how you translated this in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "on the day when I return and judge everyone" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:41

### Connecting Statement:

The Jewish leaders interrupt Jesus as he is speaking to the crowd. His conversation with these Jewish leaders is in verses [41–58](#).

### Then the Jews (ULT)

Here and to the end of this chapter, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “Then the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### I am the bread (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders paraphrase what Jesus said in verse [33](#). See how you translated **bread** and **come down from heaven** in verse [33](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**41** Then the Jews began to murmur about him because he said, “I am the bread that has come down from heaven.”

## John 6:42

### Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders believe that Jesus is just a normal person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "This is just Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

### How then does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders do not believe that Jesus came from heaven. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "He is lying when he says that he came from heaven!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "How then does he now say that he has come down from heaven?" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))



## John 6:43

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>43</sup> Jesus replied and said to them, “Do not murmur among yourselves.

## John 6:44

### to come to me (ULT)

Here, **come** does not mean to merely come near Jesus. It means to believe in him and be his disciple. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “to come to be my disciple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**44** No one is able to come to me unless the Father who sent me would draw him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in [5:23](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### would draw him (ULT)

Alternate translation: “would pull him” or “would drag him”

### him...him (ULT)

Although the pronoun **him** is masculine, John records Jesus using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “the person” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

### will raise him up (ULT)

Here, to **raise** up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. See how you translated this in verse [40](#). Alternate translation: “will cause them to live again” (See: [Idiom](#))

### on the last day (ULT)

Here, **the last day** refers to “the day of the Lord,” which is the time when God judges everyone, Jesus returns to earth, and the bodies of those who are dead are raised from their graves. (See: [day of the Lord, day of Yahweh](#)) See how you translated this in verse [40](#). Alternate translation: “on the day when I return and judge everyone” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:45

### It is written in the prophets (ULT)

If your language does not use passive voice, you could translate this in an active form. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “The prophets wrote” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in the prophets, ‘And all will be taught by God (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “in the prophets that all will be taught by God” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### all will be taught by God (ULT)

If your language does not use passive voice, you could translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will teach all” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### comes to me (ULT)

Here, **comes** does not mean to merely come near Jesus. It means to believe in him and be his disciple. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “comes to be my disciple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>45</sup> It is written in the prophets, ‘And all will be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and has learned from the Father comes to me.

## John 6:46

### the Father...has seen the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the one who is from God—he has seen the Father (ULT)

John records Jesus referring to himself in the third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: “me, the who is from God—I have seen the Father” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>46</sup> Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the one who is from God—he has seen the Father.

## John 6:47

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, the one believing has eternal life.

### the one believing (ULT)

John records Jesus leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “the one believing in me” or “the one believing that I am the Messiah” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 6:48

### I am the bread of life (ULT)

See how you translated this in [John 6:35](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

**ULT**

**48** I am the bread of life.

## John 6:49

### Your fathers (ULT)

Here, the word **fathers** figuratively means “ancestors.” If this use of **fathers** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Your forefathers” or “Your ancestors” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**49** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

### ate the manna in the wilderness (ULT)

See how you translated this expression in verse 31. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:50

### This is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person might eat from it and might not die (ULT)

Jesus continues using the **bread** metaphor to say that one must believe in him in order to have eternal life just as one must **eat bread** to sustain physical life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this as a simile. Alternate translation: "I am this bread that comes down from heaven, just as one must eat bread to live, so must one believe in me in order to not die spiritually" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> This is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person might eat from it and might not die.

### This is...it (ULT)

John records Jesus referring to himself in the third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: "I am ... me" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the bread (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse 48. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### might eat from it (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **eat** figuratively to refer to believing in him for salvation. What Jesus said plainly in verse 47 he says figuratively here. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this with a simile. Alternate translation: "might believe in me as one eats bread to live" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### might not die (ULT)

Here, the word **die** refers to spiritual death, which is eternal punishment in hell that occurs after physical death. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "might not die spiritually" or "might not experience spiritual death" (See: [Metaphor](#))



## John 6:51

### I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread, he will live into eternity (ULT)

As in the previous verse, Jesus continues using the **bread** metaphor to say that one must believe in him in order to have eternal life just as one **eats bread** to sustain physical life. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this as a simile. Alternate translation: "I am the living bread that comes down from heaven. Just as one lives if they eat bread, so does one who believes in me live forever" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread, he will live into eternity. Now my flesh is also the bread that I will give for the life of the world."

### I am (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase emphatically to make a strong statement about who he is. Use the most natural way to express emphasis in your language. Alternate translation: "I myself am" or "I am indeed" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the living bread (ULT)

Here, **living** refers to being the source of life or having the ability to produce life, which is synonymous with "life" in the phrase "the bread of life" that Jesus used in verse 35. See how you translated "the bread of life" in verse 35. Alternate translation: "the bread that causes life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### eats from this bread (ULT)

Here and in the previous verse, John records Jesus using **eats** figuratively to refer to believing in Jesus for salvation. Jesus gives eternal life to those who believe in him. See how you translated "eat" in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "Just as food keeps you physically alive, I can give you spiritual life" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my...flesh (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **flesh** figuratively to refer to his whole physical body. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "my body" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the...bread (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the **bread** metaphor slightly different from how he has used it previously. Here it refers specifically to his physical body, which he would sacrifice on the cross to pay for the sins of those who believe in him. Since Jesus says this explicitly at the end of the verse, you do not need to explain its meaning further. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### for the life of the world (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If this might be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "for the eternal life of the world" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## for the life of the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is used figuratively to refer to the people in the world. Alternate translation: “for the life of the people in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 6:52

### Then...the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “Then the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>52</sup> Then the Jews began to argue among themselves, saying, “How is this one able to give us his flesh to eat?”

### How is this one able to give us his flesh to eat (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders are reacting negatively to what Jesus has said about **his flesh**. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “There is no way that this one is able to give us his flesh to eat!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### flesh (ULT)

Here, John records the Jews using **flesh** figuratively to refer to Jesus’ whole physical body. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “his body” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### to eat (ULT)

The Jews are stating the purpose for which the flesh would be given to them. In your translation, follow the conventions of your language for purpose clauses. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “so that we would eat” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

## John 6:53

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in 1:51. (See: [Doublet](#))

### you would eat the flesh of the Son of Man and would drink his blood (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the phrases **eat the flesh** and **drink his blood** figuratively. Just as people need to **eat** and **drink** in order to live, people need to trust Jesus in order to have eternal life. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>53</sup> Therefore, Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you would eat the flesh of the Son of Man and would drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves.”

### you would eat the flesh of the Son of Man and would drink his blood (ULT)

These two phrases **eat the flesh** and **drink his blood** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that trusting in Jesus is the only way to have eternal life. Because Jesus’ **flesh** and **blood** are important concepts, do not combine them. Instead, you could communicate the emphasis in a way that is most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you would indeed eat the flesh of the Son of Man and would indeed drink his blood” (See: [Doublet](#))

### of the Son of Man and would drink his blood (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “of me, the Son of Man, and would drink my blood” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### of the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 1:51. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### you do not have life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If this use of **life** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “you do not have eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:54

### The one eating my flesh and drinking my blood has eternal life (ULT)

The phrases “eating my flesh” and “drinking my blood” are a metaphor for trusting Jesus. Just as people need food and drink in order to live, people need to trust Jesus in order to have eternal life.

However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>54</sup> The one eating my flesh and drinking my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.

### The one eating my flesh and drinking my blood has eternal life (ULT)

As in the previous verse, these two phrases **eat the flesh** and **drink his blood** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used for emphasis. See how you translated the similar expressions in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “Indeed, the one eating my flesh and drinking my blood surely has eternal life” (See: [Doublet](#))

### will raise him up (ULT)

Here, **raise him up** is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. If this would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “will cause him to live again” (See: [Idiom](#))

### in the last day (ULT)

Here, **the last day** refers to “the day of the Lord,” which is the time when God judges everyone, Jesus returns to earth, and the bodies of those who are dead are raised from their graves. (See: [day of the Lord](#), [day of Yahweh](#)) See how you translated this phrase in verse 39. Alternate translation: “on the day when I return and judge everyone” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:55

### my...flesh...my...blood (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the phrases **my flesh** and **my blood** figuratively to refer to believing in him. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>55</sup> For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

### flesh...my...flesh...is true food, and my blood is true drink (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the phrases **true food** and **true drink** figuratively to say that Jesus gives life to those who trust in him. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### flesh...my...flesh...is true food, and my blood is true drink (ULT)

As in the previous two verses, these two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used for emphasis. See how you translated the similar expressions in the previous two verses. Alternate translation: “my flesh is indeed true food, and my blood is indeed true blood” (See: [Doublet](#))

## John 6:56

### The one eating my flesh and drinking my blood (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse 54. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>56</sup> The one eating my flesh and drinking my blood remains in me, and I in him.

### remains in me (ULT)

Here and frequently in John's Gospel, **remains in** indicates having a continuous personal relationship with someone. If this would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. See the discussion of this expression in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: "has a personal relationship with me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and I in him (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus leaving out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be confusing in your language, you could supply the word from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "and I remain in him" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 6:57

### the living Father (ULT)

Here, **living** refers to being the source of life or having the ability to create life. This is also how Jesus used **living** in verse 51. See how you translated **living** in verse 51. Alternate translation: “the Father who causes life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**57** Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so the one eating me, he will also live because of me.

### Father...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### and I live because of the Father (ULT)

Here, **live** refers to being the source of life or having the ability to create life. It does not mean to merely be alive. If it is confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “and I cause life because of the Father” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and I live because of the Father (ULT)

Here, **because of the Father** indicates the reason why Jesus has the ability to cause life. God the Father gave Jesus the ability to cause others to live. Jesus explained this concept in 5:25–26. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “and I cause life because the Father has enabled me to do so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### so the one eating me (ULT)

The phrase **eating me** is a metaphor for trusting Jesus. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. See how you translated similar expressions in verses 53–56. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### he will also live because of me (ULT)

Here, **live** refers to having eternal life. It does not refer to being the source of life, as **living** and **live** are used previously in this verse. If this shift in meaning might be confusing in your language, you could state the difference explicitly. Alternate translation: “he will also have eternal life because of me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 6:58

### This is the bread that has come down from heaven (ULT)

John records Jesus referring to himself in the third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: "I am the bread that has come down from heaven" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>58</sup> This is the bread that has come down from heaven, not just as the fathers ate and died. The one eating this bread will live into eternity."

### This is the bread...this bread (ULT)

John records Jesus continuing the **bread** metaphor to refer figuratively to himself. Just as **bread** is necessary for our physical life, Jesus is necessary for our spiritual life. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### the fathers (ULT)

Here, the word **fathers** figuratively means "ancestors." If this would be confusing in your language, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "the ancestors" or "the forefathers" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### not just as the fathers ate and died (ULT)

John records Jesus leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "this bread is not just as the bread that the fathers ate and died" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### the fathers ate and died (ULT)

The phrase **ate and died** does not mean that the people died immediately after eating the bread. If this wording would be confusing in your language, you could translate it in a way that shows a time gap between eating and drinking. Alternate translation: "the fathers ate and still died at a later time" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### The one eating this bread (ULT)

Jesus spoke about himself as **this bread**. Alternate translation: "He who eats me, the bread" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### The one eating this bread (ULT)

Here, **eating this bread** is a metaphor for trusting Jesus. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

## John 6:59

### He said these things in a synagogue, teaching in Capernaum (ULT)

Here John gives background information about when this event happened. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>59</sup> He said these things in a synagogue, teaching in Capernaum.

### He said (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "Jesus said" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### these things (ULT)

Here, **these things** refers to what Jesus said to the crowd and Jewish leaders in verses [26–58](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "these teachings about being the bread of life" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 6:60

### having heard (ULT)

Here, John leaves out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “having heard this” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

**60** Then many of his disciples, having heard, said, “This word is hard; who is able to listen to it?”

### This word is (ULT)

Here, **word** stands for what Jesus had just spoken to the crowd in verses [26–58](#). If this would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “What he has just said is” or “These words are” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### hard (ULT)

Here, **hard** refers to something that causes a negative reaction because it is harsh or unpleasant. It does not refer to something that is difficult to understand, but something that is difficult to accept. If this use of **hard** would be confusing in your language, you could say this with a different expression. Alternate translation: “hard to accept” or “offensive” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### who is able to listen to it (ULT)

Here, the disciples use the question form for emphasis. If this would be confusing in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “no one is able to listen to it!” or “it is too hard to listen to!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 6:61

### But Jesus, knowing in himself (ULT)

This phrase implies that Jesus had supernatural knowledge. It indicates that Jesus knew what his disciples were saying even though he did not hear what they said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Even though no one told Jesus, he knew” or “Even though Jesus had not heard them, he was fully aware” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**61** But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were murmuring about this, said to them, “Does this offend you?”

### about this...this (ULT)

In this verse, **this** refers to what Jesus had just spoken to the crowd in verses [26–58](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “about these teachings ... what I teach” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### you (ULT)

Here and throughout verses [61–71](#) **you** is plural and refers to Jesus’ disciples. If your language distinguishes between singular and plural second person pronouns, you should use the plural form of **you**. Alternate translation: “you disciples of mine” (See: [Forms of You](#))

## John 6:62

### if...you would see the Son of Man going up to where he was before (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using only one part of a conditional sentence. He leaves out the second part of the conditional sentence for emphasis. Many languages need to have both parts of a conditional sentence in order to make the sentence complete. If this is true for your language, you could supply the second clause from the previous verse. Alternate translation: "if you would see the Son of Man going up to where he was before, would it offend you?" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>62</sup> Then if you would see the Son of Man going up to where he was before...?

### the Son of Man going up to where he was before (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man, going up to where I was before" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [1:51](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to where he was before (ULT)

This phrase refers to heaven, where Jesus was **before** he came down to earth. If this would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "to heaven, where I used to be" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:63

### The Spirit is the one making alive (ULT)

Here, **making alive** refers to giving eternal life, not physical life. If this use of **alive** might be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The Spirit is the one giving eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**63** The Spirit is the one making alive; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and they are life.

### the flesh (ULT)

Here, **the flesh** could refer to: (1) human nature. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “human nature” (2) Jesus’ body. Alternate translation: “my flesh” (3) both human nature and Jesus’ body. “your nature and my flesh” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### profits nothing (ULT)

Here, **profit** means to be beneficial or useful. It does not mean to earn money. If this use of **profit** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “has no benefit” or “is no help at all” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### The words...they are life (ULT)

Here, **words** stands for the teachings that Jesus had just spoken to the crowd in verses [26–58](#). If this would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The teachings ... these teachings are life” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### is...spirit (ULT)

This could mean: (1) from the Spirit. Alternate translation: “are from the Spirit” (2) about the Spirit. Alternate translation: “are about the Spirit”

### is...and...life (ULT)

This could mean: (1) give life. Alternate translation: “and they give life” (2) about life. Alternate translation: “and they are about life”

### life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal life. If this use of **life** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:64

### **For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones not believing and who was the one who would betray him (ULT)**

Here, John gives background information to explain why Jesus said the earlier part of this verse. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “Jesus said this because he knew from the start who did not believe and who would later betray him” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>64</sup> But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones not believing and who was the one who would betray him.

### **who do not believe...the ones not believing (ULT)**

The implied object of **believe** and **believing** is Jesus or Jesus’ teaching. If your language requires an object for these words, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “who do not believe in me ... the ones not believing in me” or “who do not believe what I say ... the ones not believing what I say” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:65

### Because of this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers the information Jesus said in the previous verse. If it would be misunderstood for your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Because of the disbelief I have just told you about” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**65** And he said, “Because of this, I have said to you that no one is able to come to me unless it would have been granted to him by the Father.”

### no one is able to come to me (ULT)

See how you translated the identical phrase in verse [44](#). Alternate translation: “no one is able to come to be my disciple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### it would have been granted to him (ULT)

Here, the pronoun **it** refers to the ability to come to Jesus and be his disciple. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the ability to come to me would be have been granted to him” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### it would have been granted to him by the Father (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the Father would give it to him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))



## John 6:66

### stayed behind (ULT)

This phrase is an idiom that refers to going back to living the way one lived previously. Here, these people left Jesus to go back to living the way they had lived before they met him. If this phrase would be confusing in your language, you could say its meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “returned to their former manner of living” or “went back to their previous way of life” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

**66** From this time, many of his disciples stayed behind and no longer were walking with him.

### no longer were walking with him (ULT)

Although Jesus did walk from one place to another, here **walking** is used figuratively to refer to how a person lives and behaves. These people were **no longer** living according to Jesus’ teaching and thus were no longer his disciples. If this meaning for **walking** would be confusing in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: “no longer obeyed his teachings” or “no longer were his disciples” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 6:67

### to the Twelve (ULT)

John is using the adjective **Twelve** as a noun in order to indicate a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase.

Alternate translation: “the 12 apostles” or “the 12 men whom he had appointed to be apostles” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

#### ULT

**67** Therefore, Jesus said to the Twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?”

### to the Twelve (ULT)

Alternatively, even if your language does not ordinarily use adjectives as nouns, you may be able to do that in this case, since this is a title by which the apostles were known. Even though it is a number, if you translate it as a title, as the ULT does, follow the conventions for titles in your language. For example, capitalize main words and write out numbers rather than use digits. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### You do not want to go away also, do you (ULT)

John records Jesus asking this question in a way that expects a negative response. He does this to contrast **the Twelve** from the many other disciples who had just abandoned him. If your language has a question form that assumes a negative response, you should use it here. Alternate translation: “You probably do not want to go away also, am I right?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:68

### Simon Peter (ULT)

**Simon Peter** is the name of a man who was Jesus' disciple. He is sometimes referred to as **Simon** or **Peter**. See how you translated this name in verse 8. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

**68** Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom will we go? You have words of eternal life,

### Lord, to whom will we go (ULT)

**Simon Peter** uses the form of a question to emphasize that he desires to follow only Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Lord, we could never follow anyone but you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### You have words of eternal life (ULT)

John records **Peter** using the possessive form to describe a **word** that gives **eternal life**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "You have words that give eternal life" (See: [Possession](#))

### words (ULT)

John records Peter using the term **words** figuratively to describe the things that Jesus taught by using words. Alternate translation: "teaching" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 6:69

### we (ULT)

When Peter says **we**, he is speaking of himself and the rest of the twelve disciples, so **we** would be exclusive. Your language may require you to mark this form. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

#### ULT

**69** and we have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God." [1]

### the Holy One of God (ULT)

John records **Peter** using the possessive form to describe a **the Holy One** who comes from **God**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Holy One from God" (See: [Possession](#))

## John 6:70

### Did not I choose you, the Twelve, and one of you is a devil (ULT)

Jesus gives this remark in the form of a question in order to emphasize that one of the twelve disciples will betray him. Alternate translation: "I chose you, the Twelve, myself, and one of you is a devil!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>70</sup> Jesus replied to them, "Did not I choose you, the Twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

### the Twelve (ULT)

See how you translated **the Twelve** in verse 67. (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

### one of you is a devil (ULT)

The word **devil** could mean: (1) one of Jesus' twelve disciples was a wicked person whose thoughts and actions resembled those of the **devil** or was being influenced or controlled by the **devil**. It does not mean that this person actually was the devil in human form. It also does not imply that there is more than one devil. Alternate translation: "one of you is wicked like the devil" or "one of you is controlled by the devil" (2) one of Jesus' twelve disciples was speaking harmful and untrue things about Jesus to others. This meaning is possible because the word translated **devil** can also mean "slanderer." Alternate translation: "one of you is a slanderer" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 6:71

### General Information:

In this verse, John provides background information about what Jesus said in the previous verse. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>71</sup> (Now he was speaking of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.)

### of Judas...son of Simon (ULT)

**Judas** and **Simon** are names of two men. This **Simon** is not the same as Simon Peter. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### the Twelve (ULT)

See how you translated **the Twelve** in verse 67. (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

## John 7

### John 7 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the Festival of Shelters (7:1–13)

Jesus says his authority is from God (7:14–24)

Jesus says he came from God (7:25–31)

Jesus says he will return to God (7:32–36)

Jesus says he is the living water (7:37–39)

The people disagree about who Jesus is (7:40–44)

The Jewish leaders disagree about who Jesus is (7:45–53)

Translators may wish to include a note at verse [53](#) to explain to the reader why they have chosen or chosen not to translate verses [7:53–8:11](#). These verses are not in the best and oldest ancient manuscripts. If the translators have chosen to translate these verses, then they will want to either put them in a footnote outside of the main text or mark them in some way, such as square brackets ([ ]), to indicate that the passage may not have originally been in John's Gospel. (See: [Textual Variants](#))

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### “Believing in him”

A recurring theme in this chapter is the concept of believing Jesus to be the Messiah. Some people believed he was the Messiah while others did not. Some were willing to recognize his power and even the possibility that he was a prophet, but most were unwilling to believe that he was the Messiah. (See: [Christ, Messiah](#) and [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#))

##### “My time has not yet come”

This phrase and “his hour had not yet come” are used in this chapter to indicate that Jesus is in control of the events that are happening in his life.

##### “Living water”

This is an important metaphor used in the New Testament to refer to the Holy Spirit. See the discussion of this metaphor in the note about “living water” for [4:10](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

##### Prophecy

In verses [33–34](#) Jesus gives a prophecy about his return to heaven without explicitly indicating his statement as prophecy.

## Irony

Nicodemus explains to the other Pharisees that the Law requires them to hear directly from a person before making a judgment about that person. The Pharisees in turn made a judgment about Jesus without speaking to Jesus.

## Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

### “Did not believe in him”

Jesus’ brothers did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah at the time the events in this chapter took place. (See: [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#))

### “The Jews”

This term is used in two different ways in this passage. It is used specifically to refer to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus and were trying to kill him ([7:1](#), [11](#), [13](#), [15](#), [35](#)). It is also used in verse [2](#) to refer to Jewish people in general. The translator may wish to use the terms “Jewish leaders” and “Jewish people” to clarify this distinction.



## John 7:1

### after these things (ULT)

This phrase indicates that what follows occurred after the events that John had recorded in the previous chapter. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “After Jesus spoke with his disciples in Capernaum” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> And after these things, Jesus traveled about in Galilee, for he did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

### the Jews (ULT)

Here and throughout this chapter, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. Apart from one exception in verse [2](#), it does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 7:2

### Now the festival of the Jews, the Shelter Festival, was near (ULT)

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about when the events happened. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "This event took place near the time of the Shelters Festival, the festival of the Jews" (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> (Now the festival of the Jews, the Shelter Festival, was near.)

### of the Jews (ULT)

Unlike in the previous verse and throughout this chapter, **the Jews** here refers to the Jewish people in general. It does not refer to the Jewish leaders. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "of the Jewish people" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:3

### his brothers (ULT)

These were Jesus' younger **brothers**, the other sons of Mary and Joseph who were born after Jesus. Since the Father of Jesus was God and their father was Joseph, they were actually his half-brothers. That detail is not normally translated, but if your language has a specific word for a man's younger brother, it would be appropriate to use it here. Alternate translation: "his younger brothers" or "his half-brothers" (See: [Kinship](#))

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Then his brothers said to him, "Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples also will see your works that you do."

### your works that you do (ULT)

Here, **works** refers to the powerful miracles that Jesus was performing. If this use of **works** could be misunderstood in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "your miracles that you do" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:4

### seeks himself (ULT)

Here, Jesus' brothers use the reflexive pronoun **himself** in order to emphasize their belief that Jesus wants to make **himself** famous. If this use of **himself** would be confusing in your language, you could use another way to show emphasis in your language. Alternate translation: "seeks for his own benefit" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> For no one does anything in secret and seeks himself to be in openness. If you do these things, show yourself to the world."

### in...seeks himself to be...openness (ULT)

Alternate translation: "seeks publicity for himself" or "seeks public attention"

### If you do these things (ULT)

John records Jesus' brothers speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but they mean that it is actually true. Although they didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah at this time, they did not deny that he was doing miracles. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what the brothers are saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: "Since you do these things" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#))

### to the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is used figurative to refer to all of the people in the world. If this use of **world** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to all people" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 7:5

### For not even his brothers were believing in him (ULT)

This sentence is a break from the main story line as John provides some background information about the brothers of Jesus. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "Jesus' brothers said this because even they didn't believe in him" (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> For not even his brothers were believing in him.

### his brothers (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse 3. Alternate translation: "his younger brothers" or "his half-brothers" (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 7:6

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Jesus therefore says to them, “My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready.”

### My time is not yet come (ULT)

This could mean: (1) It was not the right **time** for Jesus to go to Jerusalem for the festival because God had not yet told him to go. This meaning explains why he eventually went to the festival in verse [10](#). Alternate translation: “Now is not the right time for me to go to Jerusalem” (2) It was not the right **time** for Jesus to publicly reveal himself as the Messiah, which is what his brothers wanted him to do. Alternate translation: “Now is not the right time for me to publicly reveal myself as the Messiah” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### your (ULT)

All instances of “you” and **your** in verses [6–8](#) are plural. They only refer to Jesus’ brothers. (See: [Forms of ‘You’ — Singular](#) )

### your time is always ready

Alternate translation: “but any time is good for you”

## John 7:7

### The world is not able to hate you (ULT)

**The world** here refers figuratively to the people who live in the world. If this use of **world** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “All the people in the world are not able to hate you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> The world is not able to hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that the works of it are evil.

### it hates...about it...the works of it (ULT)

In this verse, **it** refers to the people in **the world**. If you translated **the world** with a plural noun, then you should change these pronouns to plural form as well. Alternate translation: “they hate...about them...their works” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### I testify about it that its works are evil

Alternate translation: “I tell them that what they are doing is evil”

## John 7:8

### You go up (ULT)

John records Jesus saying **go up** to refer to going to Jerusalem because that city is at a higher elevation than Galilee, which is where Jesus and his brothers were at this time. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate where they would go. Alternate translation: "You go up to Jerusalem" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> You go up to the festival; I am not yet going to this festival, because my time has not yet been fulfilled."

### my time has not yet been fulfilled (ULT)

This phrase means the same as "My time is not yet come" in verse 6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: "Now is not the right time for me to go to Jerusalem" or "Now is not the right time for me to publicly reveal myself as the Messiah" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 7:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Now having said these things to them,  
he remained in Galilee.

## John 7:10

### his brothers (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in verse 3. Alternate translation: “his younger brothers” or “his half-brothers” (See: [Kinship](#))

### he also went up (ULT)

See how you translated “go up” in verse 8. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### not publicly, but as in secret (ULT)

These two phrases mean the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that Jesus did not want to attract public attention in Jerusalem. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “very secretly” (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

**10** But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not publicly, but as in secret.

## John 7:11

### the...Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### Where is that one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **that one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus without saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “Where is that so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** Therefore, the Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, “Where is that one?”

## John 7:12

### murmuring (ULT)

Although the word translated **murmuring** usually refers to grumbling or complaining, here it refers to speaking quietly without a negative meaning. Some people in **the crowd** were discussing who Jesus was and didn't want the religious leaders to hear them. If your word for **murmuring** only has a negative connotation in your language, use a different neutral expression. Alternate translation: "quietly discussing" or "whispering" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**12** And there was much murmuring among the crowds about him. Some were saying, "He is good." But others were saying, "No, but he leads the crowd astray."

### the crowds...the crowd (ULT)

Here, **crowds** refers to several different groups of people, while **crowd** refers to a group of people in general. See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: "the groups of people ... the group of people" (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### He is good (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **good** in another way. Alternate translation: "He is a good person" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### he leads the crowd astray (ULT)

Here, **leads astray** refers figuratively to persuading someone to believe something that is not true. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he misleads the crowd" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 7:13

### because of the fear of the Jews (ULT)

John is using the possessive form to describe the **fear** that the people had for the Jewish leaders. If this use of the possessive form would be confusing in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “because of their fear for the Jews” (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

**13** However, no one was speaking openly about him, because of the fear of the Jews.

### of the Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 7:14

### the festival (ULT)

Here, **the festival** refers to the Jewish Festival of Shelters mentioned in verse 1. See how you translated the word **festival** there. Alternate translation: “the Shelters Festival”

#### ULT

**14** Now the festival already being half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach.

### into the temple (ULT)

Since only priests could enter **the temple** building, this refers to **the temple** courtyard. John is using the word for the entire building to refer to one part of it. Alternate translation: “into the temple courtyard” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 7:15

### the Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### marveled (ULT)

The word translated **marveled** refers to being amazed or in wonder of something in either a negative or positive way. Since the Jewish leaders despised Jesus, their amazement was unfavorable toward him. Alternate translation: “surprised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**15** Therefore, the Jews marveled, saying, “How does this one know the scriptures, not being educated?”

### How does this one know the scriptures, not being educated (ULT)

John records the Jewish leaders using the form of a question to emphasize that they were surprised and annoyed by how much knowledge Jesus had about Scripture. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “He certainly cannot know so much about the scriptures, not being educated!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### this one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **this one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “this so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### not being educated (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders use **educated** to refer to receiving a Jewish religious education, which would include studying the Hebrew scriptures and Jewish religious traditions. This does not mean that they thought Jesus didn’t know how to read or write. If this use of **educated** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “not being trained in our scriptures and doctrines” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:16

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in 4:34. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**16** Then Jesus answered them and said,  
"My teaching is not mine, but of the one  
who sent me."



## John 7:17

### it is from God...from myself (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate the source of Jesus' teaching. A teaching could only have authority if God was its source. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "it is with God's authority ... only with my own authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** If anyone desires to do his will, he will know about this teaching, whether it is from God, or I speak from myself.

## John 7:18

### from himself (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate the source of what the person is speaking. A teaching could only have authority if God was its source. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "by his own authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**18** The one speaking from himself seeks his own glory, but the one seeking the glory of the one who sent him, this one is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

### there is no unrighteousness in him (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **unrighteousness** in another way. Alternate translation: "he is not wicked" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 7:19

### Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you does the law (ULT)

John records Jesus using the form of a question to add emphasis. If your language does not use this type of question, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "It was Moses who gave you the law, but none of you obeys the law!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you does the law. Why do you seek to kill me?"

### the law...does the law (ULT)

See how you translated **the law** in 1:17. (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### the law...does (ULT)

Here, **does** means to keep, follow, or obey. If this use of **does** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "obeys the law"

### Why do you seek to kill me (ULT)

Jesus makes a statement in the form of a question in order to emphasize that the Jewish leaders who want to **kill** him for breaking the law of Moses are themselves breaking that law. If your language does not use this type of question, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "You break the law yourselves and yet you want to kill me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 7:20

### The crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “The crowd of people” or “Someone in the crowd of people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> The crowd answered, “You have a demon. Who seeks to kill you?”

### You have a demon (ULT)

Alternate translation: “A demon is inside of you!” or “You must be under the control of a demon!”

### Who seeks to kill you (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. If your language does not use this type of question, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “No one wants to kill you!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 7:21

### one work (ULT)

Here, **work** refers to the time when Jesus miraculously healed a paralyzed man on the Jewish day of rest called the Sabbath, as recorded in [5:5-9](#). If your readers would misunderstand this use of **work**, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “one miracle on the Sabbath” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “I did one work, and you all marvel.

### you all marvel (ULT)

The word translated **marveled** refers to being amazed or in wonder of something in either a negative or positive way. Since some people in this crowd despised Jesus, their amazement was unfavorable toward him. Alternate translation: “you are all surprised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:22

### For this reason (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to someone doing something on the Sabbath to help someone else. More specifically, Jesus is referring to the time he offended the Jews by healing a paralyzed man on the Sabbath. This event was indirectly mentioned in the previous verse. If your readers might misunderstand what **this** refers to, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "On account of activities like healing taking place on the Sabbath" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> For this reason, Moses has given you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man.

### not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus providing additional information about where the Jewish practice of circumcision came from. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### the fathers (ULT)

Here, **fathers** refers specifically to the first ancestors of the Jewish people, who are often called "the Patriarchs." Those people are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It does not refer to the ancestors of the Jewish people in general. If this use of **fathers** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Patriarchs" or "the men who founded the Jewish people" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### on the Sabbath you circumcise a man (ULT)

Jesus implies that the act of **circumcision** was a kind of work. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "you circumcise a male baby on the Sabbath. That is working too" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### a man (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of any Jewish **man** in general, not of one particular **man**. If this use of **man** would be misunderstood in your language, you could use a more natural expression. Alternate translation: "men" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

## John 7:23

### If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath (ULT)

John records Jesus speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Jesus is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement.

Alternate translation: "Since a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses might not be broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath?

### a man receives (ULT)

See how you translated **man** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "men receive" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

### the law (ULT)

See how you translated **the law** in 1:17. (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### the law of Moses might not be broken (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this phrase in an active form and say who would do the action. Alternate translation: "you might not break the law of Moses" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the law of Moses might not be broken (ULT)

Here, **broken** is used figuratively to refer to disobeying the regulations that God gave in **the law of Moses**. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **broken**, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the regulations of the law of Moses might not be disobeyed" (See: [Idiom](#))

### why are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath (ULT)

John records Jesus using the question form for emphasis. If your language does not use this type of question, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way.

Alternate translation: "you should not be angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 7:24

### Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment (ULT)

Jesus implies that the people should not decide what is right based only on what they can see. A person does something for a reason and that reason cannot be seen. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Do not judge people according to appearance! Instead, decide what is right according to what God says is right" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

### according to appearance (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **appearance** in another way. Alternate translation: "according to what you see" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### judge righteous judgment (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **judgment** in another way. Alternate translation: "judge righteously" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))



## John 7:25

### Is not this the one they seek to kill (ULT)

Here, **the Jerusalemites** are using the question form for emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "This is the one they are seeking to kill!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**25** Then some from the Jerusalemites said, "Is not this the one they seek to kill?"

## John 7:26

### they say nothing to him (ULT)

They Jerusalemites use this phrase in order to imply that the Jewish leaders are not opposing Jesus. Alternate translation: “they say nothing to oppose him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> And see, he speaks openly, and they say nothing to him. The rulers do not truly know that this is the Christ, do they?

### The rulers do not truly know that this is the Christ, do they (ULT)

Here, the Jerusalemites ask this question in a way that expects a negative response, but also expresses uncertainty about that response. If your language has a question form that assumes a negative response with uncertainty, you should use it here. Alternate translation: “Could it be possible that the rulers really know this is the Christ?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### The rulers (ULT)

This phrase refers to the Jewish religious leadership, specifically the Jewish council called the Sanhedrin which made decisions about Jewish law. (See: [council](#)) If this information would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “The members of the Jewish ruling council” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:27

### this one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jerusalemites saying **this one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus without saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “this so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> But we know where this one is from.  
But when the Christ would come, no  
one knows where he is from.”

## John 7:28

### cried out (ULT)

Alternate translation: “spoke in a loud voice”

### in the temple (ULT)

Jesus and the people were actually in the courtyard of the **temple**. See how you translated **temple** in verse 14. Alternate translation: “in the temple courtyard” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### ULT

**28** Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know me and know where I am from. And I have not come from myself, but the one who sent me is true, whom you do not know.”

### from myself (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in verse 17. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in verse 16. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one who sent me is true (ULT)

Here, **true** could mean: (1) real. In this case, Jesus would be saying that he the God who is real sent him. Alternate translation: “the one who sent me is the real God” (2) truthful. In this case, Jesus would be saying that God is truly the one who sent him. Alternate translation: “the one who sent me is the true sender” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:29

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>29</sup> I know him because I am from him,  
and he sent me.”

## John 7:30

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** indicates that this verse states the result of what had happened in the previous verses. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “As a result of Jesus saying these things” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Therefore, they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

### they were seeking (ULT)

Here, **they** could refer to: (1) the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities were seeking” (2) the Jerusalemites. Alternate translation: “the people dwelling in Jerusalem were seeking” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### no one laid a hand on him (ULT)

To lay **a hand on** someone is an idiom which means to grab someone or hold onto someone. If this idiom would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “no one grabbed him” (See: [Idiom](#) )

### his hour had not yet come (ULT)

Here, the word **hour** is used figuratively to refer to the time God had planned for Jesus to be arrested and killed. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **hour**, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the right time to arrest him had not yet come” (See: [Metonymy](#) )

## John 7:31

### from among the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “from among the group of people” or “from among the many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### When the Christ may come, he will not do more signs than what this one has done, will he (ULT)

The **crowd** uses the form of a question to add emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this type of question, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “When the Christ may come, surely he will not do more signs than this one has done!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

#### ULT

**31** But many from among the crowd believed in him, and they were saying, “When the Christ may come, he will not do more signs than what this one has done, will he?”

## John 7:32

### the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “the group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### murmuring (ULT)

Although the word translated **murmuring** usually refers to grumbling or complaining, here it refers to speaking quietly without a negative meaning. Some people in **the crowd** were discussing whether or not Jesus was the Messiah and didn’t want the religious leaders to hear them. See how you translated this word in verse [12](#).

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things about him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers so that they might arrest him.



## John 7:33

### I am still with you for a short time (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will remain with you for only a short period of time"

### I go away (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **go away** figuratively to refer to his death and return to heaven. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

This phrase refers to God. See how you translated this in verse 16. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Therefore, Jesus said, "I am still with you for a short time, and then I go away to the one who sent me."

## John 7:34

### where I am, you will not be able to come (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “you will not be able to come to the place where I am” (See: [Information Structure](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> You will seek me, but you will not find me, and where I am, you will not be able to come.”

## John 7:35

### The Jews therefore said among themselves (ULT)

**The Jews** here refers to the Jewish leaders. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### this one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **this one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. See how you translated this phrase in verse [15](#). Alternate translation: “this so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### He is not about to go to the dispersion of the Greeks and to teach the Greeks, is he (ULT)

John records the Jewish leaders using the form of a question to add emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this type of question, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “Surely he is not about to go to the dispersion of the Greeks and to teach the Greeks!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### the dispersion (ULT)

Here, **dispersion** refers to the Jewish people who were spread across the Greek-speaking world that was outside of the land of Israel. If this phrase would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Jews who are dispersed” or “the Jews who are scattered” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the dispersion of the Greeks (ULT)

John records the **Jews** using the possessive form to describe the Jewish people who were dispersed among **the Greeks**. If this use of the possessive form would be confusing in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “the dispersion among the Greeks” (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> The Jews therefore said among themselves, “Where is this one about to go that we will not find him? He is not about to go to the dispersion of the Greeks and to teach the Greeks, is he?”

## John 7:36

### What is this word that he said (ULT)

Here, **word** is used figuratively to refer to the meaning of the message that Jesus had shared. The Jewish leaders had failed to understand that message. If this use of **word** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "What was he talking about when he said" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> What is this word that he said, 'You will seek me, but will not find me, and where I am, you will not be able to come'?"

### he said, 'You will seek me, but will not find me, and where I am, you will not be able to come (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation, as the UST does. (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

See how you translated this in verse [34](#).

## John 7:37

### General Information:

About three or four days has passed since the events described in verses [14-36](#). It is now the last day of the Festival of Shelters and Jesus speaks to the crowd.

### cried out (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse [28](#).

### If anyone may thirst (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **thirst** figuratively to refer to a person's need for God, just as someone would **thirst** for water. If this use of **thirst** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "If anyone may recognize your need for God like a thirsty person desires water" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### let him come to me and drink (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **come** and **drink** figuratively to refer together to believing in Jesus. If this use of **come** and **drink** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or with similes. Alternate translation: "let him believe in me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**37** But on the last, great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone may thirst, let him come to me and drink."

## John 7:38

### The one believing in me, just as the scripture says (ULT)

If it would be natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. You will also need to adjust some words to fit the new order. Alternate translation: "As the scripture says about anyone who believes in me" (See: [Information Structure](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> The one believing in me, just as the scripture says, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his stomach.'"

### the scripture says, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his stomach (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "the scriptures say that rivers of living water will flow from his stomach" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### the scripture says (ULT)

Here, **scripture** is referred to as though it were a person who could speak. If this use of **says** might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "the prophets spoke in the scriptures" (See: [Personification](#))

### Rivers...of living water will flow (ULT)

Here, **rivers** is used figuratively to refer to a constant and abundant flow of **living water**. If this meaning for **rivers** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "an abundance of living water will flow" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### of living water (ULT)

Jesus uses **living water** here figuratively to refer to the Holy Spirit who works in a person to save and transform them. However, since John explains this meaning in the next verse, you do not need to explain it further here. See how you translated **living water** in 4:10. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### of living water (ULT)

Here, **living** is used figuratively to mean "giving eternal life" or "causing people to live forever." If this use of **living** would be confusing to your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "water that gives eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### his (ULT)

The pronoun **his** could refer to: (1) the person who believes in Jesus. This meaning is used in most Bible translations and assumes that a new sentence begins at the beginning of this verse. Alternate translation, as in the ULT: "his" (2) Jesus. This meaning is used in some ancient church writings and assumes that the sentence at the end of the previous verse continues into through **the one believing in me** in this verse. Alternate translation: "my" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## from his stomach (ULT)

Here the **stomach** is used figuratively to refer to the non-physical part of a person. If your language does not use **stomach** in this way, then you can say the meaning with a different expression. Alternate translation: “from inside of him” or “from his heart” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 7:39

### General Information:

In this verse John gives information to clarify what Jesus was talking about in the previous verse. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### not yet...the Spirit was (ULT)

John implies here that **the Spirit** would later come to dwell in those who trusted in Jesus. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Spirit had not yet come to dwell in the believers” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### had not yet been glorified (ULT)

Here the word **glorified** could refer to: (1) the time when Jesus would die on the cross and rise from the dead (see John 12:23). Alternate translation: “had not yet been crucified and resurrected” (2) the time when Jesus would ascend to his Father in heaven. [Acts 1–2](#) records the Holy Spirit coming after Jesus went up to heaven. Alternate translation: “had not yet returned to God in glory” (3) both the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. Alternate translation: “had not yet been glorified by his death, resurrection, and return to heaven” See the discussion of double meaning in Part 3 of the Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>39</sup> (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who had believed in him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.)



## John 7:40

### Then (ULT)

**Then** here indicates that what follows is the continuation of the narrative from verse 38, which John had interrupted with background information in verse 39. If your readers would misunderstand this reference to earlier events, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “After Jesus had said this about the Holy Spirit” (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**40** Then some from the crowd, having heard these words, said, “This is truly the prophet.”

### some from the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “some from the group of people” or “some from the many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### these words (ULT)

John uses the term **words** figuratively to describe the content of what Jesus had said by referring to something associated with it, the **words** he used to communicate it. If this use of **words** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “these things he was saying” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the prophet (ULT)

See how you translated **the prophet** in 1:21. Alternate translation: “the prophet whom God promised to send to us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:41

### Indeed, the Christ does not come from Galilee, does he (ULT)

John records these people using the form of a question to add emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this type of question, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Indeed, the Christ surely does not come from Galilee!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>41</sup> Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Indeed, the Christ does not come from Galilee, does he?"

## John 7:42

### **Has the Scripture not said that the Christ will come from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was (ULT)**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. This group of people does not believe Jesus is the Messiah because they do not think he came from Bethlehem. If your readers would

misunderstand this type of question, you could translate the words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "The scriptures surely say that the Christ will come from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>42</sup> Has the Scripture not said that the Christ will come from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

### **Has the Scripture not said (ULT)**

The **Scripture** is referred to as though it were a person who could speak. If this use of **said** might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Have the prophets not said in the scriptures" (See: [Personification](#))

## John 7:43

### a division...happened in the crowd (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand the abstract noun **division**, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “the crowd was divided” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>43</sup> So a division happened in the crowd because of him.

### in the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “in the group of people” or “among the many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

## John 7:44

### some...of them (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the people in the crowd whom Jesus had just spoken with, particularly those who were opposed to him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "some of his opponents in the crowd" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**44** (Now some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.)

### no one laid hands on him (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in verse [30](#). Alternate translation: "no one grabbed him" (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 7:45

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>45</sup> Then the officers came back to the chief priests and Pharisees, and those ones said to them, “Why did you not bring him?”

## John 7:46

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>46</sup> The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken like this."

## John 7:47

### You have not also been deceived, have you (ULT)

**The Pharisees** ask this question in a way that expects a negative response but also expresses uncertainty about that response. If your language has a question form that assumes a negative response with uncertainty, you should use it here. Alternate translation: "Could it be possible that you have also been deceived?" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> So the Pharisees replied to them,  
"You have not also been deceived, have you?"

### You have not also been deceived, have you (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "He has not also deceived you, has he?" (See: [Active or Passive](#))



## John 7:48

### None from the rulers have believed in him, or from the Pharisees, have they (ULT)

Here, **the Pharisees** use the form of a question to add emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this type of question, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Surely none from the rulers have believed in him, or from the Pharisees!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>48</sup> None from the rulers have believed in him, or from the Pharisees, have they?

### the rulers (ULT)

Here, **rulers** refers to the Jewish religious leadership, specifically the Jewish council called the Sanhedrin which made decisions about Jewish law. (See: [council](#)) See how you translated this in [3:1](#). Alternate translation: "a member of the Jewish ruling council" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 7:49

### crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “this group of people” or “these many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### the law (ULT)

See how you translated **the law** in 1:17. (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### they are accursed (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: “God has cursed them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**49** But this crowd that does not know the law, they are accursed.”

## John 7:50

### the one who came to him earlier, being one from them (ULT)

John provides this information to remind us of who Nicodemus is and the conversation he had with Jesus that is recorded in [chapter 3](#). Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: “this man was a Pharisee who had spoken with Jesus at an earlier time” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus (the one who came to him earlier, being one from them) says to them,

### being one from them (ULT)

Alternate translation: “although he was one of them” or “despite being one of them”

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

## John 7:51

**Our law does not judge a man unless it might first hear from him and might know what he does, does it (ULT)**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. If your readers would misunderstand this type of question, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Our law certainly does not judge a man unless it might first hear from him and might know what he does!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>51</sup> "Our law does not judge a man unless it might first hear from him and might know what he does, does it?"

**Our law does not judge a man unless it might first hear from him and might know...does it (ULT)**

Here, Nicodemus speaks of the **law** as if it were a person. If this use of **law** is not natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "It is not written in our law that we may judge a man unless we might first hear from him and might know ... is it" (See: [Personification](#))

**a man (ULT)**

Here, **a man** does not refer to a specific man. It refers to any man in general. Alternate translation: "any man" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

## John 7:52

### You are not also from Galilee, are you (ULT)

The Jewish leaders know that Nicodemus is not **from Galilee**. They ask this question as a way of scoffing at him. If your language does not use questions in this way, use another way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: "You must also be one of those people from Galilee!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>52</sup> They answered and said to him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet rises up from Galilee."

### Search, and see (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this sentence, you could supply the missing words from the context. Alternate translation: "Search carefully and read what is written in the Scriptures" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### no prophet rises up from Galilee (ULT)

The Jewish leaders believed that Jesus came **from Galilee** and that no **prophet** in the scriptures came **from Galilee**. Therefore, based on their reasoning Jesus could not be a **prophet**. However, what they believed was incorrect. Jesus did not originally come from Galilee, but Bethlehem in Judea. Also, the prophet Jonah came **from Galilee** ([2 Kings 14:25](#)) and [Isaiah 9:1-7](#) said that the Messiah would be a great light rising from Galilee. If your readers might not understand what the Jewish leaders are implying, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "no prophet rises up from Galilee, so this man cannot be a true prophet" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### rises up (ULT)

Here, **rises up** means to appear. Alternate translation: "appears"

## John 7:53

### General Information:

The best early texts do not have [7:53–8:11](#). The ULT has set them apart in square brackets ([ ]) to show that John probably did not include them in his original text. Translators are encouraged to translate them, to set them apart with square brackets, and to include a footnote like the one written on [John 7:53](#). (See: [Textual Variants](#))

#### ULT

<sup>53[1]</sup> [Then each went to his own house.]

## John 8

### John 8 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Jesus forgives the adulterous woman [8:1-11](#)

Jesus says he is the light of the world (8:12-20)

Jesus says he came from above (8:21-30)

Jesus says he frees people from sin (8:31-36)

Jesus describes the true children of Abraham and the children of Satan (8:37-47)

Jesus is greater than Abraham (8:48-59)

Translators may wish to include a note at verse [1](#) to explain to the reader why they have chosen to translate or to not translate verses [8:1-11](#). Verses [7:53-8:11](#) are not in the best and oldest ancient manuscripts. Those ancient texts which do have these verses also have many differences between them, which are additional evidence that these verses were not originally in the Gospel of John. If the translators have chosen to translate these verses, then they will want to either put them in a footnote outside of the main text or mark them in some way, such as square brackets ([ ]), to indicate that the passage may not have originally been in John's Gospel. (See: [Textual Variants](#))

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Light and darkness

Generally in John's Gospel, light represents what is true and good and darkness represents what is false and evil. Similar to the discussion of light in [1:4-9](#), in [8:12](#) Jesus applies the light metaphor to himself in order to show that he is the embodiment of God's truth and goodness. Jesus calls himself the Light of the World because he is the one who enables people to know God's truth and goodness. (See: [light](#), [luminary](#), [shine](#), [brighten](#), [enlighten](#))

##### I AM

John records Jesus saying these words as an independent phrase three times in this chapter ([8:24](#), [28](#), [58](#)). They stand alone as a complete sentence, and they literally translate the Hebrew expression "I AM," by which Yahweh identified himself to Moses in Exodus [3:14](#). For these reasons, many people believe that when Jesus said these words he was claiming to be Yahweh. (See: [Yahweh](#)).

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### "Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter ([8:28](#)). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man](#), [son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 8:1

### General Information:

While some texts have [7:53–8:11](#), the best and earliest texts do not include them. See the discussion of this textual issue in the General Notes to this chapter. (See: [Textual Variants](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1[1]</sup> Now Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.



## John 8:2

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now early in the morning he came to the temple again, and all the people came to him.

## John 8:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Now the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and they placed her in the middle.

## John 8:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> The priests say to him, testing him in order to have an accusation against him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.

## John 8:5

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such people, but what do you say now?"

## John 8:6

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But Jesus, having bent down, began to write on the ground with his finger.

## John 8:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> But when they continued asking him questions, he stood up and said to them, "The one among you who has no sin, let him throw a stone at her first."

## John 8:8

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> And again, having stooped down, he wrote on the ground with his finger.

## John 8:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> But each of the Jews went out, beginning with the oldest, so that they all went out, and he was left alone, with the woman being in the midst.



## John 8:10

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> And Jesus, having stood up, said to the woman, "Where are they? Did no one condemn you?"

## John 8:11

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**11** And she said to him, "No one, Lord."  
And he said, "Neither do I condemn  
you. Go, from now sin no longer."]

## John 8:12

Jesus is speaking to a crowd near the treasury in the temple some time after the events of [John 7:1-52](#). John does not mark the beginning of this new event. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

### I am the light of the world...but will have the light (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **light** figuratively to refer to God's truth and goodness that are revealed to the world by Jesus. He is the embodiment of God's truth and goodness. See the discussion of **light** and **darkness** in the General Notes to this chapter. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **light**, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: "I am the one who reveals God's truth and goodness to the world that is like a light ... but will have that truth and goodness" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; the one following me may certainly not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."

### of the world (ULT)

Here, **world** refers figuratively to all the people in the world. If this use of **world** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the people of the world" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the one following me (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using an idiom that refers to becoming Jesus' disciple and obeying his teachings. If this use of **following** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the one who becomes my disciple" or "the one who obeys me" (See: [Idiom](#))

### may certainly not walk in the darkness (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase **walk in the darkness** figuratively to refer to living a sinful life. If this use of **darkness** would be confusing in your language, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: "may certainly not live as if he were living in the darkness of sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### light of life (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the possessive form to describe **light** that gives **life**. If this use of the possessive form is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: "light that brings life" (See: [Possession](#))

### of life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal **life**. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **life**, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "of eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 8:13

### You testify about yourself (ULT)

The Pharisees assumed that their listeners understood that they were referring to Jesus testifying about himself without there being any other witnesses to confirm his **testimony**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “You are testifying about yourself without any other witnesses” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**13** Then the Pharisees said to him, “You testify about yourself; your testimony is not true.”

### your testimony is not true (ULT)

The Pharisees are implying that the **testimony** of only one person **is not true** because of a rule in the law of Moses. According to Deuteronomy [19:15](#), a statement had to be confirmed by at least two witnesses in order to be considered true in legal decisions. If your audience is not familiar with the law of Moses in the Old Testament, then you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “your testimony about yourself cannot be true because the law of Moses requires at least two witnesses” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 8:14

### but you do not know (ULT)

In verses [14-20](#) Jesus uses the plural form of **you** to indicate that he is speaking to the Pharisees. He is not speaking directly to those who believe in him. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "but you Pharisees do not know" (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**14** Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true. For I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I came from or where I am going."

## John 8:15

### the flesh (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **the flesh** figuratively to refer to human standards. Such standards are superficial and based on the limitations of sinful human nature. If this use of **flesh** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly.

Alternate translation: "standards limited by human nature" or "superficial human standards" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**15** You judge according to the flesh; I do not judge anyone.

### I do not judge anyone (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Jesus does not judge anyone in the same manner as the Pharisees, that is, **according to the flesh**. Alternate translation: "I do not judge anyone according to the flesh" (2) Jesus is not judging anyone at that time. Alternate translation: "I do not judge anyone at this time" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 8:16

### my judgment (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **judgment** in another way. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “I judge” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

**16** But even if I judge, my judgment is true, because I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent me.

### my judgment is true

Here, Jesus is contrasting the nature of the Pharisees’ **judgment** with the nature of his own **judgment**. Alternate translation: “my judgment is right” or “my judgment is according to what is true”

### I am not alone (ULT)

Here, Jesus implies that he is **not alone** when he judges people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “I am not alone in how I judge” or “I do not judge alone” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Father who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in 5:23. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 8:17

### it is written (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could this in an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**17** But even in your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true.

### the testimony of two men is true (ULT)

Here, Jesus is referring to a rule in the law of Moses. According to Deuteronomy [19:15](#), a statement had to be confirmed by at least two witnesses in order to be considered true in legal decisions. If it would be helpful to your readers, then you can say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "if the testimony of two men agrees, then it is valid" or "if two men say something that agrees, then it should be considered to be true" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 8:18

### the Father who sent me testifies about me (ULT)

In addition to Jesus himself, God the **the Father** also **testifies about** Jesus. Jesus thus implies that his testimony is true because there are two witnesses. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “my Father who sent me also brings evidence about me. So you should believe that what we tell you is true” or “my Father who sent me also testifies about me. Therefore, my testimony is true” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> I am the one testifying about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me.”

### the Father who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in verse 16. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 8:19

In this verse, **know** refers to knowing who Jesus and God actually are, not just knowing information about them. If your readers might misunderstand this use of **know**, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “You know neither who I am nor who my Father is; if you had known who I am, you would have known who my Father is also” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, they said to him, “Where is your father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father; if you had known me, you would have known my Father also.”

## Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## if you had known me, you would have known my Father also (ULT)

Here, Jesus is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that the Pharisees do not know who he really is and do not really know God. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “you do not know me, because if you did, you would also know my Father” (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#) )

## John 8:20

In this verse, John finishes telling about the events in the story by giving background information about where these events happened. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Some languages may require the information about the setting to be placed at the beginning of this part of the story in [8:12](#). (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>20</sup> He said these words in the treasury, teaching in the temple, and no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

### these words (ULT)

Here, **these words** refers to what Jesus had just spoken in verses [12–19](#). If this would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “these things about himself” or “these things to the Pharisees” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the treasury (ULT)

A **treasury** is the place where treasures are stored. In Jesus’ time, the temple **treasury** referred to a place in the courtyard that had containers for receiving money offerings. If your readers would not be familiar with this use of **treasury**, you could give a fuller description. Alternate translation: “the place where people gave money” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### his hour had not yet come (ULT)

Here, the word **hour** is used figuratively to refer to the time God had planned for Jesus to be arrested and killed. See how you translated this phrase in [7:30](#). Alternate translation: “the right time to arrest him had not yet come” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 8:21

### Then again he said to them (ULT)

**Then again** introduces a new event that happened some time after the events the story has just related. The story does not say how long after those events this new event happened. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "At another time he said to them again" (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

#### ULT

**21** Then again he said to them, "I go away, and you will seek me and you will die in your sin. Where I go away, you are not able to come."

### I go away...Where I go away (ULT)

Two times in this verse Jesus uses **go away** figuratively to refer to his death and return to God in heaven. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### in your sin (ULT)

Here, **sin** is singular. This could refer to one: (1) the specific sin of rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. Alternate translation: "in your sin of unbelief" (2) sinfulness in general. Alternate translation: "in your state of sinfulness" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

### Where I go away, you are not able to come (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "you are not able to come to where I go" (See: [Information Structure](#))

## John 8:22

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### He will not kill himself, will he (ULT)

John records the Jewish leaders using the form of a question in a way that expects a negative response, but also expresses uncertainty about that response. If your language has a question form that assumes a negative response with uncertainty, you should use it here. Alternate translation: “Could it be possible that he will kill himself?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Is that why he says, ‘Where I go, you are not able to come (ULT)

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “Is that why he says that where he goes, we will not be able to come” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### Where I go, you are not able to come (ULT)

See how you translated this clause in the previous verse.

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Then the Jews said, “He will not kill himself, will he? Is that why he says, ‘Where I go, you are not able to come’?”

## John 8:23

### You are from the things below (ULT)

In verses 23–30 Jesus uses the plural form of **you** to indicate that he is speaking to the Jewish leaders. He is not speaking directly to those who believe in him. If it would be misunderstood to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “You Jewish authorities are from below” (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**23** And he said to them, “You are from the things below; I am from the things above. You are from this world; I am not from this world.”

### You are from the things below (ULT)

The phrase **from below** could refer to: (1) the origin of the subject. Alternate translation: “You came from the things below” (2) the place where the subject belongs. Alternate translation: “You belong to the things below” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the things below (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **the things below** figuratively to refer to **this world**. It does not refer to hell. If this meaning for **below** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “You are from this lower world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### I am from the things above (ULT)

The phrase **from the things above** could refer to: (1) the origin of the subject. Alternate translation: “I came from the things above” (2) the place where the subject belongs, which is heaven. Alternate translation: “I belong to the things above” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the things above (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **the things above** figuratively to refer to heaven. If this meaning for **above** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “I am from heaven” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### You are from this world; I am not from this world (ULT)

The phrase **from this world** could refer to: (1) the origin of the subject. Alternate translation: “You come from this world; I do not come from this world” (2) the place where the subject belongs. Alternate translation: “You belong to this world; I do not belong to this world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### this world...this world (ULT)

Here, **this world** refers to everything in the universe that has been corrupted by sin and is hostile to God. If this use of **world** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “this sinful world ... this sinful world” or “this world that opposes God ... this world that opposes God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 8:24

### **you will die in your sins...you will die in your sins...I am (ULT)**

This phrase **you will die in your sins** is different from the similar statement in verse 21 because **sins** is plural in this verse but singular in that verse. Therefore, make sure that you translate **sins** differently than how you translated “sin” in verse 21.

#### **ULT**

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For unless you would believe that I am, you will die in your sins.”

### **that I am (ULT)**

This could mean: (1) Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as “I AM” in Exodus 3:14. Alternate translation: “that I am the I AM” (2) Jesus expects the people to understand that he is referring to what he already has already said about himself in the previous verse: “that I am from above” See the discussion of this phrase in the General Notes for this chapter. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 8:25

### they said (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the Jewish leaders. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Jewish authorities said" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### What have I even been saying to you from the beginning (ULT)

John records Jesus using a rhetorical question here to emphasize that he has already told the Jewish leaders who he is. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I am who I have been telling you I am since the beginning!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Therefore, they said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "What have I even been saying to you from the beginning?"



## John 8:26

### But the one who sent me is true; and the things that I heard from him, these things I say to the world (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases and make a new sentence. Alternate translation: “But I will say to the world the things that I heard from him who sent me. He is true.” (See: [Information Structure](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you. But the one who sent me is true; and the things that I heard from him, these things I say to the world.”

### the one who sent me...from him (ULT)

These phrases refer to God. However, since the Jewish leaders did not understand what Jesus meant when he used these phrases, you do not need to explain their meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### the one who sent me is true (ULT)

Here, **true** means to be truthful or to speak only the truth. If this use of **true** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who sent me is truthful” or “the one who sent me tells the truth”

### and the things that I heard from him, these things (ULT)

Jesus says that **the one who sent him is true** in order to imply that **these things** he **heard** and spoke are **true**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “and the true things that I heard from him, these true things” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### these things I say to the world (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using **the world** figuratively to refer to the people who live in **the world**. Alternate translation: “these things I say to everyone” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 8:27

### General Information:

In this verse John gives information about the Jewish leaders to explain their reaction to Jesus' teaching. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>27</sup> (They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father.)

### about the Father (ULT)

**Father** is a special title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 8:28

### When you have lifted up (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus referring to when he would be **lifted up** on the cross to be killed. If this use of **lifted up** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “When you have lifted me up on a cross to kill me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then will you know that I am, and that I do nothing from myself. But just as the Father taught me, I speak these things.”

### When you have lifted up the Son of Man (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this clause in the first person. Alternate translation: “When you have lifted me, the Son of Man, up” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [1:51](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### I am (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse [24](#) and also see the discussion of this phrase in the General Notes for this chapter. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### from myself (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [5:30](#). Alternate translation: “on my own authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### just as the Father taught me, I speak these things (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 8:29

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#).  
(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### with me (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **with me** figuratively to refer to God's help. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "helping me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> And the one who sent me is with me.  
He has not left me alone, because I  
always do what is pleasing to him."

## John 8:30

### As he is speaking these things (ULT)

Here, John is describing something that happened at the same time as the other clause in the sentence. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: "At the time Jesus was saying these things" (See: [Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> As he is speaking these things, many believed in him.

## John 8:31

### those...Jews (ULT)

In verses [31–59](#) **those Jews** could refer to: (1) some Jewish people from Judea who were in the temple courtyard with Jesus. Alternate translation: “those Judeans” (2) some of the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “those Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**31** Then Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in him, “If you remain in my word, you are truly my disciples;

### you (ULT)

In verses [31–59](#) Jesus uses the plural form of **you** to indicate that he could be speaking to: (1) some Jewish people from Judea who were in the temple courtyard with Jesus. Alternate translation: “you Judeans” (2) some of the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “you Jewish authorities” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### remain in my word (ULT)

This is an idiom that means to obey **Jesus**. If this idiom would be confusing in your language, then you can say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “obey what I have said” (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 8:32

### the truth will free you (ULT)

Here, Jesus speaks of **truth** figuratively as though it were a person who could **free** someone. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: “knowing the truth will cause you to be free” or “if you obey the truth, God will set you free” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will free you.”

### the truth...the truth (ULT)

Here, **the truth** refers to what Jesus reveals about God, which would include his plan for forgiving sinful people through Jesus’ death on the cross. If your language does not use an abstract noun for **truth**, you could express the idea behind it in another way. Alternate translation: “what is true about God ... those true things” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#)).

## John 8:33

### how can you say, 'You will be set free'?

John records the Jews using the question form here to emphasize their shock at what Jesus has said. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "We do not need to be set free!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "how can you say that we will be free" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> They replied to him, "We are the seed of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone; how can you say, 'You will be free'?"



## John 8:34

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### is a slave of sin (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus using the word **slave** figuratively to refer to someone who cannot stop sinning. This implies that **sin** is like a master for the person who sins. If this use of **slave** would be confusing in your language, you could use a simile instead. Alternate translation: "is like a slave to sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin."

## John 8:35

### the...slave does not remain...the son remains (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of slaves and sons in general, not of one particular **slave** and **son**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “slaves do not remain ... sons remain” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Now the slave does not remain in the house into eternity; the son remains into eternity.

### in the house (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **house** figuratively to refer to the family that lives inside the **house**. If this use of **house** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “as a permanent member of a family” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the son remains into eternity (ULT)

This clause is in contrast to the previous clause. Although slaves do not remain permanent members of the family who owns them, sons are permanent family members. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “but the son remains into eternity” (See: [Connect — Contrast Relationship](#))

### the son remains into eternity (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the previous clause. Alternate translation: “the son remains in the house into eternity” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 8:36

### if...the Son frees you, you will be truly free (ULT)

It is implied that Jesus is talking about freedom from sin. Alternate translation: "if the Son sets you free from sin, you will truly be free" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> Therefore, if the Son frees you, you will be truly free.

### if...the Son frees you (ULT)

Unlike the generic use of **son** in the previous verse, here Jesus uses **the Son** to refer to himself in the third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person. Alternate translation: "if I, the Son, free you" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### if...the Son frees you (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **frees** figuratively to refer to stopping people from being controlled by their sinful desires. If this use of **frees** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "if the Son frees you from being controlled by sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the Son (ULT)

**Son** is an important title for Jesus, **the Son** of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### you will be truly free (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **free** figuratively to refer to people no longer being controlled by their sinful desires and thus able to avoid sinning. If this use of **free** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "you will truly no longer be controlled by sin" "you will truly be able to refrain from sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 8:37

### of Abraham (ULT)

**Abraham** is the name of a man, the most important ancestor of the Jewish people. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### my word has no place in you (ULT)

This phrase **has no place in you** is an idiom that means to truly accept or believe something. If your readers might understand this idiom, you could use a similar idiom in your language or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you do not receive my words in your hearts” or “you reject my words” (See: [Idiom](#))

### my word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to the message or teachings of Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **word**, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**37** I know that you are the seed of Abraham, but you seek to kill me, because my word has no place in you.

## John 8:38

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### and...you...what...heard from the father, you do (ULT)

In this clause, Jesus uses the phrase **the father** to refer to the devil. Despite using the same words as in the previous clause, here Jesus is not referring to God. However, since Jesus did not yet reveal what he meant when he used this phrase, but was speaking ambiguously, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> What I have seen with the Father, I say; and therefore, what you heard from the father, you do."

## John 8:39

### father (ULT)

Here, the word **father** figuratively means “ancestor.” If that use of **father** would be confusing in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Our forefather” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

### children of Abraham (ULT)

Here, the word **children** figuratively means “descendants.” Alternate translation: “descendants of Abraham” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the works of Abraham (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe **works** that were done by **Abraham**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “the works done by Abraham” (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> They answered and said to him, “Our father is Abraham.” Jesus says to them, “If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham.”

## John 8:40

### Abraham did not do this (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to what Jesus said earlier in the verse about what the Jews were trying to do to him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Abraham did not seek to kill someone who told him the truth from God” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**40** But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

## John 8:41

### You do the works of your father (ULT)

Jesus uses the phrase **your father** to refer to the devil. However, since the Jews did not understand what Jesus meant when he used this phrase, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### We have not been born from sexual immorality (ULT)

Here, the Jews imply that Jesus does not know who his real father is and that he is the result of an immoral sexual relationship. Alternate translation: "We do not know about you, but we are not illegitimate children" or "We were all born from proper marriages" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**41** You do the works of your father."  
Then they said to him, "We have not been born from sexual immorality; we have one Father: God."



## John 8:42

### If God were your Father, you would have loved me (ULT)

Jesus is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he already knows that the condition is not true. Jesus knows that the Jews speaking to him here do not love him and are not true followers of God. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true.

Alternate translation: "God is surely not your father, because if he were, you would love me" (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would have loved me, for I came from God and am here; for neither have I come from myself, but that one sent me."

### have I come from myself (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate Jesus' origin. He could only have authority if he came from God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "have I come on my own authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### that one (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to God the Father. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "God" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

## John 8:43

### Because of what do you not understand my speech (ULT)

Jesus is using a rhetorical question here to emphasize the truth of what he is saying. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I will tell you why you do not understand what I say!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>43</sup> Because of what do you not understand my speech? It is because you are not able to hear my words.

### you are not able to hear my words (ULT)

Here, **hear** means to listen to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. It does not mean simply to hear what someone says. If this meaning for **hear** would be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you are not able to heed my words" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my words (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **words** figuratively to refer to his teachings. See how you translated this phrase in [5:47](#). Alternate translation: "my teachings." (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 8:44

### You are from your father, the devil (ULT)

The phrase **from your father** could refer to: (1) the person to whom the subject belongs, as in the UST. (2) the origin of the subject.

Alternate translation: "You came from your father, the devil" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### That one (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to **the devil**. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "The devil" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

#### ULT

**44** You are from your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. That one was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he would speak a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of it.

### was a murderer from the beginning (ULT)

Here, **the beginning** refers to the time when the first humans, Adam and Eve, sinned. It does not refer to the very beginning of time. The devil tempted Eve to sin and Adam sinned as well. Because they sinned, all living things die as part of the punishment for sin. Therefore, Jesus calls **the devil a murderer** for starting the process that brought death to the world. You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they would not know the story. Alternate translation: "was a murderer from the time when he tempted the first people to sin" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### does not stand in the truth (ULT)

The phrase **does not stand in the truth** is an idiom that means to not accept or approve of what is true. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "does not approve of the truth" (See: [Idiom](#))

### there is no truth in him (ULT)

Here, Jesus speaks figuratively of **truth** as if it were an object that could exist inside someone. If this use of **truth** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "he never speaks the truth" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Alternate translation: "he speaks according to his character" or "he speaks what is most natural for him to speak"

### the father of it (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **father** figuratively to refer to the one who originated the act of lying. Since **the devil** is the first being to tell a lie, he is called the **father** of lying. Alternate translation: "the one who created it" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the father of it (ULT)

Here, **it** refers to the act of lying. If this use of **it** would be misunderstood by your readers, you can state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the father of lying" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 8:45

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>45</sup> But because I speak the truth, you do not believe me.

## John 8:46

### Which one of you convicts me concerning sin (ULT)

John records Jesus using a rhetorical question here to emphasize that he has never sinned. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "None of you can convict me concerning sin!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts me concerning sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?

### If I speak the truth (ULT)

John records Jesus speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what John is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: "Since I speak the truth" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#))

### why do you not believe me (ULT)

John records Jesus using a rhetorical question here to scold the Jews for their unbelief. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "you have no reason for not believing me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 8:47

### He who is from God...you are not from God (ULT)

The phrase **from God** could refer to: (1) the person to whom the subject belongs, as in the UST. (2) the origin of the subject. Alternate translation: "He who came from God ... you did not come from God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>47</sup> He who is from God hears the words of God; because of this you do not hear, because you are not from God."

### He who is from God (ULT)

Although **He** is masculine, Jesus is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: "A person who is from God" (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women](#))

### hears...you do not hear (ULT)

Here, **hear** means to listen to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. See how you translated **hear** in verse 43. Alternate translation: "heed ... you do not heed" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the words of God (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **words** figuratively to refer what God has said. See how you translated **words** in 5:47. Alternate translation: "the things that God has said" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 8:48

### The Jews (ULT)

See how you translated **the Jews** in verse 31. Alternate translation: “the Judeans” or “the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### Do we not rightly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon (ULT)

**The Jews** use a rhetorical question here to accuse Jesus and to dishonor him. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “We certainly say rightly that you are a Samaritan and have a demon!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### you are a Samaritan (ULT)

Most Jewish people in Jesus’ time hated and despised Samaritans, so his Jewish opponents here called Jesus a **Samaritan** in order to insult him. Use the natural form in your language to indicate that this is an insult. Alternate translation: “you are one of those accursed Samaritans” or “you are an enemy Samaritan” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### have a demon (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 7:20. Alternate translation: “a demon is inside of you!” or “you must be under the control of a demon!”

#### ULT

**48** The Jews answered and said to him, “Do we not rightly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

## John 8:49

### I do not have a demon (ULT)

See how you translated the similar phrase in the previous verse.  
Alternate translation: "a demon is not inside of me" or "I am not under the control of a demon"

#### ULT

**49** Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me."



## John 8:50

### there is one seeking and judging (ULT)

Here, **one** refers to God. If this use of **one** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “God is the one seeking and judging” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> Now I do not seek my glory; there is one seeking and judging.

### one seeking (ULT)

Here, Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “one seeking my glory” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### judging (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. Here, **judging** could refer to: (1) God **judging** between what Jesus said about himself and what his Jewish opponents were saying about him. Alternate translation: “judging between your testimony and mine” (2) God condemning those who dishonor Jesus. Alternate translation: “judging those who dishonor me” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 8:51

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### my word (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to the message or teachings of Jesus. See how you translated this phrase in [5:24](#). Alternate translation: “my message” or “what I say” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### he will certainly not see death (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **see** figuratively to refer to experiencing or participating in something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will certainly not experience death” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he will certainly not see death into eternity (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **death** to refer to spiritual **death**, which is eternal punishment in hell that occurs after physical **death**. However, the Jews did not understand this. Therefore, you do not need to explain its meaning further here. Alternate translation: “he will certainly not die” (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

#### ULT

<sup>51</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will certainly not see death into eternity.”

## John 8:52

### The Jews (ULT)

See how you translated **the Jews** in verse 31. Alternate translation: “the Judeans” or “the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### you have a demon (ULT)

Alternate translation: “a demon is inside of you” or “you must be under the control of a demon”

### Abraham (ULT)

**Abraham** is the name of a man, the most important ancestor of the Jewish people. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word (ULT)

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “you say that if anyone keeps your word” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

### If anyone keeps my word (ULT)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

### he will certainly not taste death into eternity (ULT)

**The Jews** say here that Jesus used **taste** figuratively to refer to experiencing or participating in something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will certainly not experience death” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### death (ULT)

See how you translated **death** in the previous verse. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>52</sup> The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; but you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will certainly not taste death into eternity.’”

## John 8:53

### You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are you (ULT)

The Jews use this question to emphasize that they do not think that Jesus is **greater than Abraham**. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "You are certainly not greater than our father Abraham who died!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>53</sup> You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are you? The prophets also died. Who do you make yourself out to be?"

### our father (ULT)

Here, the word **father** figuratively means "ancestor." See how you translated this phrase in verse 39. Alternate translation: "Our forefather" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Who do you make yourself out to be (ULT)

The Jews use this question to rebuke Jesus for thinking that he is more important than Abraham. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "You should not think that you are so important!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 8:54

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “about whom you say that he is your God” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

#### ULT

<sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me—about whom you say, ‘He is our God.’”

## John 8:55

### his word (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **word** figuratively to refer what God has said. If this use of **word** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “what God says” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**55** And you have not known him, but I know him. And if I would say that I do not know him, I would be like you, a liar. However, I know him and keep his word.

## John 8:56

### Your father (ULT)

Here, the word **father** figuratively means “ancestor.” See how you translated this phrase in verse 39. Alternate translation: “Your forefather” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**56** Your father Abraham rejoiced that he might see my day, and he saw and was glad.”

### he might see...he saw (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **see** figuratively to refer to experiencing or participating in something. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he might experience ... he experienced it” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my day (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **my day** to refer to the time when Jesus came to earth. If this use of **day** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my coming” or “the time when I would come to earth” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### he saw and was glad (ULT)

This phrase could mean: (1) Abraham literally **saw** a prophetic vision of Jesus coming to earth. Alternate translation: “he foresaw my coming through revelation from God and was glad” (2) when his son Isaac was born, Abraham metaphorically **saw** that God was beginning to fulfill the covenant that would culminate in Jesus coming to earth. Alternate translation: “he perceived my coming when God gave him a son, and he was glad” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 8:57

### the Jews (ULT)

See how you translated **the Jews** in verse 31. Alternate translation: “the Judeans” or “the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### You do not yet have 50 years, and you have seen Abraham (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** opposing Jesus use this question to express their shock that Jesus claims to have seen Abraham. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “You are less than fifty years old! You could not possibly have seen Abraham!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**57** Therefore the Jews said to him, “You do not yet have 50 years, and you have seen Abraham?”



## John 8:58

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### I am (ULT)

See how you translated this in verse [24](#) and also see the discussion of this phrase in the General Notes for this chapter. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**58** Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham came into existence, I am."

## John 8:59

### they picked up...stones in order to throw at him (ULT)

The Jews opposing **Jesus** are outraged at what **Jesus** said in the previous verse. Here, John implies that they **picked up stones** in order to kill him by stoning because he had made himself equal to God (See: [stone](#), [stoning](#)). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “they picked up stones in order to kill him because he claimed to be equal with God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>59</sup> Therefore, they picked up stones in order to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out from the temple.

### the temple (ULT)

**Jesus** and his Jewish opponents were in the courtyard of **the temple**. See how you translated **temple** in verse 14. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 9

### John 9 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus' sixth sign: he heals a blind man (9:1–12)

The Pharisees question the formerly blind man whom Jesus healed (9:13–34)

Jesus speaks with the formerly blind man and some Pharisees (9:35–41)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “Who sinned?”

Many of the Jews in Jesus' time believed that if a person was blind or deaf or crippled, it was because he, his parents, or someone else in his family had sinned. The rabbis even taught that it was possible for a baby to sin while still in the womb. This was not the teaching of the law of Moses. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

#### “A sinner”

The Pharisees call some people in this chapter “sinners.” The Jewish leaders thought these people were sinful, but in reality the leaders were also sinful. This can be taken as irony. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [Irony](#))

#### “He does not keep the Sabbath”

The Pharisees thought that Jesus was working, and so breaking the Sabbath, by healing the blind man. (See: [Sabbath](#))

### Important metaphors in this chapter

#### Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

#### Seeing and being blind

Jesus uses the healing of the blind man as a metaphor for spiritual blindness. Just as a blind man cannot see the physical world, a man who is spiritually blind does not recognize God's truth, which includes his sinfulness and need for salvation. The blind man in this story is first healed from his physical blindness ([John 9:6–7](#)), then from his spiritual blindness ([John 9:38](#)). By contrast, the Pharisees are not physically blind but are spiritually blind. Jesus calls the Pharisees blind because they have seen him do great miracles that only someone sent from God could do, but they still refuse to believe that God sent him or that they are sinners who need to repent ([John 9:39–40](#)). (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

### “Son of Man”

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” in this chapter ([9:35](#)). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man, son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 9:1

### And (ULT)

**And** here shows that John intended for the events in this chapter to be directly connected to what Jesus said in the previous chapter. In [chapter 8](#), Jesus said that he is the Light of the World. In this chapter, Jesus demonstrates that he is the Light of the World by giving physical sight and spiritual light to a blind man. (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> And passing by, he saw a man blind from birth.

## John 9:2

### who sinned, this one or his parents, so that he might be born blind (ULT)

This question reflects the ancient Jewish belief that sin caused illnesses and other deformities. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “Teacher, we know that sin causes a person to be blind. Whose sin caused this man to be born blind? did this man himself sin, or was it his parents who sinned?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> And his disciples asked him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this one or his parents, so that he might be born blind?”

### so that he might be born blind (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: “so that he might be blind when his mother bore him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 9:3

### so that the works of God might be revealed in him (ULT)

Here, John records Jesus leaving out some information that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the previous verse. Alternate translation: “he was born blind so that the works of God might be revealed in him” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither did this one sin, nor his parents, but so that the works of God might be revealed in him.”

### the works of God (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe **works** that are performed by **God**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “the works done by God” (See: [Possession](#))

### the works of God might be revealed (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form, and say who would do the action. Alternate translation: “I might reveal the works of God” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in him (ULT)

Here, **him** could refer to: (1) the man’s body, especially his blind eyes. Alternate translation: “in his body” (2) the man’s body and spirit. Alternate translation: “in his body and spirit” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

## John 9:4

### us (ULT)

When Jesus says **us** here, he is including himself and the disciples who are with him. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> It is necessary for us to work the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one is able to work.

### the works of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, Jesus is using the possessive form to describe **works** that God wants Jesus and his disciples to do. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: "the works that the one who sent me demands" (See: [Possession](#))

### of the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### while it is day. Night is coming (ULT)

Here, **day** and **night** could mean: (1) the time when Jesus was on the earth with his disciples and the time when he was no longer on earth, respectively. Alternate translation: "while I am still with you. The time when I will leave you is coming" (2) a person's lifetime and the time that person dies, respectively. Alternate translation: "while we are still alive. The time when we will die is coming" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### while it is day (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **day** figuratively. He compares the time when he and his disciples can do God's work to the daytime, which is the time when people normally work. If this use of **day** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "while it is the time like the daylight hours when people usually work" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Night is coming (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **Night** figuratively. He compares the time when he and his disciples cannot do God's work to the nighttime, which is the time when people normally cannot work because it is too dark to see. If this use of **Night** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "The time like the night hours when people cannot work is coming" (See: [Metaphor](#))



## John 9:5

### in the world (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **world** to refer to the earth on which people live. It does not refer only to the people in the world or to the entire universe. Alternate translation: “on the earth” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

### I am the light of the world (ULT)

See how you translated this clause in [8:12](#). Alternate translation: “I am the one who reveals God’s truth and goodness to the world that is like a light” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 9:6

### made mud from the saliva (ULT)

Jesus used his fingers to mix the dirt and **saliva** into **mud**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "used his fingers to mix the dirt and saliva to make mud" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud from the saliva and smeared the mud on his eyes.

## John 9:7

### wash...washed (ULT)

Here, Jesus wanted the blind man to **wash** the mud off of his eyes in the pool and that is what the man did. Jesus did not want him to bathe or **wash** his whole body. If this use of **wash** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "and wash your eyes ... washed his eyes" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> And he said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," (which is translated "Sent"). So he went away and washed and came back seeing.

### the pool of Siloam (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe a **pool** that is called **Siloam**. If this is not clear in your language, you could say this plainly. Alternate translation: "the pool named Siloam" (See: [Possession](#))

### which is translated "Sent" (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could express the meaning of the passive verbal form **is translated** with an active form. Alternate translation: "which means 'Sent'" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### which is translated "Sent" (ULT)

Here, John provides a brief break in the story line in order to explain to his readers what **Siloam** means. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "which means 'Sent'" (See: [Background Information](#))

### which is translated "Sent" (ULT)

John assumes that his readers will know that he is saying what the name **Siloam** means when translated from the Aramaic language into Greek. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "which is the Aramaic word for 'Sent'" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### came back (ULT)

As the next verse suggests, the man **came back** to his home, not to Jesus. Your language may say "went" rather than **came** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "went back" (See: [Go and Come](#))

### seeing (ULT)

Here, **seeing** means that the man became able to see before coming back. If **seeing** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "after becoming able to see" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 9:8

### that he was a beggar (ULT)

This clause is missing some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "those who had seen that he was a beggar" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Then the neighbors and those who had seen him previously, that he was a beggar, began saying, "Is not this the one sitting and begging?"

### Is not this the one sitting and begging (ULT)

The people here are using a rhetorical question to express their surprise at seeing the blind man who has been healed. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "This man is the one who used to sit and beg!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 9:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Some said, "It is he." Others said, "Not at all, but that one is like him." He kept saying, "It is me."

## John 9:10

### How were your eyes opened (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could translate this sentence with an active form and say who the people thought might have done the action. Alternate translation: "How did you open your eyes?" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"

### How were your eyes opened (ULT)

Here, **eyes opened** figuratively describes the ability to see by referring to something associated with vision coming into action, specifically, the **eyes**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "How are you able to see?" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 9:11

### who is called Jesus (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could translate this clause with an active form. Alternate translation: “whom we call Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### made mud (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in [verse 6](#). Alternate translation: “used his fingers to mix the dirt with saliva to make mud” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### wash...and...having washed (ULT)

See how you translated **wash** in [verse 7](#). Alternate translation: “wash your eyes ... and having washed my eyes” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### I received my sight (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **sight** in another way. Alternate translation: “I could see” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

**11** That one answered, “The man who is called Jesus made mud and smeared {it} on my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So having gone and having washed, I received my sight.”

## John 9:12

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> And they said to him, "Where is that one?" He said, "I do not know."



## John 9:13

### They bring him (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “they brought him”

#### ULT

**13** They bring him, the one who was formerly blind, to the Pharisees.

## John 9:14

### General Information:

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about when Jesus healed the man. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

**14** (Now it was a Sabbath on the day Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.)

### Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes (ULT)

The negative reaction of the Pharisees described in the following verses is based on their belief that Jesus' actions were considered to be work according to their religious laws. Therefore, they believed that he was disobeying God's command to rest and not work on the Sabbath. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#) and [work](#), [works](#), [deeds](#) and [Sabbath](#)). If your readers might misunderstand this, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. These were two deeds the Pharisees considered to be work." (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### opened his eyes (ULT)

Here, **opened eyes** figuratively describes the ability to see by referring to something associated with vision coming into action, specifically, the **eyes**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "caused him to see" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 9:15

### Then again the Pharisees also began asking him (ULT)

Here, **again** means that this is the second time people questioned the blind man whom Jesus had healed. It does not mean that this is the second time **the Pharisees** questioned him. If this use of **again** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Then, in addition to his neighbors questioning him, the Pharisees also began asking him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> Then again the Pharisees also began asking him how he had received his sight. But he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

### he had received his sight (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: "he could see" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### I washed (ULT)

See how you translated **washed** in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: "I washed my eyes" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 9:16

### he does not keep the Sabbath (ULT)

The phrase **does not keep the Sabbath** means to disobey the regulations for the Sabbath that God gave in the law of Moses. The Pharisees added many regulations which they considered to be equal with those that God had given. It was these additional regulations that Jesus was disobeying, thereby making the Pharisees very angry with him. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “he does not obeying our Sabbath regulations” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**16** Then some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath.” Others said, “How is a man, a sinner, able to do such signs?” And there was a division among them.

### This man is not from God (ULT)

Here, **from** is used to indicate Jesus’ origin. He could only have authority if he came **from God**. Since Jesus was not obeying the Pharisees’ rules, they refused to believe that God had given him authority. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “This man does not have God’s authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### How is a man, a sinner, able to do such signs (ULT)

Some people are using a rhetorical question here to emphasize that Jesus’ signs prove he is not a sinner. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “A sinner cannot possibly do such signs!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

### there was a division among them (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **division** in another way. Alternate translation: “they divided themselves against each other” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

## John 9:17

### they ask (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “they asked”

#### ULT

**17** Therefore, they ask the blind man again, “What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?” And he said, “He is a prophet.”

### since he opened your eyes (ULT)

Because the next verse indicates that the Pharisees did not believe that the man used to be blind, **since** here does not mean that they thought the man had really been healed. If this clause might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “since you claim that he opened your eyes” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he opened your eyes (ULT)

Here, **opened eyes** figuratively describes the ability to see by referring to something associated with vision coming into action, specifically, the **eyes**. See how you translated a similar phrase in [verse 14](#). Alternate translation: “he caused you to see” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 9:18

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** here indicates that what follows is the result of what the man said about Jesus in the previous verse. Because the formerly blind man believed Jesus was a prophet, **the Jews** who opposed Jesus refused to believe that the man had really been blind. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Since the man said that Jesus was a prophet” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

### ULT

**18** Therefore, the Jews did not believe about him that he was blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders, which in this chapter may have been a group of leaders among the Pharisees. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 9:19

### was born blind (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "he was blind when you bore him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**19** And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

## John 9:20

### he was born blind (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "he was blind when his mother bore him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**20** So his parents answered and said, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind."



## John 9:21

### has full maturity (ULT)

The phrase **full maturity** describes a person who is an adult and is legally responsible for himself. If **full maturity** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "is an adult" or "is a full-grown man" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**21** But how he now sees, we do not know, or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he has full maturity. He will speak for himself."

## John 9:22

### General Information:

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about the man's parents being afraid of the Jewish leaders. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed that if anyone would confess him as the Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.

### of the Jews...the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders, which in this chapter may have been a group of leaders among the Pharisees. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: "the Jewish authorities ... those authorities" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### would confess him as the Christ (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "would confess Jesus as the Christ" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### he would be put out of the synagogue (ULT)

Here, **put out of the synagogue** is a metaphor for no longer being allowed to go into the synagogue and no longer belonging to the group of people who attend services at the synagogue. When people were **put out of the synagogue**, they were shunned by their local community. Alternate translation: "he would not be allowed to enter the synagogue" or "he would no longer belong to the synagogue community" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 9:23

### He has full maturity (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 21](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Because of this, his parents said, “He has full maturity; ask him.”

## John 9:24

### they called...the man (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the Jewish leaders introduced in ([verse 18](#))

### Give glory to God (ULT)

This is an idiom that Jewish people used when commanding someone to take an oath. It first appears in [Joshua 7:19](#) when Joshua orders Achan to confess his sin. Alternate translation: "Speak the truth before God" (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, for a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

### this man (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **this man** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: "this so-and-so" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 9:25

### that one (ULT)

Here, **that one** refers to the man who had been blind. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the man who had been blind” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Then that one replied, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I know: that being blind, now I see.”

## John 9:26

### How did he open your eyes (ULT)

Here, **open eyes** figuratively describes the ability to see by referring to something associated with vision coming into action, specifically, the **eyes**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “How did he cause you to see?” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Then they said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

## John 9:27

### Why do you want to listen again (ULT)

John records the man using a rhetorical question here to emphasize his amazement that the Jewish leaders have asked him to tell them again what happened. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you want to listen again to what happened to me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> He answered them, "I have told you already, and you did not listen! Why do you want to listen again? You do not want to become his disciples also, do you?"

### You do not want to become his disciples also, do you (ULT)

Here, the formerly blind man actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of his words. He knows that the Jewish leaders do not want to follow Jesus, but asks this question to ridicule them. If this use of irony would be misunderstood in your language, consider expressing the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It sounds like you also want to become his disciples!" (See: [Irony](#))

## John 9:28

### of that one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **that one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “of that so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**28** And they reviled him and said, “You are a disciple of that one, but we are disciples of Moses.”

### but we are disciples of Moses (ULT)

Here, the pronoun **we** is exclusive. The Jewish leaders are speaking only of themselves. Your language may require you to mark this form. Alternate translation: “but we true Jews are disciples of Moses” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))



## John 9:29

### this one (ULT)

Here, John records the Jewish leaders saying **this one** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “this so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from.”

### this one...where...is from (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders use **from** to indicate Jesus’ origin. He could only have authority if he came **from** God, but they say that they do not know where he came **from**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “where this one gets his authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 9:30

### Now this is a remarkable thing, that you do not know (ULT)

If the plain statement form for this seems unnatural, you could translate this as an exclamation and may need to make a new sentence. Alternate translation: “This is amazing! You do not know” or “How remarkable! You do not know” (See: [Exclamations](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> The man answered and said to them, “Now this is a remarkable thing, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes.”

### where he is from (ULT)

See how you translated **from** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “where he gets his authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he opened my eyes (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in [verse 14](#). Alternate translation: “caused me to see” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 9:31

### sinners...does not hear...he hears this one (ULT)

Here, **hear** and **hears** mean paying attention to or listening to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. It does not mean simply to **hear** what someone says. If this meaning for **hear** would be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "does not heed sinners ... he heeds this one" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> We know that God does not hear sinners, but if someone is devout and does his will, he hears this one.

## John 9:32

### it has never been heard (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you can use an active form. Alternate translation: “no one has ever heard” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> From eternity it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one having been born blind.

### opened...the eyes of one having been born blind (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in [verse 14](#). Alternate translation: “caused one having been born blind to see” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### of one having been born blind (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: “of one who was blind when his mother bore him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 9:33

### If this one were not from God, he would not be able to do anything (ULT)

Here, the formerly blind man uses a double negative sentence pattern to emphasize the positive fact that Jesus must be **from God**.

If this double negative pattern would be misunderstood in your language, you could translate it as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "Only a man from God would be able to do anything like that!" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> If this one were not from God, he would not be able to do anything."

### If this one were not from God (ULT)

The formerly blind man is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He has concluded that Jesus must have come **from God** because he healed him. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: "If this one were not from God, but he is" (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#))

### were not...from God (ULT)

See how you translated **from God** in [verse 16](#). Alternate translation: "did not have God's authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### anything (ULT)

Here, **anything** does not mean "anything at all." It means **anything** like the miraculous signs that Jesus was performing, particularly his healing this man who was born blind. If this use of **anything** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "anything like healing a man blind from birth" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 9:34

### You were completely born in sins, and you are teaching us (ULT)

The Jewish leaders used a question to emphasize their belief that this man was not qualified to question their opinion. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "You were completely born in sins and not qualified to teach us!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and you are teaching us?" And they threw him out.

### You were completely born in sins (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: "Your mother bore you completely in sins" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### You were completely born in sins (ULT)

The Jewish leaders mention the formerly blind man being **born in sins** to imply that the **sins** of his parents had caused his blindness. If your readers might misunderstand this use of **born in sins**, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "You were born blind completely because of your parents' sins" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### they threw him out (ULT)

Here, **threw him out** is a metaphor for no longer being allowed to go into the synagogue and no longer belonging to the group of people who attend services at the synagogue. When people were thrown out of the synagogue, they were shunned by their local community. Alternate translation: "he was forbidden to enter the synagogue" or "he was forbidden to belong to the synagogue community" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 9:35

### General Information:

Jesus finds the man whom he healed in ([verses 1–7](#)) and begins to speak to him and the crowd.

### they had thrown him out (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “they had forbidden him from entering the synagogue” or “they had forbidden him from belonging to the synagogue community” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### having found him (ULT)

Here, **found** implies that **Jesus** had first searched for the man. It does not mean that Jesus unintentionally or accidentally met the man at another time. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “having looked for him and found him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

Here, Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man”. However, the formerly blind man did not realize that Jesus was speaking of himself and Jesus does not explain the metaphor to him until verse [37](#). Therefore, you do not need to explain that Jesus is speaking about himself here. (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [1:51](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and having found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

## John 9:36

### sir (ULT)

The formerly blind man calls Jesus **Sir** in order to show respect or politeness. He does not yet know that Jesus is the Lord. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

### ULT

<sup>36</sup> That one replied and said, "And who is he, sir, so that I might believe in him?"



## John 9:37

### and that one is the one speaking with you (ULT)

Here, Jesus is referring to himself in third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person form. Alternate translation: "and I, the one who is speaking with you, am that one" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have both seen him, and that one is the one speaking with you."

## John 9:38

### Lord (ULT)

Now that the formerly blind man knows that Jesus is the **Lord**, he calls Jesus **Lord**. (See: [lord](#), [Lord](#), [master](#), [sir](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> Now he said, "Lord, I believe" and he worshiped him.

### I believe (ULT)

Here, the formerly blind man is leaving out some words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from [verse 36](#). Alternate translation: "I believe that you are the Son of Man" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 9:39

### For judgment (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **judgment** in another way. Alternate translation: “In order to judge” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> And Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those not seeing might see and those seeing might become blind.”

### so that those not seeing might see and those seeing might become blind (ULT)

Here, **not seeing**, **see**, **seeing**, and **become blind** are metaphors. See the discussion of these metaphors in the General Notes for this chapter. If your readers would not understand these uses of these words, you could use similes or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “so that those who know they are spiritually blind might receive spiritual sight, and those who falsely think they have spiritual sight might remain spiritually blind” or “so that those who recognize that they don’t know God might know him, and those who falsely think they know God might continue not knowing him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### so that those not seeing might see and those seeing might become blind (ULT)

Here, **so that** could indicate that: (1) the rest of the verse is the result of Jesus’ **judgment**, which may require starting a new sentence. Alternate translation: “The result of my judgment will be that those not seeing might see and those seeing might become blind” (2) the rest of the verse is an explanation of the **judgment** Jesus mentioned at the beginning of the verse, which may also require starting a new sentence. Alternate translation: “That judgment is that those not seeing might see and those seeing might become blind” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#))

## John 9:40

### We are not also blind, are we (ULT)

John records several **Pharisees** using a rhetorical question here to emphasize that they do not think that they are spiritually blind. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way.

Alternate translation: "We surely are not also blind!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "We are not also blind, are we?"

### We are not also blind, are we (ULT)

Here to be **blind** is a metaphor for not knowing God's truth. If your readers would not understand this use of **blind**, you could use a simile or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "We are not also ignorant of God's truth, are we?" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 9:41

### If you were blind, you would have no sin (ULT)

See how you translated **blind** in [verses 39–40](#). Alternate translation: “If you did not know God’s truth, you would have no sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin, but now you say, ‘We see.’ Your sin remains.”

### you would have no sin...Your sin remains (ULT)

In these two phrases, Jesus speaks figuratively of **sin** as if it were an object that a person could possess or that could remain with a person. If this use of **sin** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you would not be sinful ... you are still sinful” (See: [Metaphor](#))

See how you translated **see** in [verse 39](#). Alternate translation: “you say, ‘We know God’s truth,’ your sin remains” (See: [Metaphor](#))

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “you say that you see” (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))



## **John 10**

## John 10 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus tells the Parable of the Sheep Pen (10:1-6)  
Jesus says he is the gate of the sheep pen (10:7-10)  
Jesus says he is the Good Shepherd (10:11-18)  
The Jewish leaders disagree about who Jesus is (10:19-21)  
Jesus says he is God at the Festival of Dedication (10:22-42)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Blasphemy

When a person claims that he is God or that God has told him to speak when God has not told him to speak, this is called blasphemy. The law of Moses commanded the Israelites to kill blasphemers by throwing stones at them until they died. When Jesus said, "I and the Father are one," the Jews thought he was blaspheming, so they picked up stones to kill him. (See: [blasphemy](#), [blaspheme](#), [blasphemous](#) and [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Parable

Parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people who wanted to believe in him could easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. But people who did not want to believe in him would not be able to understand the message ([John 10:1-6](#)).

#### Sheep

Jesus spoke metaphorically of people as sheep because sheep do not see well, do not think well, often walk away from those who care for them, and cannot defend themselves when other animals attack them. God's people also rebel against him and do not know when they are doing wrong. (See: [ewe](#), [ram](#), [sheep](#), [sheepfold](#), [sheepshearers](#), [sheepskins](#))

#### Sheep pen

A sheep pen was a space with a stone wall around it in which shepherds would keep their sheep. There were large sheep pens in which multiple flocks were kept, and also smaller sheep pens for a single flock. Once they were inside the sheep pen, the sheep could not run away, and animals and thieves could not easily get inside to kill or steal them. In [John 10:1-5](#), Jesus uses the sheep pen as a metaphor for the people of Israel. Out of the "sheep pen" of the Jewish people, Jesus calls his first "sheep."

#### Laying down and taking up life

Jesus speaks of his life as if it were a physical object that he could: (1) lay down on the ground, which is a metaphor for dying, or (2) pick up again, which is a metaphor for becoming alive again.



## John 10:1

### General Information:

In [verses 1–5](#), Jesus speaks a parable, which he then uses for teaching purposes in [verses 7–18](#). Here, the “shepherd” is a metaphor for Jesus and “sheep” is a metaphor for people. “His own sheep” are the people who follow Jesus, and the **thief**, **robber**, and “strangers” are the Jewish leaders, including the Pharisees, who try to deceive the people. Since Jesus does not explain the meaning of this parable here, you should not explain the metaphors within the parable itself. (See: [Parables](#))

### ULT

<sup>1</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, the one not entering through the gate into the sheep pen but climbing up some other way, that one is a thief and a robber.

### Connecting Statement:

In [verses 1–21](#), Jesus continues to speak to the Pharisees whom he was speaking with at the end of the last chapter. This section continues the story which began in [9:35](#).

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### sheep pen (ULT)

A **sheep pen** is a fenced area where a shepherd keeps his sheep. See the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. If your readers would not be familiar with this way of protecting livestock, you could use a general expression for a roofless space surrounded by walls or a fence. Alternate translation: “the walled area for protecting the sheep” or “the place where sheep are kept” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### a thief...and a robber (ULT)

The words translated **thief** and **robber** describe two different kinds of criminals. A **thief** is a person who steals by stealth, but a **robber** is a person who steals by force or violence. For this reason, you may want to use “or” instead of **and** between these two terms. Alternate translation: “a thief or a robber” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 10:2

### the shepherd...of the sheep (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe a **shepherd** who takes care of **the sheep**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "the shepherd who cares for the sheep" or "the shepherd in charge of the sheep" (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> But the one entering through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

## John 10:3

### The gatekeeper (ULT)

A **gatekeeper** is a person who guards the sheep pen and opens the gate for the shepherd. If your readers would not be familiar with this way of protecting livestock, you could use a general expression for a person who guards an entrance. Alternate translation: “the gate guard” or “the person guarding the gate” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens for this one, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

### The gatekeeper opens (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the previous verse. Alternate translation: “The gatekeeper opens the gate” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### for this one...his voice...he calls his own sheep (ULT)

In this verse, **this one**, **his**, and **he** refer to the shepherd mentioned in the previous verse. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “for this shepherd ... the shepherd’s voice ... the shepherd calls his own sheep” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### the sheep hear his voice (ULT)

Here, **hear** could mean: (1) all the sheep in the pen **hear** the shepherd’s **voice**, but not all of them respond to it, as in the ULT. This meaning implies that there are multiple flocks in the sheep pen. (2) the sheep that belong to the shepherd heed or obey his **voice**. This implies that **the sheep** are identical with **his own sheep**. Alternate translation: “the sheep heed his voice” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he calls his own sheep by name (ULT)

Here, **his own sheep** are designated as a separate group among **the sheep** of the previous clause. If this might be confusing to your readers, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: “he calls his own sheep by name out from among all the sheep” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 10:4

### he goes ahead of them (ULT)

Shepherds in Jesus' culture led their sheep by walking in front of them. If people who take care of livestock in your culture do not do this, you might need to say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "he leads them to pasture by walking in front of them" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

## John 10:5

### the voice of strangers (ULT)

Here, the word **voice** is singular in form, but it refers to all of the strangers' voices as a group. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: "the voices of strangers" (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Now they will certainly not follow a stranger, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

## John 10:6

### this parable (ULT)

This **parable** is an illustration from the work of shepherds that uses metaphors. See the discussion of parables in the General Notes for this chapter. (See: [Parables](#))

### to them (ULT)

In this verse, **them**, **those ones**, and **they** refer to the Pharisees, whom Jesus was speaking with in [9:40–41](#). If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly, as the UST does. (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Jesus spoke this parable to them, but those ones did not understand what it was that he was saying to them.

## John 10:7

### Connecting Statement:

In [verses 7–18](#), Jesus uses ideas from the parable he told in [verses 1–5](#) in order to teach about himself, those who believe in him, and those who deceive the people.

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the gate of the sheep.

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### I am the gate of the sheep (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **gate** differently than he did in [verse 1–2](#). Here, Jesus uses **gate** figuratively to say that he provides access into heaven, where God dwells. If this use of **gate** would be confusing in your language, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: “I am like the gate” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### I am the gate of the sheep (ULT)

Jesus is using the possessive form to describe himself as a **gate** that is for **the sheep** to use. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “I am the gate for the sheep” (See: [Possession](#))

### of the sheep (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **sheep** figuratively to refer to people who believe in him. If this use of **sheep** might be misunderstood in your language, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: “of those who follow me like sheep” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 10:8

### Everyone who came before me (ULT)

**Everyone** here is an exaggeration that refers to the majority of Israel's leaders, including the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders. Not every leader of Israel throughout history was wicked, but most were. If this use of **Everyone** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "Most leaders who came before me" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Everyone who came before me is a thief and a robber, but the sheep did not hear them.

### a thief...and a robber (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **thief** and **robber** figuratively to refer to the Jewish leaders who were deceiving the people. If this use of **thief** and **robber** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: "like a thief and a robber" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### a thief...and a robber (ULT)

The words translated **thief** and **robber** describe two different kinds of criminals. See how you translated this expression in [verse 1](#). Alternate translation: "a thief or a robber" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the sheep (ULT)

In this verse, Jesus uses **sheep** figuratively to refer specifically to the Jewish people who believed in him. If this use of **sheep** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the sheep who follow me" or "the sheep, my disciples" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### did not hear them (ULT)

Here, **hear** means listening to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. It does not mean simply to **hear** what someone says. If this meaning for hearing would be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "did not heed them" (See: [Metaphor](#))



## John 10:9

### I am the gate (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **gate** figuratively to say that he provides access into heaven, where God dwells. See how you translated this phrase in [verse 7](#). Alternate translation: “I am like the gate” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> I am the gate. If anyone enters through me, he will be saved, and he will go in and go out and will find pasture.

### If anyone enters through me (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **enters through me** figuratively to refer to trusting in him for salvation. If this might be confusing to your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “If anyone believes in me for salvation” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he will be saved (ULT)

Here, **saved** refers to being **saved** from the eternal punishment in hell that all people deserve because of their sins. If this use of **saved** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “he will be saved from hell” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he will be saved (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you can say who will do the action. Alternate translation: “God will save him” or “I will save him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### he will go in and go out (ULT)

The phrase **go in and go out** is a common Old Testament idiom meaning to travel and move around freely in a safe environment. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “he will move about freely” or “he will go around in a safe environment” (See: [Idiom](#))

### will find pasture (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase *\*find pasture\** to refer to having one’s needs provided for. If this might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “will find sustenance” or “will receive everything that he needs” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 10:10

### The thief (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of thieves in general, not of one particular **thief**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: "A thief" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

#### ULT

**10** The thief does not come except in order that he might steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they might have life and might have it abundantly.

### The thief (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **thief** figuratively to refer to the Jewish leaders who were deceiving the people. See how you translated the similar use of this word in [verse 8](#). Alternate translation: "Every leader is like a thief" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### does not come except in order that he might steal (ULT)

If this double negative would be misunderstood in your language, you could translate it as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "comes only in order that he might steal" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### he might steal and kill and destroy (ULT)

Here, Jesus is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "he might steal and kill and destroy the sheep" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### they might have (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the sheep, which is a metaphor for God's people. If it would be clearer in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "the sheep might have" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### so that they might have life (ULT)

Here, **life** refers to eternal **life**. If this use of **life** might be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "so that they might have eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and might have it abundantly (ULT)

Here, **abundantly** implies that the eternal **life** Jesus' followers will receive has more blessings than anyone could expect. If this use of **abundantly** might be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "and might have it with abundant blessings" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 10:11

### Connecting Statement:

In [verses 11–18](#), Jesus uses ideas from the parable he told in [verses 1–5](#) to proclaim that he is the good shepherd who leads his sheep to heaven and takes care of them.

#### ULT

**11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

### I am the good shepherd (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase **good shepherd** figuratively to refer to himself. Just as a **good shepherd** takes care of his **sheep**, Jesus takes care of his followers. If this use of **shepherd** might be misunderstood in your language, you could use a simile. Alternate translation: “I am like a good shepherd” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### lays down his life (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **lays down his life** to refer to voluntarily dying. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use a different polite way of referring to this or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: “voluntarily dies” (See: [Euphemism](#))

### the sheep (ULT)

See how you translated **sheep** in the [verse 8](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 10:12

### the hired man (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase **hired servant** figuratively to refer to the Jewish leaders and teachers. If this use of the phrase might confuse your readers, you could use a simile or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Each of your leaders is like a hired servant" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**12** And the hired man, not being a shepherd, of whom the sheep are not his own, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and escapes, and the wolf seizes and scatters them,

### the hired man (ULT)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this passive phrase with an active form. Alternate translation: "the man whom someone hired" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the wolf...the wolf (ULT)

A **wolf** is a fierce wild dog that is known for attacking and devouring livestock. If your readers would not be familiar with this animal, you could use the name of a fierce predator or wild dog in your area that commonly eats farmers' livestock, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "the fierce predator ... that predator" (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### the sheep...the sheep (ULT)

See how you translated **sheep** in the [verse 8](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the wolf seizes and scatters them (ULT)

This clause describes two events. The first event causes the second event. When **the wolf** attacks and **seizes** a sheep, the other sheep scatter. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: "the wolf seizes a sheep and then the rest of the sheep scatter" (See: [Connect — Sequential Time Relationship](#))

## John 10:13

### a hired man (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in the previous verse. (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**13** because he is a hired man, and it is not a concern to him about the sheep.

### it is not a concern to him about the sheep (ULT)

Here, Jesus compares a **hired man** who abandons **the sheep** to the Jewish leaders and teachers who do not care for God's people. See how you translated **sheep** in the [verse 8](#). Alternate translation: "he is not concerned about the sheep, just like your leaders are not concerned about God's people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 10:14

### I am the good shepherd (ULT)

See how you translated this in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: "I am like a good shepherd" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**14** I am the good shepherd, and I know those of mine, and those of mine know me,

## John 10:15

### the Father...the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### I lay down my life (ULT)

See how you translated the similar phrase in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: “I voluntarily die” (See: [Euphemism](#))

### the sheep (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in the [verse 8](#). (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**15** just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

## John 10:16

### I have other sheep (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **other sheep** figuratively to refer to his followers who are not Jews. If this use of **other sheep** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "I have disciples from a different group" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**16** And I have other sheep that are not from this sheep pen. It is necessary for me to bring them also, and they will hear my voice and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

### this sheep pen (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **sheep pen** figuratively to refer to the people of Israel. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for this chapter. If this use of **sheep pen** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the Jewish people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### them also...to bring (ULT)

Jesus is leaving out some of the words that this phrase would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. This could mean: (1) Jesus will bring them to himself, as in the UST. (2) Jesus will bring them to God. Alternate translation: "to bring them also to God" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### they will hear my voice (ULT)

Here, **hear** means listening to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. See how you translated this word in [verse 8](#). Alternate translation: "they will heed my voice" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### one flock (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **flock** figuratively to refer to all of his followers, including Jews and non-Jews, as if they are one group like a **flock of sheep**. If this would be confusing in your language, you could use a simile or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "one group" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### one shepherd (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses **shepherd** figuratively to refer to himself. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for the chapter. See also how you translated **shepherd** in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: "one group" (See: [Metaphor](#))



## John 10:17

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.

### Because of this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I might take it up again (ULT)

Here, **this** refers to all the information in the second clause. If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Because I lay down my life so that I might take it up again, the Father loves me" (See: [Information Structure](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### I lay down my life (ULT)

See how you translated the similar phrase in [verse 11](#). Alternate translation: "I voluntarily die" (See: [Euphemism](#))

### so that I might take it up again (ULT)

Here, Jesus figuratively refers to becoming alive again as if life were an object that he could **take up**. If this use of **take up** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "so that I might cause myself to be alive again" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**17** Because of this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I might take it up again.

## John 10:18

### No one takes it away from me (ULT)

Here, Jesus figuratively refers to someone killing him as if life were an object that could be taken away. If this use of **takes away** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “No one is causing me to die” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### it...I lay...down...to lay it down (ULT)

See how you translated the similar phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “I voluntarily die ... to voluntarily die” (See: [Euphemism](#))

### I lay it down from myself (ULT)

The reflexive pronoun **myself** is used here to emphasize that Jesus voluntarily lays down his own life. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “I myself lay it down” (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

### to take it up again (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “to cause myself to be alive again” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**18** No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down from myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. I received this command from my Father.”

## John 10:19

### A division again occurred among the Jews (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **division** in another way. Alternate translation: "The Jews divided themselves against each other again" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> A division again occurred among the Jews because of these words.

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders, which in this chapter and the previous chapter may have been a group of leaders among the Pharisees. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: "the Jewish authorities" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### because of these words (ULT)

Here, **these words** refers to what Jesus has just said to **the Jews** in the previous verses. It wasn't the words themselves that caused division, but the meaning of what Jesus said. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "because of the things he said" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 10:20

### He has a demon (ULT)

See how you translated a similar phrase in [7:20](#). Alternate translation: "A demon is inside of him!" or "He must be under the control of a demon!"

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Now many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to him?"

### Why do you listen to him (ULT)

Jesus' opponents are using the form of a question to emphasize that the people should not listen to Jesus. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "You should certainly not listen to him!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 10:21

### These are not the words of a demon-possessed man (ULT)

Here, **words** refers to what a **demon-possessed man** would say. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "These things are not what a demon-possessed man would say" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Others were saying, "These are not the words of a demon-possessed man. A demon is not able to open the eyes of the blind, is he?"

### A demon is not able to open the eyes of the blind, is he (ULT)

The people are using the form of a question to emphasize that they do not believe that a **demon** could heal a **blind** person. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Certainly a demon cannot cause a blind man to see!" or "Certainly a demon cannot give sight to blind people!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### to open the eyes of the blind (ULT)

Here, **open the eyes** figuratively describes the ability to see by referring to something associated with vision coming into action, specifically, **the eyes**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to caused the blind to see" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 10:22

### General Information:

Some Jews begin to question Jesus during **the Festival of Dedication**. This verse gives background information about the time when the events of [verses 24–39](#) took place. The next verse gives background information about the place where those events took place. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Then the Festival of Dedication in Jerusalem happened. It was winter, <sup>[1]</sup>

### the Festival of Dedication (ULT)

The **Festival of Dedication** is an eight-day holiday that Jews celebrate in the **winter** to remember when they dedicated the Jewish temple to God after it had been defiled by the Syrians. If your readers would not be familiar with this holiday, you could use a general expression to explain it. Alternate translation: “the Jewish temple dedication festival” or “the Jewish festival for remembering the dedication of their temple” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

## John 10:23

### Jesus was walking in the temple (ULT)

**Jesus was walking** in the courtyard of **the temple**. See how you translated \**temple*\* in [8:14](#). Alternate translation: “Jesus was walking in the temple courtyard” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23[2]</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple on the porch of Solomon.

### the porch of Solomon (ULT)

Here, the possessive form describes **the porch** that was associated with King **Solomon** in some way. It may have been the only remaining part of the temple built during the time of **Solomon**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “the porch associated with Solomon” (See: [Possession](#))

### of Solomon (ULT)

**Solomon** is the name of a man, the king who oversaw the building of the first Jewish temple. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### porch (ULT)

A **porch** was a structure with a roof, had at least one wall missing, and was attached to the side of a building. See how you translated this word in [5:2](#). (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

## John 10:24

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### are you taking away our life (ULT)

This is an idiom which means to keep people in suspense by not telling them something. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “keep us from knowing for sure?” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

**24** Then the Jews surrounded him and began saying to him, “How long are you taking away our life? If you are the Christ, tell us openly.”



## John 10:25

### The works (ULT)

Here, **works** could refer to: (1) the miracles that Jesus did. Alternate translation: "The miracles" (2) Jesus' miracles and teaching. Alternate translation: "The miracles and teaching" See how you translated this in 5:36. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Jesus replied to them, "I told you, but you do not believe. The works that I do in the name of my Father, these testify concerning me."

### in the name of my Father (ULT)

Here, **name** could mean: (1) Jesus performed miracles by means of God's authority. Alternate translation: "through my Father's authority" (2) Jesus performed miracles as God's representative. Alternate translation: "as my Father's representative" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### of my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### these testify concerning me (ULT)

Here, Jesus speaks figuratively of his **works** as though they were a person who could testify and offer proof in a court of law. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "these offer proof concerning me" (See: [Personification](#))

## John 10:26

### not...from my sheep (ULT)

Here, the word **sheep** is a metaphor for the followers of Jesus. If this use of **sheep** might be misunderstood in your language, you could use a simile or say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “not my followers” or “not my disciples” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> But you do not believe, because you are not from my sheep.

## John 10:27

### My sheep (ULT)

See how you translated **My sheep** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “My followers” or “My disciples” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

### hear my voice (ULT)

Here, **hear** means listening to something with the intent to heed it and respond appropriately. See how you translated this word in [verse 16](#). Alternate translation: “heed my voice” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### they follow me (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses an idiom that refers to becoming Jesus’ disciple and obeying his teachings. See how you translated a similar phrase in [8:12](#). Alternate translation: “they have become my disciples” or “they obey me” (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 10:28

### no one will snatch any of them from my hand (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **hand** figuratively to refer to his protective care and **snatch** to refer to removing someone from that care. If this use of **hand** and **snatch** would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “no one will steal any of them away from me” or “they all will remain secure forever in my care” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> And I give them eternal life, and they will certainly not perish into eternity, and no one will snatch any of them from my hand.

## John 10:29

### My Father, who has given them to me (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### no one is able to snatch them from the hand of the Father (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **hand** figuratively to refer to God's protective care and **snatch** to refer to removing someone from that care. See how you translated **hand** and **snatch** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "no one will steal any of them away from my Father" or "they all will remain secure forever in my Father's care" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them from the hand of the Father.

## John 10:30

### are one (ULT)

Here, the word translated **one** means to be completely united. It does not mean to be the same identical person. Although this expression implies that Jesus is God, he is not identical to God **the**

**Father**. If this use of **one** might be confusing in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “are united in purpose and character” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 10:31

### The Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#). Alternate translation: “The Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> The Jews took up stones again so that they might stone him.

### so that they might stone him (ULT)

**The Jews** opposing Jesus are outraged at what Jesus said in the previous verse. Here, John implies that they wanted to kill him with stones because he had made himself equal to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “so that they might stone him because he claimed to be equal with God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 10:32

### many good works...of those works (ULT)

See how you translated **works** in [verse 25](#). Alternate translation: “many good miracles ... of those miracles” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### from the Father (ULT)

This phrase could refer to: (1) the source of the **good works**. Alternate translation: “originating from the Father” (2) the one who enabled the **good works**. Alternate translation: “given to me by the Father”

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### For which of those works are you stoning me (ULT)

Here, Jesus is using irony. Jesus knows the Jewish leaders do not want to stone him because he has done **good works**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, consider expressing the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Your certainly are not stoning me because of those works” (See: [Irony](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of those works are you stoning me?”



## John 10:33

### The Jews answered him (ULT)

See how you translated this in [verse 31](#). Alternate translation: “The Jewish authorities” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### for blasphemy (ULT)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **blasphemy** in another way. Alternate translation: “because you blaspheme” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### blasphemy (ULT)

Here, the **Jews** use the word **blasphemy** with its technical sense, which refers to a human being claiming to be God. This is what the Jewish leaders felt Jesus was doing in [verse 30](#). Here, **blasphemy** does not have a general sense of “insult.” See the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “committing the crime of blasphemy” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### making yourself God (ULT)

This phrase means to claim to be God. It does not mean to try to make oneself into God or become God. Alternate translation: “claiming to be God”

#### ULT

**33** The Jews answered him, “We are not stoning you for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because you, a man, are making yourself God.”

## John 10:34

### Is it not written ... gods'?"

Here, Jesus uses the form of a question to add emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "It is certainly written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods'"?

### Is it not written (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "Did not a prophet write" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in your law (ULT)

Jesus is using the name of the first part of the Hebrew Scriptures, the **law**, to represent the entire Hebrew Scriptures in general. If this use of **law** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in your Scriptures" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### I said, "You are gods (ULT)

Here, Jesus quotes [Psalm 82:6](#) where God calls some humans **gods**. Jesus does this in order to show that God also used the word "god" to refer to people other than himself. In the verse that Jesus quotes, the first person **I** refers to God. If this might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: "I, God, said, 'You are gods'" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### I said, "You are gods (ULT)

If the direct quotation inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I said that you are gods" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

## John 10:35

Verses 35 and 36 are one sentence. In this sentence, Jesus argues by moving from a weaker reason to a stronger reason (an argument from the lesser to the greater). Based on the scripture he quoted in verse 34, Jesus argues that, since God calls humans **gods** in that verse, it is even more appropriate to call him God because he is the Son of God. You may need to change the order of the clauses in order for this idea to be clearer in your language.

### ULT

<sup>35</sup> If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture is not able to be broken),

### If he called them gods (ULT)

**If** indicates a conditional sentence that extends until the end of the next verse. Jesus is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what John is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: "Since he called them gods" (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#) )

### the word of God came (ULT)

Here, Jesus used the term **word** figuratively to describe the message that God said by using words. Alternate translation: "God's message came" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the word of God came (ULT)

Here, Jesus speaks of **the word of God** figuratively as though it were a person who moved toward those who heard it. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "God spoke his word" (See: [Personification](#))

### the Scripture is not able to be broken (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: "no one can break the Scripture" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the Scripture is not able to be broken (ULT)

This phrase could mean: (1) no one can prove that the Scriptures are false or contain errors. Alternate translation: "the Scriptures are not able to be proven false" (2) the authority of Scripture cannot be ignored. Alternate translation: "the Scriptures are not able to be ignored" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 10:36

**do you say to him whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?**

### ULT

<sup>36</sup> do you say to the one the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

Here, Jesus uses the form of a question to rebuke his opponents for accusing him of blasphemy. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "you should not say to the one the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God!'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## You are blaspheming

If the direct quotations inside a direct quotation would be confusing in your language, you could translate the two instance of second direct quotations as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "do you say ... that he is blaspheming because I said that I am the Son of God" (See: [Quotes within Quotes](#))

## to the one the Father sanctified and sent into the world (ULT)

Here, Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "to me whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## You are blaspheming (ULT)

Jesus is leaving a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply this word from the context. See how you translated "blasphemy" in [verse 33](#) and also the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: "You have committed the crime of blaspheming God" or "You are guilty of blaspheming God" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## the Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 10:37

### the works of my Father (ULT)

Here, Jesus is using the possessive form to describe **works** that God wants him to do. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. See how you translated a similar phrase in [9:4](#). Alternate translation: “the works that my Father demands” (See: [Possession](#))

#### ULT

**37** If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me.

### of...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 10:38

### But if I am doing them (ULT)

Here, Jesus is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Jesus is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “But since I am doing them” (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

**38** But if I am doing them, even if you do not believe me, believe in the works so that you might know and might understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

### believe in the works (ULT)

Here, **believe in** means to acknowledge that the **works** Jesus does are done with the authority of the Father and prove that he is God. Alternate translation: “believe that the works I do are from God” or “believe that the works I do are done with God’s power”(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Father is in me, and I in the Father (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the word **in** to express the close personal relationship between him and God. If this use of **in** might be misunderstood in your language, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my Father has a close relationship with me, and I have a close relationship with my Father” (See: [Idiom](#))

### the Father is in me, and I in the Father (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that the truth of what Jesus is saying. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “my Father and I are completely joined together as one” (See: [Doublet](#))

## John 10:39

### he went away out of their hand (ULT)

Here, John used the word **hand** figuratively to refer to the custody or possession of the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “he escaped from them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> Therefore, they were seeking to seize him again, but he went away out of their hand.

## John 10:40

### beyond the Jordan (ULT)

Here, *\*beyond the Jordan\** refers to the region of Judea that is on the east side of the **Jordan** River, which is the side opposite from Jerusalem. See how you translated this expression in [1:28](#). Alternate translation: “on the side of the Jordan River opposite from Jerusalem” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**40** And he went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John first was baptizing, and he stayed there.

### John (ULT)

Here, **John** refers to Jesus’ cousin, often referred to as “John the Baptist.” (See: [John \(the Baptist\)](#)) It does not refer to the Apostle John who wrote this Gospel. See how you translated this in [1:26](#). Alternate translation: “John the Baptist” or “John the Immerser” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### John first was baptizing (ULT)

Here, **first** refers to the beginning of John’s ministry. It does not mean that **John** was the **first** person to baptize people in that location. If this use of **first** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “John was baptizing during the first days of his ministry” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he stayed there (ULT)

Jesus remained on the east side of **Jordan** for a short period of time. If your language requires a length of time for **stay**, you can use a general expression. Alternate translation: “Jesus stayed there for several days” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 10:41

### sign (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of signs in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John.  
Alternate translation: “significant miracle”

### this one (ULT)

Here, **this one** refers to Jesus. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “this man, Jesus” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

**41** And many came to him and were saying, “John indeed did no sign, but all that John said about this one was true.”

## John 10:42

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

**ULT**

<sup>42</sup> And many believed in him there.

# John 11

## John 11 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Jesus returns to Judea (11:1–16)

Jesus' seventh sign: Jesus makes Lazarus become alive again (11:17–46)

The Jewish leaders plan to kill Jesus (11:47–57)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Ancient Jewish burial customs

According to the burial customs of that time, a dead person's family would wrap the dead body with many strips of linen cloth and place it on a table inside a tomb. The tomb was either a cave or a room cut out of the side a large rock. Once the body had decomposed, which was a one-year process in Jewish tradition, the family would then place the bones in a stone box. If your readers would be unfamiliar with these burial customs, then you may need to provide explanations in your translation or in a note for [verses 38–44](#).

#### Passover

After Jesus made Lazarus become alive again, the Jewish leaders were determined to kill Jesus, so he started traveling from place to place in secret. The Pharisees knew that he would come to Jerusalem for the Passover because God had commanded all Jewish men to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, so they planned to catch him and kill him then ([John 11:55–57](#)). (See: [Passover](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### “Walks in the daytime” and “walks at night”

In [verses 9–10](#) of this chapter, Jesus uses the idea of a person working in the light of day and stumbling in the darkness of night as a metaphor for his ministry on the earth. The “daytime” refers to the length of time that Jesus would do God's work on the earth. The “night” refers to the end of his earthly ministry. This ministry would end when he “stumbled,” which refers to his death. Jesus uses this metaphor to comfort his disciples when worry they about him going to Judea ([11:8](#)). He reassures them that, just as the daylight has a set length of time, so does his earthly ministry, and nothing can shorten that time.

#### “One man dies for the people”

In the law of Moses God commanded the priests to kill animals so that God would forgive the people's sins. In this chapter, the high priest Caiaphas says, “It is better for you that one man dies for the people than that the whole nation perishes” ([11:50](#)). He said this because he loved his “place” and “nation” ([11:48](#)) more than he loved the God who had made Lazarus become alive again. He wanted Jesus to die so that the Romans would not destroy the temple and Jerusalem, but God wanted Jesus to die so that he could forgive all of his people's sins.

## **“The Jews”**

This term is used in three different ways in this chapter. Unlike in other parts of John’s Gospel, it is used here primarily to refer to the Jewish people living in Judea, especially Judean friends and relatives of Lazarus. Some of these Judeans believed in Jesus and others opposed him (11:36–37). The term is also used specifically at least once in this chapter to refer to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus and were trying to kill him (11:8 and possibly 11:54). Finally, the term is used in 11:55 to refer to the Jewish people in general. The translator may wish to use the terms “Judeans,” “Jewish authorities,” and “Jewish people” to clarify these distinctions.

## **Hypothetical situation**

When Martha and Mary said, “If you had been here, my brother would not have died,” they were speaking of a situation that could have happened but did not happen (11:21, 32). Jesus had not come, and their brother had died.

## John 11:1

### General Information:

Verses 1–2 provide background information about **Lazarus** and his sisters. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, from the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

### Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany (ULT)

This verse introduces **Lazarus** as a new character in the story. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new character. Alternate translation: “There was a man named Lazarus, who was from Bethany and was sick” (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

### her sister Martha (ULT)

Because those who write Scripture usually list the names of siblings in order from oldest to youngest, the list in [verse 5](#) suggests that **Martha** was the oldest and **Lazarus** was the youngest of the three siblings. If your language uses different words for **sister** depending on birth order, use the word for an older **sister** here. Alternate translation: “her older sister Martha” (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 11:2

### Now it was Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped his feet with her hair (ULT)

Here, John refers to an event that what would happen at a time after the events recorded in this chapter ([12:1-8](#)). If this reference to an event that had not occurred yet in the story might be misunderstood by your readers, you could translate this as a future event. Alternate translation: “Now it was Mary who would later anoint the Lord with myrrh and wipe his feet with her hair” (See: [Order of Events](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now it was Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

### brother Lazarus (ULT)

Because those who wrote Scripture usually list the names of siblings in order from oldest to youngest, the list in [verse 5](#) suggests that Martha was the oldest and **Lazarus** was the youngest of the three siblings. If your language uses different words for **brother** depending on birth order, use the word for a younger **brother** here. Alternate translation: “younger brother Lazarus” (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 11:3

### sent...to him (ULT)

Here, John is leaving out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: “sent messengers to him” or “sent a message to him” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the sisters sent to him, saying, “Sir, behold, he whom you love is sick.”

### Sir, behold, he whom you love is sick (ULT)

Here, the **sisters** are using a present statement to make a request indirectly. They tell Jesus that Lazarus is **sick** because they want Jesus to come and heal him. If this use of a statement is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for instruction. Alternate translation: “Sir, behold, he whom you love is sick and needs your help” (See: [Statements — Other Uses](#))

### behold (ULT)

Here, **behold** means to take notice of something or pray attention to something. It is used here to emphasize the urgency of the words that follow. Alternate translation: “take notice” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 11:4

### is not to death (ULT)

Here, **not to** indicates that what follows is not the result of the **sickness**. If this use of **not to** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “This sickness will not result in death” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> But having heard it, Jesus said, “This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”

### but for the glory of God (ULT)

Jesus is stating the purpose for Lazarus’s **sickness**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “but for the purpose of glorifying God” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

### so that the Son of God may be glorified by it (ULT)

Jesus is stating the second purpose for Lazarus’s **sickness**. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a second purpose clause. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “and for the purpose of glorifying the Son of God” (See: [Connect — Goal \(Purpose\) Relationship](#) )

### the Son of God (ULT)

Jesus is referring to himself in third person. If this is confusing in your language, you can use the first person form, as in the UST. (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) )

### Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#) )



## John 11:5

### Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus (ULT)

In this verse, John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about Jesus relationship with **Lazarus** and his sisters. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> (Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.)

### sister (ULT)

Because those who wrote Scripture usually list the names of siblings in order from oldest to youngest, the list in [verse 5](#) suggests that Martha was the oldest and Lazarus was the youngest of the three siblings. If your language uses different words for **sister** depending on birth order, use the word for a younger **sister** here. Alternate translation: “younger sister” (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 11:6

### Therefore (ULT)

**Therefore** connects this verse to the previous verse in order to indicate that Jesus delayed going to Lazarus because he loved him and his sisters. Jesus' delay is not in contrast to his love for them. Although Lazarus's family would suffer for a short time, they would experience a great blessing when Jesus brought Lazarus back to life.

Alternate translation: "Because Jesus loved them" (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, when he heard that he was sick, he then indeed stayed two days in the place where he was.

## John 11:7

### he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he said”

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Then after this, he says to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

## John 11:8

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to the Jewish leaders. It does not refer to the Jewish people in general. See how you translated this term in [1:19](#) and the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “the Jewish authorities ” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> The disciples say to him, “Rabbi, right now the Jews are seeking to stone you, and you are going back there again?”

### you are going back there again (ULT)

Here, the disciples use the form of a question to emphasize that they do not want Jesus to go to Jerusalem. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “you surely should not go back there again!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 11:9

### Are there not 12 hours in the day (ULT)

Jesus uses the form of a question for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "There are surely 12 hours in the day" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Are there not 12 hours in the day? If someone walks in the daytime, he does not stumble, because he sees by the light of this world."

### If someone walks in the daytime, he does not stumble, because he sees by the light of this world (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the idea of **someone** walking in the daylight figuratively to refer himself doing what God wants him to do while he is still on the earth. In this metaphor, Jesus uses **the light of this world** figuratively to refer to himself, who has previously called himself "the Light of the World" in [8:12](#) and [9:5](#). He also uses **stumble** figuratively to refer to death. The statement in this verse has a similar meaning to Jesus' statement in [9:4](#). Jesus does not want his disciples to worry about him going to Judea because he will be safe as long God wants him to remain on the earth. If this metaphor would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or use a simile. See the discussion of this passage in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: "Just as someone who walks in the daytime does not stumble because they can see in the light, so you do not need to worry about me while I, the Light of the World, am still with you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 11:10

### But if someone walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him (ULT)

In this verse Jesus continues the metaphor of a person walking outside. Jesus uses the idea of **someone** walking **at night** figuratively to refer to the time when his earthly ministry would be complete and he would die and leave the earth. Jesus uses **night** figuratively to refer to the time when his ministry on earth would end. He uses **stumble** figuratively to refer to his death, and uses **light** figuratively to refer to his life. If this metaphor would be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning plainly or use a simile. See the discussion of this passage in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “But just as someone who walks at night stumbles because there is no light, so I will die when it is time for me, the Light of the World, to leave” (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> But if someone walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

## John 11:11

### he says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “he said”

#### ULT

**11** He said these things, and after this, he says to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going so that I may wake him out of sleep.”

### Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep (ULT)

Jesus uses **fallen asleep** to refer to being dead. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. Since Jesus explains the meaning in [verse 14](#), you do not need to explain it here. However, If you have an idiom for this idea in your language, you may use it here. (See: [Euphemism](#))

### but I am going so that I may wake him out of sleep (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses the phrase **wake him out of sleep** figuratively to refer to his plan to bring Lazarus back to life. If you have an idiom for this idea in your language, you may use it here. Since the disciples do not understand what Jesus is saying here, do not translate this in a non-figurative way. (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 11:12

### if he has fallen asleep (ULT)

See how you translated **fallen asleep** in the previous verse. (See: [Euphemism](#))

#### ULT

**12** Therefore, the disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."



## John 11:13

In this verse, John briefly stops telling the events in the story in order to give background information about Jesus' conversation with his disciples. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### those ones (ULT)

Here, **those ones** refers to Jesus' disciples. If it would be more natural in your language, you could say this explicitly, as in the UST. (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> (Now Jesus had spoken about his death, but those ones thought that he is speaking about the sleep of slumber.)

### he is speaking (ULT)

If this use of present tense in past narration would not be natural in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "he was speaking"

### the sleep of slumber (ULT)

John is using the possessive form to describe **sleep** that is **slumber**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: "sleep that is actually sleep" or "natural sleep" (See: [Possession](#))

## John 11:14

### then...Jesus...said to them plainly (ULT)

Here, **plainly** means to say something clearly without using and metaphors or others figures of speech. Because the disciples did not understand the metaphor Jesus told them in [verse 11](#), he told them the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Jesus then said to them in words that they could understand"

#### ULT

**14** Therefore, Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus has died."

## John 11:15

### for your sakes (ULT)

Alternate translation: "for your benefit" or "for your good"

### so that you may believe (ULT)

Here, Jesus is leaving out some words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. You may also need to start a new sentence. Alternate translation: "I allowed this to happen so that you may believe in me" or "I let Lazarus die so that you may believe that I am the Messiah" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

**15** And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

## John 11:16

### who is called Didymus (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “whom some people called Didymus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Didymus (ULT)

This is the name of a man. It is a Greek word that means “twin.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

**16** Therefore, Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to {his} fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may die with him.”

## John 11:17

### Jesus found him having already been in the tomb for four days (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus found him; people had put him in the tomb four days before" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, having come, Jesus found him having already been in the tomb for four days.

## John 11:18

### Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about 15 stadia away (ULT)

This verse gives background information about the place where this event took place. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "This event took place in Bethany, which was near Jerusalem and was about 15 stadia away" (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about 15 stadia away.

### 15 stadia away (ULT)

The word **stadia** is the plural of "stadium," which is a Roman measurement of distance equivalent to about 185 meters or a little over 600 feet. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this in terms of modern measurements, either in the text or a footnote. Alternate translation: "about two miles away" (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

## John 11:19

This verse gives background information about the people who were present when this event took place. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** refers to people living in Judea, particularly the Jewish friends of Lazarus' family. It does not refer to the Jewish leaders or those Jews who opposed Jesus. See the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. If this use of **Jews** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly, as the UST does. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### brother (ULT)

See how you translated **brother** in [verse 2](#). (See: [Kinship](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, so that they might comfort them about {their} brother.

## John 11:20

### about their brother

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this statement as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “she heard that Jesus was coming” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

#### ULT

**20** Then Martha, when she heard, “Jesus is coming,” went to meet him, but Mary was sitting in the house.



## John 11:21

### if you had been here, my brother would not have died (ULT)

**Martha** is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but she knows that the condition is not true. **Jesus** had not been there and her **brother** had **died**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if you had been here, but you were not, my brother would not have died, but he did” (See: [Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions](#) )

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

### brother (ULT)

See how you translated **brother** in [verse 2](#). (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 11:22

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>22</sup> But even now, I know that whatever you would ask from God, God will give to you."

## John 11:23

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**23** Jesus says to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

### Your brother will rise again (ULT)

Here, **rise again** is an idiom that refers to a died person becoming alive **again**. If this use of **rise again** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Your brother will become alive again” (See: [Idiom](#))

### brother (ULT)

See how you translated **brother** in [verse 2](#). (See: [Kinship](#))

## John 11:24

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Martha says to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”

### he will rise again (ULT)

See how you translated **rise again** in the previous verse. (See: [Idiom](#))

### in the resurrection (ULT)

If your readers would misunderstand the abstract noun **resurrection**, you could express the idea behind it with a verb such as “resurrect.” Alternate translation: “when God resurrects people” or “when God brings people back from the dead” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### on the last day (ULT)

Here, **the last day** refers to “the day of the Lord,” which is the time when God judges everyone, Jesus returns to earth, and the bodies of those who are dead are raised from their graves. (See: [day of the Lord](#), [day of Yahweh](#)). Alternate translation: “on the day when God judges everyone” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:25

### the resurrection (ULT)

Here, **Jesus** calls himself **the resurrection** in order to say that he is the one who causes dead people to come back to life. If this use of **resurrection** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the one who resurrects dead people” or “the one who brings dead people back to life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; the one believing in me, even if he dies, will live;

### the life (ULT)

Here, **Jesus** calls himself **the life** in order to say that he is the one who gives people eternal **life**. If this use of **life** might confuse your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the one who makes people live forever” or “the one who causes people to live forever” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### even if he dies (ULT)

Here, **dies** refers to physical death. If it would be clearer in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “even if his body dies” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will live (ULT)

Here, **live** refers to having eternal life. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **live**, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “will have eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:26

### everyone living (ULT)

Here, **living** refers to having eternal life, as “live” does in the previous verse. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **living**, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “everyone who has eternal life” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> and everyone living and believing in me may certainly not die into eternity. Do you believe this?”

### may certainly not die into eternity (ULT)

Here, **die** refers to spiritual death, which is eternal punishment in hell that occurs after physical death. If your readers would misunderstand this use of **die**, you could say this explicitly. See how you translated a similar phrase in [6:50](#). Alternate translation: “may certainly not not die spiritually into eternity” or “may certainly not experience spiritual death into eternity” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### may certainly not die into eternity (ULT)

Here, Jesus uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “may certainly live into eternity” (See: [Litotes](#))

## John 11:27

### She says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”

#### ULT

**27** She says to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

### Son of God (ULT)

This is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### who is coming into the world (ULT)

This phrase refers to a prophet the Jews were waiting for, based on God’s promise to send **into the world** a prophet like Moses, which is recorded in [Deuteronomy 18:15](#). If your readers will not be familiar with this Old Testament reference, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “whom God said he would send into the world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:28

### sister (ULT)

See how you translated **sister** in [verse 5](#). (See: [Kinship](#))

### Teacher (ULT)

Here, **Teacher** refers to Jesus. If your readers might misunderstand this use of **Teacher**, you could say it explicitly. Alternate translation: “Teacher Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**28** And having said this, she went away and called her sister Mary privately, having said, “The Teacher is here and is calling you.”



## John 11:29

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Now when she heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

## John 11:30

### Now Jesus had not yet come into the village (ULT)

Here, John provides a brief break in the story to give background information regarding the location of Jesus. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "At that time Jesus had not yet come into the village" (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> (Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him.)

## John 11:31

### the...Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 19](#).

### who were with her in the house and comforting her (ULT)

This phrase is making a distinction between **the Jews** who were **comforting Mary** in her **house** and those who were not doing so. It is not giving us further information about **the Jews**. If this is confusing in your language, you can make the relationship between these phrases more clear. Alternate translation: “the Jews, that is, those Jews who were with her in the house and comforting her” (See: [Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Then the Jews who were with her in the house and comforting her, having seen that Mary got up quickly and went out, followed her, having thought that she was going to the tomb so that she might weep there.

## John 11:32

### she fell down at his feet (ULT)

Here, **fell down** means that Mary voluntarily threw herself down on the ground in front of Jesus to show the respect that she had for him. The phrase does not mean that **Mary** involuntarily **fell down**. If this use of **fell down** might be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “she prostrated herself at his feet” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Then as soon as Mary came to the place where Jesus was, having seen him, she fell down at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

### Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died (ULT)

See how you translated this sentence in [11:21](#).

## John 11:33

### the...Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 19](#).

### he was deeply disturbed in the spirit and he troubled himself (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. John combines these phrases to express the intense emotional distress that Jesus was feeling. Alternate translation: “he was very upset” (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

**33** When therefore Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews having come with her weeping, he was deeply disturbed in the spirit and he troubled himself.

### he was deeply disturbed (ULT)

The word translated **deeply disturbed** could mean: (1) Jesus was experiencing very intense negative emotions, in which case the meaning would be similar to **troubled**. Alternate translation: “he was deeply moved” (2) Jesus was angry or indignant, which is what the word means in other books in the Bible. Alternate translation: “he was outraged” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he was deeply disturbed in the spirit (ULT)

Here, **spirit** refers to Jesus’ **spirit**. It does not refer to the Holy Spirit. If this use of **spirit** might be misunderstood by your readers, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “he was deeply disturbed within himself” or “he was deeply disturbed inside” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:34

### Where have you laid him (ULT)

Jesus is referring to putting Lazarus' dead body in a tomb as laying him down. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant and accurately describes the Jewish burial practice of laying a dead body on a table inside the tomb. If this would be confusing in your language, use a different polite way of referring to this or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: "Where have you entombed him?" (See: [Euphemism](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They say to him, "Lord, come and see."

## John 11:35

### Jesus wept (ULT)

The word translated **wept** is different than the word used to describe the weeping of Mary and the Jews with her in [verses 31–33](#). The word here just means to shed tears. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus cried” or “Jesus shed tears” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**ULT**<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

## John 11:36

### the Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 19](#).

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, "Behold how much he loved him!"



## John 11:37

### **Was this one, who opened the eyes of the blind man, not able to act so that this one also would not die (ULT)**

Here, some of the Jews use the form of a question to express their surprise that Jesus did not heal Lazarus. This could mean: (1) they believed that Jesus loved Lazarus, but doubted his ability to heal him.

“He opened the eyes of the blind man, but he was not able to keep this man from dying.” (2) they thought that Jesus did not really love Lazarus because he healed the blind man but not him. Alternate translation: “He could open the eyes of the blind man. So if he really loved this man, he surely would have healed him!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Was this one, who opened the eyes of the blind man, not able to act so that this one also would not die?”

### **who opened the eyes of the blind man (ULT)**

See how you translated a similar phrase in [9:14](#). Alternate translation: “who caused the blind man to see” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 11:38

### being deeply disturbed in himself (ULT)

See how you translated the similar phrase in [verse 33](#).

### Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it (ULT)

John pauses the story briefly to describe the tomb where the people had entombed Lazarus. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. Alternate translation: "The place Lazarus was entombed was a cave that had a stone laying against it." (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> Therefore, Jesus again, being deeply disturbed in himself, went to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

## John 11:39

### says...says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "said ... said"

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> Jesus says, "Take away the stone."  
Martha, the sister of the one who had died, says to him, "Lord, he will already stink, for it is four days."

### the sister (ULT)

**Martha** was Lazarus' oldest **sister**. If your language uses different words for **sister** depending on birth order, use the word for a older or oldest **sister** here. Alternate translation: "the oldest sister" (See: [Kinship](#))

### for it is four days (ULT)

This means that it has been **four days** since Lazarus **died**. If it would be clearer to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "for he has been dead for four days" or "for it has been four days since he died" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:40

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: "said"

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> Jesus says to her, "Did I not say to you that, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

### Did I not say to you that, if you believe, you will see the glory of God (ULT)

Jesus is using the form of a question to emphasize that God is about to do something wonderful. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I certainly said to you that, if you believe, you would see the glory of God!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### if you believe (ULT)

Here, Jesus is leaving out some words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be confusing in your language, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: "if you believe in me" or "if you believe that I am the Messiah" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### the glory of God (ULT)

This could mean: (1) God receives the glory. Alternate translation: "the glorification of God" or "God glorified" (2) glory that comes from God. Alternate translation: "the glory from God" (See: [Possession](#))

## John 11:41

### Jesus...lifted up {his} eyes (ULT)

Here, “lifted up his eyes” is an idiom that means to look upward.  
Alternate translation: “Jesus looked up” (See: [Idiom](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**41** Therefore, they took away the stone.  
Then Jesus lifted up {his} eyes and said,  
“Father, I thank you that you heard me.”

## John 11:42

### the crowd that is standing around (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “the group of people that is standing around” or “the many people who are standing around” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> Now I have known that you always hear, but because of the crowd that is standing around I said this, so that they may believe that you sent me.”

## John 11:43

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>43</sup> And having said this, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

## John 11:44

### feet and hands having been bound with cloths, and his face having been bound with a cloth (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you can state this in an active form. Alternate translation: “someone having bound his feet and hands with cloths, and someone having bound his face with a cloth” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his feet and hands having been bound with cloths, and his face having been bound with a cloth. Jesus says to them, “Untie him, and let him go.”

### feet and hands having been bound with cloths, and his face having been bound with a cloth (ULT)

Wrapping a dead body in strips of **cloth** was the burial custom in this culture. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for this chapter. If your readers would not be familiar with such a custom, you could describe it more specifically, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “his feet and hands having been bound with burial cloths, and his face having been wrapped with a burial cloth” or “his feet, hands, and face having been wrapped in clothes for burial” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### says (ULT)

To call attention to a development in the story, John uses the present tense in past narration. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you can use the past tense in your translation. Alternate translation: “said”



## John 11:45

### General Information:

[Verses 45–54] explain what happened after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

### the Jews (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 19](#).

#### ULT

**45** Therefore, many of the Jews who had come to Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

## John 11:46

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>46</sup> But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things that Jesus had done.

## John 11:47

### the Sanhedrin (ULT)

The **Sanhedrin** is the name of the highest ruling council of the Jews. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Sanhedrin, their ruling council” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**47** Therefore, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the Sanhedrin together and said, “What will we do, for this man does many signs?”

### the Sanhedrin (ULT)

**Sanhedrin** is the name of a governing body. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### What will we do (ULT)

It is implied here that the council members are talking about Jesus. Alternate translation: “What are we going to do about Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### this man (ULT)

Here, the Jewish leaders say **this man** as a disrespectful way to refer to Jesus and to avoid saying his name. If your language has a similar way to refer to someone in an indirect but derogatory manner, you may use it here. Alternate translation: “this so-and-so” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of signs in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

## John 11:48

### all will believe in him (ULT)

The Jewish leaders were afraid that the people would try to make Jesus their king and rebel against the Roman government. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “everyone will believe in him, make him king, and revolt against the Roman government” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**48** If we leave him alone like this, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and will take away both our place and nation.”

### the Romans will come (ULT)

The Jewish leaders use **the Romans** figuratively to refer to the Roman army. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or plain language. Alternate translation: “Roman soldiers will come” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### and will take away both our place (ULT)

Here, **place** could mean: (1) the Jewish temple, as in the UST. (2) the city of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “and will take away both our city, Jerusalem” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### nation (ULT)

Here, **nation** refers to all of the Jewish people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jewish nation” or “the people of our nation” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 11:49

### one...certain man among them, Caiaphas (ULT)

This phrase introduces **Caiaphas** as a new character in the story. Use the natural form in your language for introducing a new character. Alternate translation: “there was a man among them named Caiaphas” (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

#### ULT

<sup>49</sup> But one certain man among them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You do not know anything.”

### You do not know anything (ULT)

Here, **Caiaphas** uses an exaggeration in order to insult his hearers. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language that shows contempt. Alternate translation: “You do not understand what is happening” or “You speak as though you know nothing” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

## John 11:50

### and the whole nation would not perish (ULT)

Caiaphas implies that the Roman army would kill all of the people of the Jewish **nation** if Jesus is allowed to live and cause a rebellion. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly.

Alternate translation: "and the Romans would not kill all the people of our nation" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**50** You do not consider that it is better for you that one man would die for the people, and the whole nation would not perish."

### and the whole nation would not perish (ULT)

Here, **nation** refers to all of the Jewish people. See how you translated this word in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "and all the people of our nation would not perish" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 11:51

### General Information:

In [verses 51–52](#) John interrupts the story to explain that Caiaphas was prophesying even though he did not realize it at the time. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>51</sup> (Now this he said not from himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

### from himself (ULT)

Here, **from himself** could mean: (1) Caiaphas was speaking something he had thought of himself. Alternate translation: “on his own initiative” (2) Caiaphas was speaking from his own authority, which is how the phrase is used in [5:19](#). Alternate translation: “on his own authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### but being high priest that year (ULT)

This clause indicates the reason why Caiaphas **prophesied** a true prophecy from God. If your readers would misunderstand the meaning of this clause, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because he was high priest that year” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#))

### to die for the nation (ULT)

See how you translated **nation** in the previous verse. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 11:52

### the nation (ULT)

See how you translated **nation** in the previous verse. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### the children of God (ULT)

Here, John uses the word **children** figuratively to express the relationship between God and those who trust Jesus for salvation. That relationship is like the relationship between children and their father. See the discussion of this phrase in the General Notes to chapter 1. Since this is an important metaphor in the Bible, you should keep it in your translation, but you can use a simile if it might confuse your readers. Alternate translation: “those who are like God’s children” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>52</sup> and not only for the nation, but so that also the children of God who had been scattered would be gathered together into one.)

### so that also the children of God who had been scattered would be gathered together into one (ULT)

If your language does not use the passive voice, you could say the two passive phrases in this verse with an active form and say who would do those actions. You may need to change the sentence structure in order to do this. Alternate translation: “so that also Jesus would gather together into one the children of God who have scattered themselves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### would be gathered together into one (ULT)

Here, John is leaving out a word that some languages would need in order for the sentence to be complete. The word **people** is implied by the context. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “would be gathered into one people” (See: [Ellipsis](#))



## John 11:53

### Therefore (ULT)

John is telling his readers what the Jewish leaders did as a result of what Caiaphas said in [verses 49-50](#). Alternate translation: “Consequently” (See: [Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship](#) )

#### ULT

**53** Therefore, from that day they plotted so that they might put him to death.

### they plotted (ULT)

The word translated **plotted** could mean: (1) the Jewish leaders made plans together for how to kill Jesus. Alternate translation: “they schemed” (2) the Jewish leaders were determined to kill Jesus. Alternate translation: “they resolved”

## John 11:54

### walked openly among the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** does not refer to the Jewish people in general. It could refer to: (1) the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: “among the Jewish authorities” (2) the people living in Judea. Alternate translation: “among the Judeans” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### walked openly among the Jews (ULT)

Here, **walked openly** is a metaphor for “walked around where everyone could see him.” Alternate translation: “walked around where all the Jews could see him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the country (ULT)

Here, **country** could refer to: (1) an area of land. Alternate translation: “the area” or “the district” (2) the rural area outside cities where fewer people live. Alternate translation: “the countryside” or “the rural area”

### There he stayed with the disciples (ULT)

Jesus and his disciples **stayed** in Ephraim for a short period of time. If your language requires a length of time for **stayed**, you can use a general expression. Alternate translation: “There he stayed with the disciples for a short period of time” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>54</sup> Therefore, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but he departed from there into the country near the wilderness, into a town called Ephraim. There he stayed with the disciples.

## John 11:55

### went up...to Jerusalem (ULT)

The phrase **went up** is used here because Jerusalem is at a higher elevation than the surrounding areas. See how you translated **went up** in [7:10](#).

### the Passover...before the Passover (ULT)

Here, **Passover** is the name of a festival. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Passover Festival ... before the Passover Festival" (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### the country (ULT)

Here, **country** could refer to: (1) an area of land. Alternate translation: "the area" or "the district" (2) the rural area outside cities where fewer people live. Alternate translation: "the countryside" or "the rural area"

#### ULT

**55** Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover so that they might purify themselves.

## John 11:56

### General Information:

The event in [verse 57](#) occurs before the event in this verse. If this order might confuse your readers, you can combine these verses and put the text of [verse 57](#) before the text of this verse. (See: [Order of Events](#))

### ULT

<sup>56</sup> So they were looking for Jesus and speaking one with another as they stood in the temple, "What does it seem to you? That he may certainly not come to the festival?"

### they were looking for...Jesus (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the Jewish people who had traveled to Jerusalem before the Passover Celebration, as described in the previous verse. If this use of **they** might be confusing in your language, you could say the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Jewish people who came to Jerusalem before the Passover Celebration were looking for Jesus" (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#))

### in the temple (ULT)

Since only priests could enter **the temple** building, this refers to **the temple** courtyard. John is using the word for the entire building to refer to one part of it. Alternate translation: "in the courtyard of the temple" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### What does it seem to you (ULT)

This is an idiom used to ask for someone's opinion. If this expression would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "What is your opinion" (See: [Idiom](#))

### That he may certainly not come to the festival (ULT)

The people are using a rhetorical question here to emphasize that they do not think Jesus will **come** to the **Passover** Festival. The speakers here were wondering if Jesus would come to the festival since the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "He will certainly not come to the festival!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### That he may certainly not come to the festival (ULT)

The people are leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could supply these words from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: "Does it seem to you that he will come to the festival?" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## John 11:57

### Now the chief priests (ULT)

This event occurs before that of the previous verse. If this order might confuse your readers, you can combine these verses and put the text of this verse before the text of [verse 56](#). Another option would be to clearly state that this verse refers to an earlier event. Alternate translation: "Earlier the chief priests" (See: [Order of Events](#))

#### ULT

**57** Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given an order so that if anyone might know where he was, he should report it so that they might seize him.

## John 12

### John 12 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 12:38 and 40, which are words from the Old Testament.

Verse 16 is a commentary on these events. It is possible to put this entire verse in parentheses in order to set it apart from the narrative of the story.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Mary anointed Jesus' feet

The Jews would put oil on a person's head to make that person feel welcome and comfortable. They would also put oil on a person's body after the person had died but before they buried the body. But they would never think to put oil on a person's feet, because they thought that feet were dirty.

#### The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey and a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULT without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

#### Glory

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. In this chapter John says that the glory of Jesus is his resurrection (John 12:16).

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### The metaphors of light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: [Metaphor](#) and [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

## Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

### Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in 12:25: “He who loves his life will lose it; but he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” But in 12:26 Jesus explains what it means to keep one’s life for eternal life. ([John 12:25-26](#)).

### “Son of Man”

Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of Man” several times in this chapter. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man](#), [son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 12:1

### General Information:

Jesus is at dinner in Bethany when Mary anoints his feet with oil.

### six days before the Passover (ULT)

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.  
(See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

### had raised from the dead (ULT)

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “had made alive again” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.



## John 12:2

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> So they made him a dinner there, and Martha was serving, but Lazarus was one of those reclining to eat with him.

## John 12:3

### a litra of perfumed oil (ULT)

You may convert this to a modern measure. A “litra” is about one third of a kilogram. Or you may refer to a container that could hold that amount. Alternate translation: “a third of a kilogram of perfume” or “a bottle of perfume” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

### of perfumed oil (ULT)

This is a good-smelling liquid made by using the oils of pleasant smelling plants and flowers.

### of...nard (ULT)

This is a perfume made from a pink, bell-shaped flower in the mountains of Nepal, China, and India. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

### Now the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfumed oil (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Now the scent of her perfume filled the house” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Then Mary, having taken a litra of perfumed oil of very precious pure nard, anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. Now the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfumed oil.

## John 12:4

### **Iscairiot...who was going to betray him (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "the one who later enabled Jesus' enemies to seize him"

#### **ULT**

<sup>4</sup> But Judas Iscairiot, one of his disciples, the one who was going to betray him, says,

## John 12:5

### **For what reason was this perfumed oil not sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor (ULT)**

This is a rhetorical question. You can translate it as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "This perfume could have been sold for three hundred denarii and the money could have been given to the poor!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>5</sup> "For what reason was this perfumed oil not sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?"

### **for...denarii (ULT)**

A denarius was the amount of silver that a common laborer could earn in one day of work. The plural of denarius is **denarii**. (See: [Biblical Money](#))

## John 12:6

**But he said this, not because it was a concern to him about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the moneybag, he was stealing what was put in it (ULT)**

John explains why Judas asked the question about the poor. If your language has a way of indicating background information, you can use it here. (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But he said this, not because it was a concern to him about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the moneybag, he was stealing what was put in it.

**he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief**

Alternate translation: "he said this because he was a thief. He did not care about the poor"

## John 12:7

### Leave her alone, because she has kept it for the day of my burial (ULT)

Jesus implies that the woman's actions can be understood as anticipating his death and **burial**. Alternate translation: "Allow her to show how much she appreciates me! In this way she has prepared my body for burial" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said, "Leave her alone, because she has kept it for the day of my burial."

## John 12:8

### the poor...you always have...with you (ULT)

Jesus implies that there will always be opportunities to help **the poor** people. Alternate translation: “there will always be poor people among you, and you can help them whenever you want” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

### but you do not always have me (ULT)

In this way, Jesus implies that he will die. Alternate translation: “but I will not always be here with you” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 12:9

### Then (ULT)

**Then** is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here John tells about a new group of people that has come to Bethany from Jerusalem. (See: [Background Information](#))

### a large crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a large group of people” or “very many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Then a large crowd of the Jews learned that he is there, and they came, not only for Jesus, but also so that they might see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.



## John 12:10

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Now the chief priests conspired together so that they might also put Lazarus to death;

## John 12:11

### because of him (ULT)

The fact that Lazarus was alive again caused many Jews to believe in Jesus.

#### ULT

**11** for because of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

### believed in Jesus (ULT)

This implies that many of the Jewish people were trusting **in Jesus** as the Son of God. Alternate translation: “were putting their trust in Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 12:12

### General Information:

Jesus enters Jerusalem and the people honor him as a king.

### On the next day (ULT)

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

### a great crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a large group of people” or “very many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> On the next day a great crowd came to the festival. Having heard that Jesus is coming to Jerusalem,

## John 12:13

### Hosanna (ULT)

This means “May God save us now!”

### Blessed is (ULT)

This expresses a desire for God to cause good things to happen to a person.

### ULT

<sup>13</sup> they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet him and cried out, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one coming in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.”

### in the name of the Lord (ULT)

Here the word **name** is a metonym for the person’s authority and power. Alternate translation: “as the representative of the Lord” or “in the power of the Lord” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 12:14

### having found...Jesus...a young donkey, sat on it (ULT)

Here John gives background information that Jesus secures a **donkey**. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> Now Jesus, having found a young donkey, sat on it, just as it is written,

### having found...Jesus...a young donkey, sat on it (ULT)

John implies that Jesus will ride the donkey into Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “he found a young donkey and sat on it, riding it into the city” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “as the prophets wrote in the Scripture” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 12:15

### daughter of Zion (ULT)

Here, **daughter of Zion** here is a metonym that refers to the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "you people of Jerusalem" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**15** "Do not fear, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, sitting on the colt of a donkey."

## John 12:16

### General Information:

John, the writer, interrupts here to give the reader some background information about what the disciples later understood. (See: [Background Information](#))

### His disciples did not understand these things (ULT)

#### ULT

**16** His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

Here the words **these things** refer to the words that the prophet had written about Jesus.

### when Jesus was glorified (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “when God glorified Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### these things...him...they had done (ULT)

The words **these things** refer to what the people did when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (praising him and waving the palm branches).

## John 12:17

### Then (ULT)

The word **Then** is used here to mark a break in the main narrative. Here John explains that many of the people came to meet Jesus because they heard others say that he had raised Lazarus from the dead. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** Then the crowd testified that they had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him up from the dead.

### the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))



## John 12:18

### For this reason...they heard that he had done...sign (ULT)

Alternate translation: "they heard others say that he had done this sign"

### sign (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of signs in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: "significant miracle"

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> For this reason also the crowd went out to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign.

## John 12:19

### You see that you are accomplishing nothing (ULT)

The Pharisees imply here that it might be impossible to stop Jesus.  
Alternate translation: "It seems like we can do nothing to stop him"  
(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the Pharisees said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing! Behold, the world has gone after him!"

### Behold, the world has gone after him (ULT)

The Pharisees use this exaggeration to express their shock that so many people have come out to meet Jesus.  
Alternate translation: "it looks like everyone is becoming his disciple" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym that represents (in exaggeration) all of the people in the world. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the world (ULT)

You may need to make explicit that the hearers would have understood that the Pharisees were speaking only of the people in Judea. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 12:20

### Now certain Greeks (ULT)

This phrase marks the introduction of the Greeks as new characters to the story. (See: [Introduction of New and Old Participants](#))

### so that they might worship at the festival (ULT)

John implies that these “Greeks” were going to **worship** God during the Passover. Alternate translation: “to worship God at the Passover festival” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Now certain Greeks were among those going up so that they might worship at the festival.

## John 12:21

### Bethsaida (ULT)

This was a town in the province of Galilee.

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Therefore, these men went to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

## John 12:22

### Speak to Jesus (ULT)

Philip and Andrew tell Jesus about the Greeks' request to see him. You can translate this by adding the implied words. Alternate translation: "tell Jesus what the Greeks had said" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Philip goes and speaks to Andrew;  
Andrew and Philip go and speak to  
Jesus.

## John 12:23

### General Information:

Jesus begins to respond to Philip and Andrew.

### The hour has come so that the Son of Man might be glorified (ULT)

Jesus implies that it is now the right time for God to honor the **Son of Man** through his upcoming suffering, death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "God will soon honor me when I die and rise again" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [1:51](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Now Jesus answers them, saying,  
"The hour has come so that the Son of  
Man might be glorified."

## John 12:24

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### unless a grain of wheat, having fallen into the earth, dies, it remains by itself; but if it would die, it bears much fruit (ULT)

Here, **a grain of wheat** or “seed” is a metaphor for Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. Just as a seed is planted and grows again into a plant that will bear much fruit, so will many people trust in Jesus after he is killed, buried, and raised back to life. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat, having fallen into the earth, dies, it remains by itself; but if it would die, it bears much fruit.

## John 12:25

### The one loving his life loses it (ULT)

Here, **loving his life** means considering one's own physical life to be more valuable than the lives of others. Alternate translation: "Whoever values his own life more than others will not receive eternal life" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> The one loving his life loses it, but the one hating his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

### the one hating his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (ULT)

Here the one who **hating his life** refers to one who loves his own life less than he loves the lives of others. Alternate translation: "whoever considers the lives of others as more important than his own life will live with God forever" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 12:26

### where I am, there will my servant also be (ULT)

Jesus implies that those who serve him will be with him in heaven.  
Alternate translation: "when I am in heaven, my servant will also be there with me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> If anyone would serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there will my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 12:27

### what might I say? 'Father, save me from this hour (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a rhetorical question. Although Jesus desires to avoid crucifixion, he chooses to be obedient to God and to be killed. Alternate translation: "I will not pray, 'Father, save me from this hour!'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> Now my soul has been troubled, and what might I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this reason I came to this hour.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### this hour (ULT)

Here, **this hour** is a metonym that represents when Jesus would suffer and die on the cross. (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 12:28

### glorify your name (ULT)

Here the word **name** is a metonym that refers to God. Alternate translation: “make your glory known” or “reveal your glory” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

### came...a voice...from heaven (ULT)

This represents God speaking. Alternate translation: “God spoke from the heavens” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### came...a voice...from heaven (ULT)

Sometimes people avoid referring directly to God because they respect him. (See: [Euphemism](#))

## John 12:29

### the...crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in [5:13](#). Alternate translation: “a group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Then the crowd that stood by, also having heard it, were saying that thunder had occurred. Others were saying, “An angel has spoken to him.”

## John 12:30

### General Information:

Jesus explains why the voice spoke from heaven.

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for me, but for you."

## John 12:31

### Now is the judgment of this world (ULT)

Here, **this world** is a metonym that refers to all the people in the world. Alternate translation: “Now is the time for God to judge all of the people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world:  
Now will the ruler of this world be  
thrown out.

### Now will the ruler of this world be thrown out (ULT)

Here, **ruler** refers to Satan. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Now is the time when I will destroy the power of Satan who rules this world” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 12:32

### General Information:

In verse 33 John tells us background information about what Jesus said about being “lifted up” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw everyone to myself.”

### And I, if I am lifted up from the earth (ULT)

Here Jesus refers to his crucifixion. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “When people raise me high on a cross” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### will draw everyone to myself (ULT)

Through his crucifixion, Jesus will provide a way for everyone to trust in him.

## John 12:33

**this...he was saying...to indicate what kind of death he was about to die (ULT)**

John interprets Jesus' words to mean that people will crucify him.  
Alternate translation: "he said this to let the people know how he would die" (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Now he was saying this to indicate what kind of death he was about to die.



## John 12:34

### the crowd (ULT)

See how you translated **crowd** in 5:13. Alternate translation: “the group of people” or “many people” (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

### the law (ULT)

See how you translated **the law** in 1:17. (See: [Collective Nouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Then the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains into eternity. And how do you say that it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

### it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up (ULT)

The phrase **lifted up** means crucified. You may translate this in a way that includes the implied words “on a cross.” Alternate translation: “The Son of Man must be lifted up on a cross” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### the Son of Man...Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in 1:51. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the...the...of Man...Who is this...Son (ULT)

This could mean: (1) they are asking, “What is the identity of this Son of Man?” (2) they are asking, “What kind of Son of Man are you talking about?”

## John 12:35

**The light will still be with you for a short amount of time. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness does not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going**

Here, **light** is a metaphor for Jesus' teachings which reveal the truth of God, and **walking in darkness** is a metaphor that means to live without God's truth. Alternate translation: "Jesus said to them 'My words are like a light to you, to help you understand how to live as God wants you to. I will not be with you much longer. You need to follow my instructions while I am still with you. If you reject my words, it will be like walking in darkness and you cannot see where you are going'" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Jesus then said to them, "The light will be with you yet a short time. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness might not overtake you. And the one walking in the darkness does not know where he goes.

## John 12:36

### While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may be sons of light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for the teachings of Jesus which reveal the truth of God, and **sons of light** is a metaphor for those who accept the message of Jesus and live according to God's truth. Alternate translation: "While I am with you, believe what I teach so that God's truth will be in you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may be sons of light." Jesus said these things, and having departed, was hidden from them.

## John 12:37

### General Information:

This is a break in the main story line as the John begins to explain about the fulfillment of prophecies that had been spoken by the prophet Isaiah.

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> Although he had done so many signs before them, they were not believing in him

## John 12:38

### so that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “in order to fulfill the message of Isaiah the prophet” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> so that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, in which he said: “Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

### Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed (ULT)

This appears in the form of two rhetorical questions to express the prophet’s dismay that the people do not believe his message. You can state these as a single rhetorical question. Alternate translation: “Lord, hardly anyone has believed our message, even though they have seen that you are powerfully able to save them!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### the arm of the Lord (ULT)

This is a metonym that refers to the Lord’s ability to rescue with power. (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 12:39

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>39</sup> For this reason they were not able to believe, for Isaiah had again said,

## John 12:40

### he has hardened their hearts...might understand with their hearts (ULT)

Here, **hearts** is a metonym for a person's mind. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### he has hardened their hearts...might understand with their hearts (ULT)

The phrase **hardened their hearts** is a metaphor for making someone become stubborn. Also, to **understand with their hearts** means to "truly understand." Alternate translation: "he has made them stubborn ... truly understand" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### and would turn (ULT)

Here, **turn** is a metaphor for "repent." Alternate translation: "and they would repent" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> "He has blinded their eyes, and he has hardened their hearts; otherwise they might see with their eyes and might understand with their hearts, and would turn, and I would heal them."

## John 12:41

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>41</sup> Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke about him.



## John 12:42

### so that they would not be banned from the synagogue (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “so people would not stop them from going to the synagogue” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> But nevertheless, even many of the rulers believed in him; but because of the Pharisees, they were not confessing it so that they would not be banned from the synagogue.

## John 12:43

**They loved the praise that comes from people more than the praise that comes from God**

Alternate translation: "they wanted people to praise them more than they wanted God to praise them"

**ULT**

<sup>43</sup> For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

## John 12:44

### General Information:

Now John returns to the main story line. This is another time when Jesus begins to speak to the crowd.

### Jesus...cried out and said (ULT)

Here John implies that a crowd of people had gathered to hear Jesus speak. Alternate translation: “Jesus shouted out to the crowd that had gathered” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**44** Now Jesus cried out and said, “The one believing in me, believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me,

## John 12:45

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in the previous verse. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>45</sup> and the one seeing me sees the one who sent me.

## John 12:46

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the crowd.

### I...as a light...have come (ULT)

Here the **light** is a metaphor for Jesus' example. Alternate translation: "I have come to show the truth" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### might not remain in the darkness (ULT)

Here, **darkness** is a metaphor for living in ignorance of God's truth. Alternate translation: "may not continue to be spiritually blind" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym that represents all of the people in the world. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>46</sup> I have come as a light to the world, so that all who believe in me might not remain in the darkness.

## John 12:47

**And if anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I have not come so that I might judge the world, but so that I might save the world (ULT)**

Here, **judge the world** implies condemnation. Jesus did not come to condemn people. Alternate translation: “And if anyone hears my teaching and rejects it, I do not condemn him. I have not come to condemn people. Instead, I have come to save those who trust in me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>47</sup> And if anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I have not come so that I might judge the world, but so that I might save the world.

## John 12:48

### on the last day (ULT)

Alternate translation: "at the time when God judges people's sins"

#### ULT

**48** The one rejecting me and not receiving my words has one judging him. The word which I have spoken, this will judge him on the last day.

## John 12:49

### the Father...who sent me (ULT)

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in [5:23](#).  
(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**49** For I did not speak from myself, but the Father himself who sent me has given me the command, what I should say and what I should speak.



## John 12:50

### I know that his command is eternal life (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I know that the words that he commanded me to speak are the words that give life forever"

#### ULT

<sup>50</sup> And I know that his command is eternal life. Therefore, what I say, just as the Father has spoken to me, thus I speak."

## John 13

### John 13 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

The events of this chapter are commonly referred to as the last supper or the Lord's supper. This Passover feast in many ways parallels Jesus' sacrifice as the lamb of God. (See: [Passover](#))

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### The washing of feet

People in the ancient Near East thought that feet were very dirty. Only servants would wash people's feet. The disciples did not want Jesus to wash their feet because they considered him their master and themselves his servants, but he wanted to show them that they needed to serve each other. (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

#### I AM

John records Jesus as saying these words four times in this book, once in this chapter. They stand alone as a complete sentence, and they literally translate the Hebrew word for "I AM," by which Yahweh identified himself to Moses. For these reasons, many people believe that when Jesus said these words he was claiming to be Yahweh. (See: [Yahweh](#)).

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### "Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter ([13:31](#)). Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking about someone else. See the discussion of this concept in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. (See: [Son of Man, son of man](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

## John 13:1

### General Information:

It is not yet Passover and Jesus is together with his disciples for supper. These verses explain the setting of the story and give background information about Jesus and Judas. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### Having loved (ULT)

This is the kind of love that comes from God, which is focused on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now before the Festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come so that he might depart from this world to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

## John 13:2

**the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, so that he might betray him (ULT)**

The phrase **put into the heart** is an idiom that means to cause someone to think about something. Alternate translation: “the devil had already caused Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to think about betraying Jesus” (See: [Idiom](#))

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> And while supper was happening, the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, so that he might betray him.

## John 13:3

### Connecting Statement:

Verse 3 continues to tell us background information about what Jesus knew. The action in the story begins in verse 4. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### had given everything to him...into his hands (ULT)

Here, **his hands** is a metonym for power and authority. Alternate translation: “had given him complete power and authority over everything” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### and...he had come from God...was going back to God (ULT)

Jesus had always been with the Father, and would return there after his work on earth was finished.

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> He knew that the Father had given everything to him, into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God.

## John 13:4

### He gets up from supper and takes off his outer clothing (ULT)

Because the region was very dusty, it was customary for the host of a dinner to provide a servant to wash the feet of the guests. Jesus took off his **outer clothing** so he would look like a servant.

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> He gets up from supper and takes off his outer clothing, and having taken a towel, he wrapped it around himself.

## John 13:5

### began to wash the feet of the disciples (ULT)

Because the region was very dusty, it was customary for the host of a dinner to provide a servant **to wash the feet** of the guests. Jesus did the work of the servant by washing the disciples' feet.

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Then he pours water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them with the towel that was tied around himself.

## John 13:6

### Lord, do you wash my feet (ULT)

Peter's question shows that he is not willing for Jesus to wash his feet. Alternate translation: "Lord, it is not right for you to wash the feet of me, a sinner!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Then coming to Simon Peter, he says to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"



## John 13:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered and said to him,  
"What I do you do not understand now,  
but you will understand after this."

## John 13:8

### **If I do not wash you, you have no share with me (ULT)**

Jesus states two negatives to convince Peter to allow him to wash his feet. Alternate translation: "I must wash your feet so that you can have fellowship with me" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>8</sup> Peter says to him, "You may certainly not wash my feet into eternity." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."

### **If I do not wash you, you have no share with me (ULT)**

Jesus implies that Peter must let him wash his feet if he wants to continue being a disciple. Alternate translation: "If I wash you, you will always belong with me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 13:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter says to him, “Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.”

## John 13:10

### General Information:

Jesus uses the word **you** to refer to all of his disciples.

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to Simon Peter.

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Jesus says to him, "The one who has been washed has no need, except to wash his feet, but he is completely clean, and you are clean, but not all."

### The one who has been washed has no need, except to wash his feet (ULT)

Here, **been washed** is a metaphor that means that God has cleansed a person spiritually. Alternate translation: "If anyone has already received God's forgiveness, he now only needs to receive cleansing from his daily sins" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 13:11

### Not all are clean (ULT)

Jesus implies that the one who will betray him, Judas, has not trusted in him. Therefore God has not forgiven him of his sins. Alternate translation: "Not all of you have received God's forgiveness" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** (For he knew who is betraying him; for this reason he said, "Not all are clean.")

## John 13:12

### Do you understand what I have done for you (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question so Jesus can emphasize the importance of what he is teaching his disciples.  
Alternate translation: "You need to understand what I have done for you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> So when he had washed their feet and taken his garments and sat down again, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you?"

## John 13:13

### You call me 'teacher' and 'Lord' (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that his disciples have great respect for him.  
Alternate translation: "You show me great respect when you call me 'teacher' and 'Lord.'" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**13** You call me 'teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are speaking correctly, because I am.

## John 13:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> If I then, the Lord and the Teacher,  
have washed your feet, you also ought  
to wash the feet of one another.



## John 13:15

### you also would do just as I did to you (ULT)

Jesus implies that his disciples should be willing to follow his example and serve one another. Alternate translation: "you should also humbly serve each other" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example so that you also would do just as I did to you.

## John 13:16

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to his disciples.

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### greater than (ULT)

one who is more important or more powerful, or one who should have an easier life or a more pleasant life

#### ULT

**16** Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

## John 13:17

### you are blessed (ULT)

Here, **are blessed** means good, beneficial things will happen to them. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**17** If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

## John 13:18

### so that the scripture might be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “this is in order to fulfill the scripture” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### The one eating bread with me lifted up his heel against me (ULT)

Here the phrase **eating bread with me** is an idiom for someone who pretends to be a friend. The phrase **lifted up his heel** is also an idiom, which means someone who has become an enemy. If you have idioms in your language that carry these meanings, you can use them here. Alternate translation: “The one who has pretended to be my friend has turned out to be an enemy” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

**18** I am not speaking about all of you; I know whom I have chosen—but so that the scripture might be fulfilled: ‘The one eating bread with me lifted up his heel against me.’

## John 13:19

### From this moment I tell you, before it happens (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I am telling you now what is going to happen before it happens"

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> From this moment I tell you, before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe that I am.

### I am (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as "I AM." (2) Jesus is saying, "I am the one I claim to be."

## John 13:20

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, the one receiving whomever I might send receives me, and the one receiving me receives the one who sent me."

## John 13:21

### was troubled (ULT)

was concerned, upset

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Having said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and he testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you that one of you will betray me."

## John 13:22

**The disciples began looking at each other, wondering about whom he was speaking (ULT)**

The disciples looked at each other and wondered: "Who will betray Jesus?"

### ULT

<sup>22</sup> The disciples began looking at each other, wondering about whom he was speaking.



## John 13:23

### one of his disciples...whom Jesus loved (ULT)

This refers to John.

### reclining to eat (ULT)

During the time of Christ, Jews would often dine together in the Greek style, in which they lay on their sides on low couches. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the chest of Jesus (ULT)

Lying with one's head against the side of another diner in the Greek style was considered to be the place of greatest friendship with him.

### loved (ULT)

This kind of love comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Now one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining to eat against the chest of Jesus.

## John 13:24

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, Simon Peter motioned to this one to ask, "Who is it about whom he is speaking?"

## John 13:25

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>25</sup> So having thus leaned back against the chest of Jesus, that one said to him, "Lord, who is it?"

## John 13:26

### Iscariot (ULT)

This may indicate that Judas was from the village of Kerieth. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, "It is that one to whom I, having dipped the piece of bread, will hand it over and give it to him." Then having dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot.

## John 13:27

### And after the bread (ULT)

The words “Judas took” are understood from the context. Alternate translation: “Then after Judas took the bread” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### Satan then entered into him (ULT)

This is an idiom that means **Satan** took complete control of Judas. Alternate translation: “Satan then took control of him” or “Satan then started to command Judas” (See: [Idiom](#))

### Satan...Therefore...Jesus...says to him (ULT)

Here Jesus is speaking to Judas.

### What you are doing, do quickly (ULT)

Alternate translation: “Do quickly what you are planning to do!”

#### ULT

**27** And after the bread, Satan then entered into him. Therefore, Jesus says to him, “What you are doing, do quickly.”

## John 13:28

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>28</sup> But none of those reclining to eat  
knew why he said this to him.

## John 13:29

### so that he might give something to the poor (ULT)

You can translate this as a direct quote: "Go and give some money to the poor."

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> For some were thinking that, since Judas had the moneybag, Jesus is saying to him, "Buy what we need to have for the festival," or so that he might give something to the poor.

## John 13:30

### he went out immediately. Now it was night (ULT)

John seems to draw attention here to the fact that Judas will do his evil or “dark” deed in the darkness of the **night**. Alternate translation: “he went out immediately into the dark night” (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Therefore, having received the bread, he went out immediately. Now it was night.



## John 13:31

### Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now people are about to see how the Son of Man will receive honor and how God will receive honor through what the Son of Man is doing" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Therefore, when he had gone out, Jesus says, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him."

### the Son of Man has been glorified (ULT)

Jesus is speaking of himself in the third person. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, have been glorified" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

### the Son of Man (ULT)

See how you translated it in [1:51](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 13:32

### God will glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately (ULT)

The word **him** refers to the Son of Man. The word **himself** is a reflexive pronoun that refers to God. Alternate translation: "God himself will immediately give honor to the Son of Man" (See: [Reflexive Pronouns](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> And God will glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately.

## John 13:33

### Little children (ULT)

Jesus uses the term **Little children** to communicate that he loves the disciples as though they were his children.

### just as I said to the Jews (ULT)

Here, **Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: “just as I said to the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**33** Little children, I am with you for still a short time. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I go, you are not able to come.’ Now I also say this to you.

## John 13:34

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.

### you would love (ULT)

This is the kind of **love** that comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> I give to you a new commandment, so that you would love one another; just as I have loved you, so also you would love one another.

## John 13:35

### everyone (ULT)

You may need to make explicit that this exaggeration refers only to those people who see how the disciples love each other. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

## John 13:36

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>36</sup> Simon Peter says to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I go, you are not able to follow me now, but you will follow later.”

## John 13:37

### my life...I will lay down (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will give up my life" or "I will die"

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> Peter says to him, "Lord, why am I not able to follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

## John 13:38

### Will you lay down your life for me (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus' statement. Alternate translation: "You say that you will die for me, but the truth is that you will not!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster may certainly not crow before which you will deny me three times."

### the rooster may certainly not crow before which you will deny me three times (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you will say that you do not know me three times before the rooster crows"



## John 14

### John 14 General Notes

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “My Father’s house”

Jesus used these words to speak of heaven, where God lives, not of the temple. (See: [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#))

#### The Holy Spirit

Jesus told his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (John 14:16) who is always with God’s people to help them and to speak to God for them, He is also the Spirit of truth (John 14:17) who tells God’s people what is true about God so they know him better and serve him well. (See: [Holy Spirit](#), [Spirit of God](#), [Spirit of the Lord](#), [Spirit](#))

## John 14:1

### Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.

### ULT

<sup>1</sup> "Do not let your heart be troubled.  
You believe in God; believe also in me.

### Do not let your heart be troubled (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "Stop being so anxious and worried" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 14:2

### In the house of my Father are many rooms (ULT)

Alternate translation: "There are many places to live in my Father's house"

### In the house of my Father (ULT)

This refers to heaven, where God lives.

### of...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### many rooms (ULT)

Here, **rooms** can refer to single rooms, or to larger dwellings.

### I am going to prepare a place for you (ULT)

Jesus is **going to prepare a place** in heaven for every person who trusts in him. The **you** is plural and refers to all his disciples. (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> In the house of my Father are many rooms. But if not, I would have told you, for I am going to prepare a place for you.

## John 14:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, so that where I am you also may be.

## John 14:4

### the way (ULT)

This could be: (1) a metaphor that refers to “the way to God.” (2) a metaphor that refers to “the one who takes people to God.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> And you know the way where I am going.”

## John 14:5

### How are we able to know the way (ULT)

Alternate translation: "how can we know how to get there?"

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Thomas says to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How are we able to know the way?"

## John 14:6

### the truth (ULT)

This could be: (1) a metaphor that means “the true person.” (2) a metaphor that means “the one who speaks true words about God.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Jesus says to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

### the life (ULT)

This is a metaphor that means Jesus can give life to people. Alternate translation: “the one who can make people alive” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### no one comes to the Father except through me (ULT)

People can come to God and live with him only by trusting Jesus. Alternate translation: “No one can come to the Father and live with him unless he comes through me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 14:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> If you had known me, you will know my Father also. And from now on you know him and have seen him.”



## John 14:8

### Lord, show us the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Philip says to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.”

## John 14:9

### So long a time I am with you, and you do not know me, Philip (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus' words. Alternate translation: "Philip, I have been with you disciples already for a very long time. You should know me by now!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Jesus says to him, "So long a time I am with you, and you do not know me, Philip? The one who has seen me has seen the Father. How do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

### The one who has seen me has seen the Father (ULT)

To see Jesus, who is God the Son, is to see God **the Father**. **Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### How do you say, 'Show us the Father (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize Jesus' words to Philip. Alternate translation: "So you really should not be saying, 'Show us the Father!'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 14:10

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus asks Philip a question and then he continues to speak to all of his disciples.

### Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me (ULT)

#### ULT

**10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from myself, but the Father remaining in me is doing his work.

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize Jesus' words to Philip. Alternate translation: "You really should believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### The words that I say to you I do not speak from my own authority

Alternate translation: "What I am telling you is not from me" or "The words I tell you are not from me"

### I am...The words that...say to you (ULT)

Here, **you** is plural. Jesus is now speaking to all of his disciples.

### from myself (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [5:30](#). Alternate translation: "on my own authority" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 14:11

### I am in the Father, and the Father is in me (ULT)

This is an idiom that means God the Father and Jesus have a unique relationship. Alternate translation: "I am one with the Father, and the Father is one with me" or "my Father and I are just as though we were one" (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. But if not, believe because of the works themselves.

## John 14:12

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### the one believing in me (ULT)

This means to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title that describes the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**12** Truly, truly, I say to you, the one believing in me, the works that I do, he also will do, and he will do greater than these, because I am going to the Father.

## John 14:13

### whatever you might ask in my name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus.  
Alternate translation: "Whatever you ask, using my authority" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**13** And whatever you might ask in my name, this I will do so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

### so that the Father may be glorified in the Son (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so I can show everyone how great my Father is" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Father...Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 14:14

### If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus.

Alternate translation: "If you ask me anything as one of my followers, I will do it" or "Whatever you ask of me, I will do it because you belong to me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

## John 14:15

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>15</sup> If you love me, you will keep my commandments,



## John 14:16

### Comforter (ULT)

This refers to the Holy Spirit.

#### ULT

**16** and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter so that he may be with you into eternity—

## John 14:17

### Spirit of Truth (ULT)

This refers to the Holy Spirit who teaches people what is true about God.

### whom the world is not able to receive (ULT)

Here the **world** is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: “whom the unbelieving people in this world will never welcome” or “whom those who oppose God will not accept” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**17** the Spirit of Truth whom the world is not able to receive, because it does not see him nor know him. You know him, for he remains with you and will be in you.

## John 14:18

### I will not leave you as orphans (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that he **will not leave** his disciples with no one to care for them. Alternate translation: "I will not leave you with no one to care for you" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come back to you.

## John 14:19

### the world (ULT)

Here the **world** is a metonym that represents the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: “the unbelievers” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**19** Yet a short time and the world no longer sees me, but you see me.  
Because I live, you will also live.

## John 14:20

### On...you will know that I am...my Father (ULT)

God the **Father** and Jesus live as one person. Alternate translation: "you will know that my Father and I are just like one person"

### my...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### you are in me, and that I am in you

Alternate translation: "you and I are just like one person"

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

## John 14:21

### loving (ULT)

This kind of love comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### and the one loving me will be loved by my Father (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “and my Father will love everyone who loves me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### my...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**21** The one having my commandments and keeping them, this is the one loving me, and the one loving me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and I will show myself to him.”

## John 14:22

### Judas (not Iscariot) (ULT)

This refers to another disciple whose name was Judas, not to the disciple who was from the village of Kerioth who betrayed Jesus.  
(See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### why is it that you are about to show yourself to us (ULT)

Here the word **show** refers to revealing how wonderful Jesus is. Alternate translation: “why will you reveal yourself only to us” or “why will you only let us see how wonderful you are”

### not to the world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym that represents the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: “not to those who do not belong to God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) says to him, “Lord, why is it that you are about to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

## John 14:23

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to Judas (not Iscariot).

### If anyone loves me, he will keep my word (ULT)

Alternate translation: "The one who loves me will do what I have told him to do"

### loves (ULT)

This kind of love comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### we will come to him, and we will make residence with him (ULT)

The Father and the Son will share life with those who obey what Jesus commands. Alternate translation: "we will come to live with him, and will have a personal relationship with him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and we will make residence with him."



## John 14:24

### **The one...me...word that you hear is not mine, but of the Father who sent (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "the things I have told you are not things that I have decided to say on my own"

### **The one...word (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "the message"

### **that you hear (ULT)**

Here when Jesus says **you** he is speaking to all of his disciples.

### **of the Father who sent me (ULT)**

Here, this phrase refers to God. See how you translated it in 5:23. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **the...of...Father (ULT)**

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>24</sup> The one not loving me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine, but of the Father who sent me.

## John 14:25

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>25</sup> I have said these things to you while I am remaining with you.

## John 14:26

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Now the Comforter—the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything, and he will remind you of everything that I said to you.

## John 14:27

### world (ULT)

Here, the **world** is a metonym that represents those people who do not love God. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "So stop being anxious, and do not be afraid" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**27** I leave you peace; I give you my peace. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.

## John 14:28

### you loved (ULT)

This kind of love comes from God and desires the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### I am going to the Father (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that he will return to his **Father**. Alternate translation: “I am going back to the Father” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the Father is greater than I am (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that the Father has greater authority than the Son while the Son is on the earth. Alternate translation: “the Father has greater authority than I have here” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**28** You heard that I said to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I am.

## John 14:29

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>29</sup> And now I have told you before it happens so that, when it may happen, you will believe.

## John 14:30

### ruler of this world (ULT)

Here, the **ruler** refers to Satan. See how you translated this in [John 12:31](#). Alternate translation: “Satan who rules this world”

### is coming...the ruler of this world (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that Satan **is coming** to attack him. Alternate translation: “Satan is coming to attack me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> I will not speak with you much longer, for the ruler of this world is coming. And he has nothing in me,

## John 14:31

### so that the world might know (ULT)

Here the **world** is a metonym for the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: “in order that the ones who do not belong to God may know” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**31** but so that the world might know that I love the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do. Get up. Let us go from here.”



## John 15

### John 15 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Vine

Jesus used the vine as a metaphor for himself. This is because the vine of the grape plant is what takes water and minerals from the ground to the leaves and grapes. Without the vine, the grapes and leaves die. He wanted his followers to know that unless they loved and obeyed him, they would be unable to do anything that pleased God. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 15:1

### Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

### I am the true vine (ULT)

Here the **true vine** is a metaphor. Jesus compares himself to a vine or a vine stem. He is the source of life that causes people to live in a way that pleases God. Alternate translation: “I am like a vine that produces good fruit” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my Father is the gardener (ULT)

Here, the **gardener** is a metaphor. A “gardener” is a person who takes care of the vine to ensure it is as fruitful as possible. Alternate translation: “my Father is like a gardener” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### my Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 15:2

### Every branch in me not bearing fruit, he takes...away (ULT)

Here, **Every branch** represents people, and **bearing fruit** represents living in a way that pleases God. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he takes it away (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he cuts it off and takes it away"

### Every...bearing fruit...one that...he prunes it (ULT)

Alternate translation: "he trims every branch that bears fruit"

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Every branch in me not bearing fruit, he takes it away; and every one that bears fruit, he prunes it so that it might bear more fruit.

## John 15:3

### You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you (ULT)

The implied metaphor here is the **clean** branches that have already been “pruned.” Alternate translation: “It is as if you have already been pruned and are clean branches because you have obeyed what I have taught you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you.

### You...to you (ULT)

The words **You** and **you** in this verse are plural and refer to the disciples of Jesus. (See: [Forms of You](#))

## John 15:4

### Remain in me, and I in you

Alternate translation: "If you remain joined to me, I will remain joined to you" or "Remain joined to me, and I will remain joined to you"

### in...unless...you remain...me (ULT)

By remaining in Christ, those who belong to him depend on him for everything. Alternate translation: "unless you stay joined to me and depend upon me for everything"

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is not able to bear fruit from itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me.

## John 15:5

### I am the vine; you are the branches (ULT)

Here, the **vine** is a metaphor that represents Jesus, and the **branches** is a metaphor that represent those who trust in Jesus and belong to him. Alternate translation: “I am like a vine, and you are like branches that are attached to the vine” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches.  
The one remaining in me and I in him,  
he bears much fruit, for without me you  
can do nothing.

### The one remaining in me and I in him (ULT)

Here Jesus implies that his followers are joined to him as he is joined to God. Alternate translation: “The person who stays joined to me, as I stay joined to my Father” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he bears much fruit (ULT)

The implied metaphor here is the fruitful branch that represents the believer who pleases God. Just as a branch that is attached to the vine will bear **much fruit**, those who stay joined to Jesus will do many things that please God. Alternate translation: “that person will bear much fruit” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 15:6

### he is thrown outside like a branch and is dried up (ULT)

Here the implied metaphor is the unfruitful branch that represents those who do not stay joined to Jesus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### he is thrown outside like a branch and is dried up (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the vinedresser throws him away like a branch and he dries up” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### they are burned up (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the fire burns them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown outside like a branch and is dried up, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned up.

## John 15:7

### ask whatever you desire (ULT)

Jesus implies that believers must ask God to answer their prayers.  
Alternate translation: "ask God whatever you wish" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, ask whatever you desire, and it will be done for you.

### it will be done for you (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he will do it for you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))



## John 15:8

### My Father has been glorified in this (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "It causes people to honor my Father" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### My Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### that you would bear much fruit (ULT)

Here, **fruit** is a metaphor for living to please God. Alternate translation: "that you live in a way that pleases him" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### you would be my disciples (ULT)

Alternate translation: "show you are my disciples" or "demonstrate you are my disciples"

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> My Father has been glorified in this, that you would bear much fruit and you would be my disciples.

## John 15:9

### Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you (ULT)

Jesus shares the love that God the Father has for him with those who trust in him. **Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### Remain in my love

Alternate translation: "Continue to accept my love"

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love.

## John 15:10

**If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept the commandments of the Father and remain in his love (ULT)**

When Jesus' followers obey him, they show their love for him.

Alternate translation: "When you do the things I have told you to do, you are living in my love, just as I obey my Father and live in his love" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept the commandments of the Father and remain in his love.

## of the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 15:11

**I have spoken these things to you so that my joy will be in you**

Alternate translation: "I have told you these things so that you will have the same kind of joy that I have"

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> I have spoken these things to you so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.

**and your joy might be complete (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that you will be completely joyful" or "so that your joy may have nothing missing" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 15:12

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> This is my commandment, that you would love one another just as I have loved you.

## John 15:13

### life (ULT)

This refers to physical life.

#### ULT

**13** No one has greater love than this—that he would lay down his life for his friends.

## John 15:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**14** You are my friends if you do the things that I command you.

## John 15:15

**all the things I heard from my Father, I have made known to you (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "I have told you everything my Father told me"

**my Father (ULT)**

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### ULT

<sup>15</sup> No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, for all the things I heard from my Father, I have made known to you.



## John 15:16

### You did not choose me (ULT)

Jesus implies that his followers did not decide on their own to become his disciples. Alternate translation: “You did not decide to become my disciples” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### would go and would bear fruit (ULT)

Here, **fruit** is a metaphor that represents a life that is pleasing to God. Alternate translation: “live lives that please God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### and...your fruit would remain (ULT)

Alternate translation: “that the results of what you do should last forever”

### whatever you would ask of the Father in my name, he would give it to you (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: “because you ask with my authority, whatever you ask of the Father, he will give it to you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### of the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**16** You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you would go and would bear fruit, and your fruit would remain, so that whatever you would ask of the Father in my name, he would give it to you.

## John 15:17

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**17** These things I command you so that you would love one another.

## John 15:18

### the world (ULT)

Here, the **world** refers to the people who do not belong to God and are opposed to him. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**18** If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you.

## John 15:19

### the world (ULT)

Here, the **world** refers to the people who do not belong to God and are opposed to him. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### would love (ULT)

This refers to human, brotherly **love** or love for a friend or family member.

#### ULT

**19** If you were from the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not from the world, but I chose you from the world, on account of this the world hates you.

## John 15:20

### Remember the word that I said to you (ULT)

Here, **word** is a metonym for the message of Jesus. Alternate translation: "Remember the message that I spoke to you" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

## John 15:21

### because of my name (ULT)

Here, **because of my name** is a metonym that represents Jesus. People will make his followers suffer because they belong to him. Alternate translation: “because you belong to me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in [4:34](#). (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> But they will do all these things to you because of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me.

## John 15:22

**If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin (ULT)**

Jesus implies here that he has shared God's message with those who do not trust him. Alternate translation: "Because I have come and told them God's message, they have no excuse when God judges them for their sins" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

## John 15:23

### The one hating me also hates my Father (ULT)

To hate God the Son is to hate God the Father.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> The one hating me also hates my Father.



## John 15:24

**If I had not done the works that no one else did among them, they would have no sin...but (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Because I have done among them the works that no one else did, they have had sin, and" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### ULT

<sup>24</sup> If I had not done the works that no one else did among them, they would have no sin, but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father.

**they would have no sin (ULT)**

"they would not have any sin." See how you translated this in [John 15:22](#).

**they have seen and hated both me and my Father**

To hate God the Son is to hate God the Father.

## John 15:25

### this is in order that the word that is written in their law might be fulfilled (ULT)

Here, **word** is a metonym for the entire message of God. Alternate translation: "in order that the prophecy in their law might be fulfilled" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> But this is in order that the word that is written in their law might be fulfilled, 'They hated me without a cause.'

### this is in order that the word that is written in their law might be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "this happened in order to fulfill the prophecy in their law" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### law (ULT)

Here, **law** refers generally to the entire Old Testament, which contained all of God's instructions for his people.

## John 15:26

### will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of Truth...he will testify about me (ULT)

God the Father sent God the Spirit to show the world that Jesus is God the Son.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the Spirit of Truth (ULT)

This is a title for the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “the Spirit who tells the truth about God and me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>26</sup> When the Comforter whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of Truth who goes out from the Father—may come, he will testify about me.

## John 15:27

### you...also...are...testifying (ULT)

Here, **testifying** means they are telling others about Jesus. Alternate translation: "you also must tell everyone what you know about me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> But you are also testifying, because you are with me from the beginning.

### the beginning (ULT)

Here the **beginning** is a metonym that means the first days of Jesus' ministry. Alternate translation: "the very first days when I began teaching the people and doing miracles" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 16

### John 16 General Notes

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### The Holy Spirit

Jesus told his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (John 14:16) who is always with God's people to help them and to speak to God for them, He is also the Spirit of truth (John 14:17) who tells God's people what is true about God so they know him better and serve him well. (See: [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#))

#### “The hour is coming”

Jesus used these words to begin prophecies about times that could be shorter or longer than sixty minutes. “The hour” in which people would persecute his followers (John 16:2) was days, weeks, and years long, but “the hour” in which his disciples would scatter and leave him alone (John 16:32) was less than sixty minutes long. (See: [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Simile

Jesus said that just as a woman is in pain as she gives birth to a baby and his followers would be sad when he died. But the woman is glad after the baby is born, and his followers would be happy when he became alive again. (See: [Simile](#))

## John 16:1

### Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> "I have spoken these things to you so that you might not fall away.

### you might not fall away (ULT)

Here the phrase **fall away** implies to stop putting one's trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "you will not stop trusting in me because of the difficulties you must face" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 16:2

**you...an hour is coming for everyone who kills...to think he offers a service to God (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "it will someday happen that a person will kill you and think he is doing something good for God."

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> They will cause you to be put out of the synagogues. But an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think he offers a service to God.

## John 16:3

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> And they will do these things, because they have not known the Father nor me.



## John 16:4

### when their hour may come (ULT)

Here, **hour** is a metonym that refers to the time when people will persecute Jesus' followers. Alternate translation: "when they cause you to suffer" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### in the beginning (ULT)

Here, **the beginning** is a metonym that refers to the first days of Jesus' ministry. Alternate translation: "when you first started following me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> But I have spoken these things to you so that when their hour may come, you may remember that I told you about them. But I did not tell you these things in the beginning, because I was with you.

## John 16:5

### the one who sent me (ULT)

Here, **the one who sent me** refers to God. See how you translated it in 4:34. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> But now I go to the one who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

## John 16:6

### sadness has filled your heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "you are now very sad" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But because I have said these things to you, sadness has filled your heart.

## John 16:7

### if...I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “the Comforter will come to you only if I go away” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### Comforter (ULT)

This is a title for the Holy Spirit who will be with the disciples after Jesus goes away. See how you translated this in [John 14:26](#).

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I would go away. For if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

## John 16:8

### the Comforter will reprove the world about sin (ULT)

When the Holy Spirit came, he began to show people that they are sinners.

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> And having come, the Comforter will reprove the world about sin and about righteousness and about judgment—

### the Comforter (ULT)

This refers to the Holy Spirit. See how you translated this in [John 14:16](#).

### world (ULT)

This is a metonym that refers to the people in the world.(See: [Metonymy](#))

## John 16:9

**about sin, because they do not believe in me  
(ULT)**

Alternate translation: "they are guilty of sin because they do not trust in me"

**ULT**

<sup>9</sup> about sin, because they do not believe in me;

## John 16:10

### about righteousness...because I go to the Father, and you will no longer see me (ULT)

Alternate translation: "when I return to God, and they see me no more, they will know that I did the right things"

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> and about righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will no longer see me;

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 16:11

### about...judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged (ULT)

Alternate translation: "God will hold them accountable and will punish them for their sins, just as he will punish Satan, the one who rules this world"

#### ULT

<sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

### the ruler of this world (ULT)

Here, **the ruler** refers to Satan. See how you translated this in [John 12:31](#). Alternate translation: "Satan who rules this world"



## John 16:12

### many more things...to say to you (ULT)

Alternate translation: "additional messages for you" or "more words for you"

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> I have many more things to say to you, but you are not able to bear them now.

## John 16:13

### the Spirit of Truth (ULT)

This is a name for the Holy **Spirit** who will tell the people the truth about God.

### he will guide you into the whole truth (ULT)

Here, **truth** refers to spiritual truth. Alternate translation: “he will teach you all the spiritual truth you need to know” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### from himself (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [5:19](#). Alternate translation: “on his own authority” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### he will say whatever he will hear (ULT)

Jesus implies that God the Father will speak to the Spirit. Alternate translation: “he will say whatever God tells him to say” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**13** But when that one, the Spirit of Truth, comes, he will guide you into the whole truth, for he will not speak from himself, but he will say whatever he will hear, and he will announce to you things that are coming.

## John 16:14

**he will take from the things of mine and he will announce it to you (ULT)**

Here, **things of mine** refers to Jesus' teaching and mighty works.  
 Alternate translation: "he will reveal to you that what I have said and done are indeed true" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> That one will glorify me, because he will take from the things of mine and he will announce it to you.

## John 16:15

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

**he will take from the things of mine and he will announce it to you (ULT)**

The Holy Spirit will tell people that the words and works of Jesus are true. Alternate translation: “the Holy Spirit will tell everyone that my words and works are true” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>15</sup> Everything, as much as the Father has, is mine. Therefore, I said that he will take from the things of mine and he will announce it to you.

## John 16:16

### in a little while (ULT)

Alternate translation: "soon" or "before much time passes"

### And in a little while...again (ULT)

Alternate translation: "again, before much time passes"

#### ULT

**16** And in a little while you no longer see me, and again a little while and you will see me."

## John 16:17

### General Information:

There is a break in Jesus' speaking as his disciples ask each other about what Jesus meant.

### A little while and you do not see me (ULT)

The disciples did not understand that this refers to Jesus' death on the cross.

### A little while and...me...again...you will see (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) Jesus' resurrection. (2) Jesus' coming at the end of time.

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**17** Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while and you do not see me, and again a little while and you will see me,' and, 'Because I go to the Father'?"

## John 16:18

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>18</sup> Therefore they were saying, "What is this 'A little while'? We do not know what he is saying."

## John 16:19

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.

**Are you seeking among yourselves concerning this because I said, 'A little while and you do not see me, and again a little while and you will see me (ULT)**

Jesus uses this question so his disciples will focus on what he has just told them, so he can explain further. Alternate translation: "You are asking yourselves what I meant when I said, 'A little while and you do not see me, and again a little while and you will see me.'" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Jesus knew that they wanted to question him, and he said to them, "Are you seeking among yourselves concerning this because I said, 'A little while and you do not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'?"



## John 16:20

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### but the world will be glad (ULT)

Here the **world** is a metonym for the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: “but the people who oppose God will be glad” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### but your sorrow will become joy (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “but your sadness will become joy” or “but afterwards instead of being sad you will be very happy” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will be glad. You will be grieved, but your sorrow will become joy.

## John 16:21

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>21</sup> When a woman gives birth, she has pain because her hour has come, but when she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers her suffering, because of the joy that a man has been born into the world.

## John 16:22

### your heart will be glad (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "you will be very happy" or "you will be very joyful" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> And so you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your heart will be glad, and no one takes away your joy from you.

## John 16:23

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this is in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

### whatever you might ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you (ULT)

Here the word **name** is a metonym that refers to the person and authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: “if you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you because you belong to me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### of...Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### in my name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that refers to the person and authority of Jesus. The Father will honor the requests of the believers because of their relationship with Jesus. Alternate translation: “because you are my followers” or “on my authority” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**23** And in that day you will ask me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you might ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

## John 16:24

### your joy may be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will give you great joy" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive so that your joy may be fulfilled.

## John 16:25

### in figures of speech (ULT)

Alternate translation: "in language that is not clear"

### an hour is coming (ULT)

Alternate translation: "it will soon happen"

### to you...I will tell...plainly about the Father (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I will tell you about the Father in a way that you will clearly understand."

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> I have said these things to you in figures of speech; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but instead I will tell you plainly about the Father.

## John 16:26

### you will ask in my name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym for the person and authority of Jesus.  
 Alternate translation: "you will ask because you belong to me" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**26** In that day you will ask in my name,  
 and I do not say to you that I will ask  
 the Father on behalf of you,

## John 16:27

### himself...the Father...loves you, because you have loved me (ULT)

When a person **loves** Jesus, the Son, they also love the Father, because the Father and Son are one.

### the Father (ULT)

Here, **Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.



## John 16:28

### I came from the Father ... I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father

After his death and resurrection, Jesus will return to God the Father.

### the Father...the Father (ULT)

Here, **Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym that refers to the people who live in the world. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> I came from the Father, and I have come into the world. Again, I am leaving the world, and I am going to the Father."

## John 16:29

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>29</sup> His disciples say, “See, now you are speaking plainly, and you are not speaking in figures of speech.”

## John 16:30

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things, and you do not have need that anyone would question you. In this we believe that you have come from God.”

## John 16:31

### Just now do you believe (ULT)

This remarks appears in the form of a question to show that Jesus is puzzled that his disciples are only now ready to trust him. Alternate translation: "So, now you finally place your trust in me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "Just now do you believe?"

## John 16:32

### you might be scattered (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “others will scatter you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Behold, an hour is coming—and has come—that you might be scattered, each one to his own, and you might leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

## John 16:33

### so that you might have peace in me (ULT)

Here, **peace** refers to inner peace. Alternate translation: “so that you may have inner peace because of your relationship with me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### I have conquered the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** refers to the troubles and persecution that believers will endure from those who oppose God. Alternate translation: “I have conquered the troubles of this world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**33** I have spoken these things to you so that you might have peace in me. In the world you have troubles, but have courage. I have conquered the world.”

## **John 17**

### **John 17 General Notes**

#### **Structure and formatting**

This chapter forms one long prayer.

#### **Special concepts in this chapter**

##### **Glory**

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. In this chapter Jesus asks God to show his followers his true glory (John 17:1).

##### **Jesus is eternal**

Jesus existed before God created the world (John 17:5). John wrote about this in John 1:1.

#### **Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter**

##### **Prayer**

Jesus is God's one and only Son (John 3:16), so he could pray differently from the way other people pray. He used many words that sounded like commands. Your translation should make Jesus sound like a son speaking with love and respect to his father and telling him what the father needs to do so that the father will be happy.

## John 17:1

### Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus had been speaking to his disciples, but now he begins to pray to God.

### having lifted up his eyes to the heaven (ULT)

To “lift up the eyes” is an idiom that means to look upward. Alternate translation: “he looked up to the sky” (See: [Idiom](#))

### heaven (ULT)

This refers to the sky.

### Father...Son (ULT)

**Father** and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the hour has come (ULT)

Here the word **hour** is a metonym that refers to the time for Jesus to suffer and die. Alternate translation: “it is time for me to suffer and die” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Jesus said these things and, having lifted up his eyes to the heaven, he said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so that the Son might glorify you,



## John 17:2

### over all flesh (ULT)

This refers to all people.

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> just as you gave him authority over all flesh, so that everyone whom you have given him, he would give to them eternal life.

## John 17:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life, that they would know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.

## John 17:4

### the work...that you have given me so that I might do it (ULT)

Here, **work** is a metonym that refers to Jesus' entire earthly ministry. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> I glorified you on the earth, having completed the work that you have given me so that I might do it.

## John 17:5

**Father, glorify me along with yourself with the glory that I had with you before the world was made (ULT)**

Jesus had glory with God the Father “before the world was made” because Jesus is God the Son. Alternate translation: “Father, give me and you honor by bringing me into your presence as we were before we made the world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me along with yourself with the glory that I had with you before the world was made.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 17:6

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to pray for his disciples.

### I revealed your name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that refers to the person of God. Alternate translation: “I taught them who you really are and what you are like” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> I revealed your name to the men whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

### from the world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym that refers to the people of the world that oppose God. This means that God has separated the believers spiritually from the people who do not believe in him. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### they have kept your word (ULT)

This is an idiom that means to obey. Alternate translation: “they have obeyed your teaching” (See: [Idiom](#))

## John 17:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything that  
you have given me is from you,

## John 17:8

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> for I have given them the words that you gave me, and they received them and truly knew that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

## John 17:9

### I do not ask on behalf of the world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "I am not praying for those who do not belong to you" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> I ask on behalf of them. I do not ask on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you have given me, for they are yours.



## John 17:10

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> And all things that are mine are yours, and what are yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

## John 17:11

### in the world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym that refers to being on earth and being among the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: “among the people who do not belong to you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Holy Father, keep them...so that they would be one, just as we are (ULT)

Jesus asks the Father to keep those who trust in him so they can have a close relationship with God.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### keep them in your name that you have given me (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym for God’s power and authority. Alternate translation: “keep them safe by your power and authority, which you have given me” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**11** And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me so that they would be one, just as we are.

## John 17:12

### I kept them in your name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that refers to the power and protection of God. Alternate translation: "I kept them with your protection" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### them...not one of...perished, except for the son of destruction (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the only one among them who was destroyed is the son of destruction"

### the son of destruction (ULT)

This refers to Judas, who betrayed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the one whom you long ago decided you would destroy" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### so that the scripture would be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the prophecy about him in the scriptures" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**12** While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. And I protected them, and not one of them perished, except for the son of destruction, so that the scripture would be fulfilled.

## John 17:13

### the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym for the people who live in the world.  
(See: [Metonymy](#))

### so that they would have my joy fulfilled in themselves (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “so that you might give them great joy” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**13** But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world so that they would have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

## John 17:14

### I have given them your word (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I have spoken your message to them"

**the world has hated them because they are not from the world, just as I am not from the world (ULT)**

Here, **the world** is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "the people who oppose you have hated my followers because they do not belong to those who do not believe, just as I do not belong to them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### ULT

**14** I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not from the world, just as I am not from the world.

## John 17:15

### the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym for the people who oppose God. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### you would keep them from the evil one (ULT)

Here, **the evil one** refers to Satan. Alternate translation: “you would protect them from Satan, the evil one” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**15** I do not ask that you would take them away from the world, but that you would keep them from the evil one.

## John 17:16

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>16</sup> They are not from the world, just as I am not from the world.

## John 17:17

### Sanctify them by the truth (ULT)

You can state clearly the purpose for setting them apart. The phrase **by the truth** here represents by teaching the truth. Alternate translation: "Make them your own people by teaching them the truth" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

### Your word is truth

Alternate translation: "Your message is true" or "What you say is true"



## John 17:18

### into the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym that means the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: “to the people of the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**18** Just as you sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

## John 17:19

### so that they themselves may also be sanctified in truth (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “so that they may also set apart themselves truly to you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I have sanctified myself, so that they themselves may also be sanctified in truth.

## John 17:20

### those who will believe in me through their word (ULT)

Alternate translation: "those who will believe in me because they teach about me"

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> But I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word

## John 17:21

**they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us**

Those who trust in Jesus become united with the Father and the Son when they believe.

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym that refers to the people who do not yet know God. Alternate translation: “the people who do not know God” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### ULT

<sup>21</sup> so that they would all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, so that they also would be in us, so that the world would believe that you have sent me.

## John 17:22

### **The glory that you gave me, I also have given to them (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "I have honored my followers just as you have honored me"

#### **ULT**

<sup>22</sup> The glory that you gave me, I also have given to them, so that they would be one, just as we are one:

### **so that they would be one, just as we are one (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that you can unite them just as you have united us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 17:23

### so that they may be made complete as one (ULT)

Alternate translation: “that they may be completely united”

### so that the world may know (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym that refers to the people who do not know God. Alternate translation: “that all the people will know” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### you loved (ULT)

This kind of love comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> I in them, and you in me so that they may be made complete as one, so that the world may know that you sent me and you loved them just as you loved me.

## John 17:24

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### where I am (ULT)

Here, **where I am** refers to heaven. Alternate translation: “with me in heaven” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to see my glory

Alternate translation: “to see my greatness”

### before the foundation of the world (ULT)

Here Jesus refers to the time before creation. Alternate translation: “before we created the world” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Father, those you have given me, I desire that they also may be with me where I am, in order to see my glory, which you gave me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

## John 17:25

### Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes his prayer.

### Righteous Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### the world did not know you (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym for the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: “those who do not belong to you do not know what you are like” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Righteous Father, even the world did not know you, but I know you; and these know that you sent me.



## John 17:26

### I made your name known to them (ULT)

The word **name** refers to God. Alternate translation: "I have revealed to them what you are like" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### love...you have loved (ULT)

This kind of **love** comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

#### ULT

**26** And I made your name known to them, and I will make it known so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

## John 18

### John 18 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Verse 14 says, “Now Caiaphas was the one who had given the advice to the Jews that it would be better that one man die for the people.” The author says this to help the reader understand why it was to Caiaphas that they took Jesus. You might want to put these words in parentheses. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death”

The Roman government did not allow the Jews to kill criminals, so the Jews needed to ask Pilate, the governor, to kill him (John 18:31).

### Jesus’ kingdom

No one knows for sure what Jesus meant when he told Pilate that his kingdom was not “of this world” (John 18:36). Some people think that Jesus means that his kingdom is only spiritual and that he has no visible kingdom on this earth. Other people think that Jesus meant that he would not build and rule his kingdom by force, the way other kings build theirs. It is possible to translate the words “is not of this world” as “is not from this place” or “comes from another place.”

### King of the Jews

When Pilate asked if Jesus were the King of the Jews (John 18:33), he was asking if Jesus were claiming to be like King Herod, whom the Romans were permitting to rule Judea. When he asked the crowd if he should release the King of the Jews (John 18:39), he is mocking the Jews, because the Romans and Jews hated each other. He was also mocking Jesus, because he did not think that Jesus was a king at all. (See: [Irony](#))

## John 18:1

### General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information for the events that follow. Verse 1 tells where they took place, and verse 2 gives background information about Judas. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Having spoken these words, Jesus (ULT)

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event. (See: [Introduction of a New Event](#))

### of...Kidron (ULT)

This is a valley in Jerusalem separating the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### where there was a garden (ULT)

This **garden** was a grove of olive trees. Alternate translation: “where there was a grove of olive trees” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Having spoken these words, Jesus went out with his disciples across the brook of the Kidron, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered.

## John 18:2

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Now Judas, the one betraying him, also knew the place, for Jesus often gathered there with his disciples.

## John 18:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> So Judas, leading the cohort of soldiers and officers from the chief priests and from the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

## John 18:4

### General Information:

Jesus begins to speak with the soldiers, officers, and Pharisees.

### Then Jesus, knowing all the things happening to him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Then Jesus, who knew everything that was about to happen to him"

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing all the things happening to him, having gone out, asked them, "Whom do you seek?"

## John 18:5

### Jesus the Nazarene (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Jesus, the man from Nazareth"

### I am (ULT)

The word **he** is implied in the text. Alternate translation: "I am he"  
(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one betraying him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the one who was going to hand him over"

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> They answered him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He says to them, "I am." Now Judas, the one betraying him, was also standing with them.

## John 18:6

### I am (ULT)

Here the word **he** is not present in the original text, but it is implied.  
Alternate translation: "I am he" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> So when he said to them, "I am," they went backward and fell to the ground.

### fell to the ground (ULT)

The men fell to the ground because of Jesus' power. Alternate translation: "fell down because of Jesus' power" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))



## John 18:7

### Jesus the Nazarene (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Jesus, the man from Nazareth"

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Then again he asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene."

## John 18:8

### General Information:

In verse 9 there is a break from the main story line as John tells us background information about Jesus fulfilling Scripture. (See: [Background Information](#))

### I am (ULT)

Here the word **he** is not present in the original text, but it is implied. Alternate translation: "I am he" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, "I told you that I am. So if you are seeking me, allow these to go away."

## John 18:9

### **This was so that would be fulfilled the word that he said (ULT)**

Here, **the word** refers to the words Jesus had prayed. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **This was so that would be fulfilled the word that he said (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This happened in order to fulfill the words that he had said when he was praying to his Father" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>9</sup> This was so that would be fulfilled the word that he said: "Of those whom you have given me, I lost none from among them."

## John 18:10

### Malchus (ULT)

Malchus is a male servant of the high priest. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

**10** Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. Now the name of the servant was Malchus.

## John 18:11

### sheath (ULT)

the cover for a sharp knife or sword, so the knife will not cut the owner

### The cup which the Father has given me, should I certainly not drink it (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus' statement. Alternate translation: "I must surely drink the cup that the Father has given to me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### The cup (ULT)

Here, **cup** is a metaphor that refers to the suffering that Jesus must endure. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**11** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into its sheath. The cup which the Father has given me, should I certainly not drink it?"

## John 18:12

### General Information:

Verse 14 tells us background information about Caiaphas. (See: [Background Information](#))

### of the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: “the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### seized Jesus and tied him up (ULT)

The soldiers tied Jesus’ hands to prevent him from escaping. Alternate translation: “captured Jesus and tied him up to prevent him from escaping” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**12** Then the cohort of soldiers and the commander and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and tied him up.

## John 18:13

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**13** And they led him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

## John 18:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> Now Caiaphas was the one who had given the advice to the Jews that it would be better for one man to die on behalf of the people.



## John 18:15

### Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Now the high priest knew that disciple so he was able to enter with Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> Now Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.

## John 18:16

### so the other disciple, who was known to the high priest (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “So the other disciple, whom the high priest knew” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> But Peter was standing at the door outside, so the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the female doorkeeper, and he brought Peter in.

## John 18:17

### Are you not also from the disciples of this man (ULT)

This appears in the form of a question to enable the servant to express her remark somewhat cautiously. Alternate translation: "You are also one of the arrested man's disciples! Are you not?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>17</sup> Then the female servant, the doorkeeper, says to Peter, "Are you not also from the disciples of this man?" He says, "I am not."

## John 18:18

**Now the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves (ULT)**

These were the high priest's servants and the temple guards.  
Alternate translation: "It was cold, so the high priest's servants and temple guards made a charcoal fire and were standing and warming themselves around it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Now (ULT)

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story line so John can add the information about the people who were warming themselves around the fire. (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>18</sup> Now the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves. But Peter was also with them, standing there and warming himself.

## John 18:19

### General Information:

Here the story line shifts back to Jesus.

### The...high priest (ULT)

This was Caiphas ([John 18:13](#)).

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> The high priest then asked Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

### about his disciples and about his teaching (ULT)

Here, **his teaching** refers to what Jesus had been teaching the people. Alternate translation: “about his disciples and what he had been teaching the people” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 18:20

### I have spoken openly to the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym for those people who had heard Jesus teach. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### I have spoken openly to the world (ULT)

Here the exaggeration **the world** emphasizes that Jesus has spoken openly. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### where all the Jews come together (ULT)

Here, **all the Jews** is an exaggeration that emphasizes that Jesus spoke where anyone who wanted to hear him could hear him. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I was always teaching in the synagogue and in the temple where all the Jews come together, and I said nothing in secret."

## John 18:21

### Why do you ask me (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "You should not be asking me these questions!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**21** Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them. Behold, these people know what I said."

## John 18:22

### Do you answer the high priest in this manner (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis.  
Alternate translation: "That is not how you should answer the high priest!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Now when he had said this, one of the officers standing there gave Jesus a slap, saying, "Do you answer the high priest in this manner?"



## John 18:23

### testify about the wrong (ULT)

Alternate translation: "tell me what I said that was wrong"

### but if rightly, why do you strike me (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "but if I said only what was right, you should not be hitting me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, testify about the wrong, but if rightly, why do you strike me?"

## John 18:24

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him, tied up, to Caiaphas the high priest.

## John 18:25

### General Information:

Here the story line shifts back to Peter.

### Now (ULT)

This word is used to mark a break in the story line so John can provide information about Peter. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. Then they said to him, "Are you not also from among his disciples?" He denied it and said, "I am not."

### Are you not also from among his disciples (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "You are also one of his disciples!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 18:26

### Did I not see you in the garden with him (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis.  
Alternate translation: "I saw you in the olive tree grove with the man they arrested! Did I not?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### with him (ULT)

Here the word **him** refers to Jesus. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> One from among the servants of the high priest, who was a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, says, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

## John 18:27

### Peter then denied it again (ULT)

Here it is implied that **Peter denied** knowing and being with Jesus.  
Alternate translation: "Peter then denied again that he knew Jesus or that he had been with him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**27** Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

### immediately a rooster crowed (ULT)

Here it is assumed the reader will remember that Jesus had said Peter would deny him before the **rooster crowed**.  
Alternate translation: "immediately the rooster crowed, just as Jesus had said would happen" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 18:28

### General Information:

Here the story line shifts back to Jesus. The soldiers and Jesus' accusers bring him to Caiaphas. Verse 28 gives us background information about why they did not enter the Praetorium. (See: [Background Information](#))

### Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas (ULT)

Here it is implied that they are leading Jesus from Caiaphas' house. Alternate translation: "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas' house" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### they did not enter into the governor's palace so that they would not be defiled (ULT)

You can translate the double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "they themselves remained the governor's palace to they would remain ceremonially clean" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### they did not enter into the governor's palace so that they would not be defiled (ULT)

Pilate was not a Jew, so if the Jewish leaders entered his headquarters, they would be defiled. This would have prevented them from celebrating the Passover. Alternate translation: "they themselves remained outside Pilate's headquarters because Pilate was a Gentile. They did not want to become defiled" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**28** Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor's palace. Now it was early in the morning, and they did not enter into the governor's palace so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

## John 18:29

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>29</sup> So Pilate went out to them and says,  
"What accusation do you bring against  
this man?"

## John 18:30

### **If this one were not an evildoer, we would not have handed him over to you (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "This man is an evil doer, so we had to bring him to you for punishment" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>30</sup> They answered and said to him, "If this one were not an evildoer, we would not have handed him over to you."

### **we would...have handed...him...over (ULT)**

This phrase here means to hand over to an enemy.



## John 18:31

### General Information:

In verse 32 there is a break from the main story line as the author tells us background information about how Jesus' predicted how he would die. (See: [Background Information](#))

### The Jews said to him (ULT)

Here, **Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus and arrested him. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders said to him" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death (ULT)

According to Roman law, the Jews could not put a man **to death**. Alternate translation: "According to Roman law, we cannot put a person to death" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Therefore, Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."

## John 18:32

### **This was so that the word of Jesus would be fulfilled (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This happened in order to fulfill what Jesus had said earlier," (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>32</sup> This was so that the word of Jesus would be fulfilled which he spoke to indicate by what kind of death he was about to die.

### **to indicate by what kind of death he was about to die (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "regarding how he would die"

## John 18:33

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate entered into the governor's palace again and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

## John 18:34

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, "Do you speak this from yourself, or did others speak to you about me?"

## John 18:35

### I am not a Jew, am I (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question so Pilate can emphasize his complete lack of interest in the cultural affairs of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "Well I am certainly not a Jew, and I have no interest in these matters!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### Your own people

Alternate translation: "Your fellow Jews"

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What did you do?"

## John 18:36

### My kingdom is not from this world (ULT)

Here, **world** is a metonym for the people who oppose Jesus. This could mean: (1) his kingdom is not part of this world. (2) he does not need this world's permission to rule as their king. (3) it is not from this world that Jesus has authority to be king. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### would fight...so that I would not be handed over to the Jews (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "would prevent the Jewish leaders from arresting me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants would fight so that I would not be handed over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here."

## John 18:37

### I have come into the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a synecdoche that refers to the people who live in the world. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### I would bear witness to the truth (ULT)

Here, **the truth** refers to the truth about God. Alternate translation: "I would tell people the truth about God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> Pilate then said to him, "So then, are you a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, so that I would bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is from the truth listens to my voice."

### who is from the truth (ULT)

This is an idiom that refers to anyone who loves the truth about God. (See: [Idiom](#))

### to my voice (ULT)

Here, **voice** is a synecdoche that refers to words Jesus says. Alternate translation: "to the things I say" or "to me" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 18:38

### What is truth (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to reflect Pilate's belief that no one really knows what truth is. Alternate translation: "No one can know what is true!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**38** Pilate says to him, "What is truth?" And having said this, he went out again to the Jews and says to them, "I find no guilt in him."



## John 18:39

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>39</sup> But there is the custom to you that I would release one person to you at the Passover. So do you desire that I would release the King of the Jews to you?"

## John 18:40

### Not this one, but Barabbas (ULT)

This is an ellipsis. You can add the implied words. Alternate translation: "No! Do not release this man! Release Barabbas instead" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### Now Barabbas was a robber (ULT)

Here John provides background information about **Barabbas**. (See: [Background Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>40</sup> Then they cried out again, saying, "Not this one, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

## John 19

### John 19 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 19:24, which are words from the Old Testament.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “Purple garment”

Purple is a color like red or blue. The people were mocking Jesus, so they put him in a purple garment. This was because kings wore purple garments. They spoke and acted like they were giving honor to a king, but everyone knew that they were doing it because they hated Jesus. (See: [Irony](#))

#### “You are not Caesar’s friend”

Pilate knew that Jesus was not a criminal, so he did not want to have his soldiers kill him. But the Jews told him that Jesus was claiming to be a king, and anyone who did that was breaking Caesar’s laws (John 19:12).

### The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (John 19:41) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Sarcasm

The soldiers were insulting Jesus when they said, “Hail, King of the Jews.” Pilate was insulting the Jews when he asked, “Should I crucify your king?” He was probably also insulting both Jesus and the Jews when he wrote, “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” (See: [Irony](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Gabbatha, Golgotha

These are two Hebrew words. After translating the meanings of these words (“The Pavement” and “The Place of a Skull”), the author transliterates their sounds by writing them with Greek letters.

## John 19:1

### Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus is standing before Pilate as he is being accused by the Jews.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Pilate then took Jesus and whipped him.

### Therefore, Pilate then took Jesus and whipped (ULT)

Pilate himself did not whip Jesus. Here, **Pilate** is a synecdoche for the soldiers that Pilate ordered to whip Jesus. Alternate translation: "Then Pilate ordered his soldiers to whip Jesus" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## John 19:2

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> And the soldiers twisted together a crown from thorns. They put it on his head and put a purple garment on him.

## John 19:3

### Hail, King of the Jews (ULT)

The greeting **Hail** with a raised hand was only used to greet Caesar. As the soldiers use the crown of thorns and the purple robe to mock Jesus, it is ironic that they do not recognize that he is indeed a king. (See: [Irony](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> And they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they began giving him slaps to the face.

## John 19:4

### I find no guilt in him (ULT)

Pilate states this twice to say he does not believe Jesus is not guilty of any crime. He does not want to punish him. Alternate translation: "I see no reason to punish him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and says to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you so that you might know that I find no guilt in him."

## John 19:5

### the crown of thorns and the purple garment (ULT)

The **crown** and the **purple** robe are things only kings wear. The soldiers dressed Jesus in this manner to mock him. See [John 19:2](#).

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And he says to them, "Behold the man!"



## John 19:6

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate says to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him."

## John 19:7

### The Jews answered him (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: “The Jewish leaders answered Pilate” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### he ought to die, because he made himself to be the Son of God (ULT)

Jesus was condemned to death by crucifixion because he claimed he was “the Son of God.”

### the Son of God (ULT)

**Son of God** is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself to be the Son of God.”

## John 19:8

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, when Pilate heard this word, he became even more afraid,

## John 19:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> and he entered into the governor's palace again and says to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

## John 19:10

### Are you not speaking to me (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question. Here Pilate expresses his surprise that Jesus does not take the opportunity to defend himself. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe you are refusing to speak to me!" or "Answer me!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**10** Then Pilate says to him, "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and I have authority to crucify you?"

### Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and I have authority to crucify you (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "You should know that I am able to release you or to order my soldiers to crucify you!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## John 19:11

**You do not have any authority over me, except for what has been given to you from above (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "You are able to act against me only because you have been given that authority" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, "You do not have any authority over me, except for what has been given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you has a greater sin."

**You do not have any authority over me, except for what has been given to you from above (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "You are able to act against me only because God has made you able" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**from above (ULT)**

This is a respectful way of referring to God.

**who handed me over (ULT)**

This phrase here means to hand over to an enemy.

## John 19:12

### At this (ULT)

Here, **at this** refers to Jesus' answer. Alternate translation: "When Pilate heard Jesus' answer" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Pilate was seeking to release him (ULT)

The form of "was seeking" in the original indicates that Pilate tried "hard" or "repeatedly" to release Jesus. Alternate translation: "he tried hard to release Jesus" or "he tried again and again to release Jesus" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### but the Jews cried out (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders that opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "but the Jewish leaders cried out" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### you are not a friend of Caesar (ULT)

Alternate translation: "you are opposing Caesar" or "you are opposing the emperor"

### who makes...himself a king (ULT)

Alternate translation: "who claims that he is a king"

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> At this, Pilate was seeking to release him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you release this one, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

## John 19:13

### Therefore, Pilate, having heard these words, brought Jesus out (ULT)

Here, **Pilate** is a synecdoche for his soldiers, who brought Jesus out. Alternate translation: "he ordered the soldiers to bring Jesus out" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### sat down (ULT)

Important people like Pilate sat down when they performed an official duty, while people who were not so important stood up.

### in the judgment seat (ULT)

The **judgment seat** was a special chair that an important person like Pilate sat in when he was making an official judgment. If your language has a special way to describe this action, you can use it here.

### in a place called "The Pavement (ULT)

**The Pavement** was a special stone platform in Jerusalem where only the important people were allowed to go. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in a place the people called 'The Pavement'" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in Hebrew (ULT)

**Hebrew** was the language that the people of Israel spoke.

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, Pilate, having heard these words, brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place called "The Pavement," but in Hebrew, "Gabbatha."



## John 19:14

### Connecting Statement:

Some time has passed and it is now the sixth hour, as Pilate orders his soldiers to crucify Jesus.

### Now (ULT)

**Now** marks a break in the story line so that John can provide information about the upcoming Passover and the time of day. (See: [Background Information](#))

### it was...about the sixth hour (ULT)

Alternate translation: "It was about noon"

### he says to the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Pilate said to the Jewish leaders" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**14** Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. And he says to the Jews, "Behold your king!"

## John 19:15

### Should I crucify your King (ULT)

Here, **I** is a synecdoche that refers to Pilate's soldiers who will actually perform the crucifixion. Alternate translation: "Do you really want me to tell my soldiers to nail your king to a cross?" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**15** But they cried out, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate says to them, "Should I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king except Caesar."

## John 19:16

**then...he...handed him over to them so that he might be crucified (ULT)**

Here, **Pilate** gives the order for his soldiers to crucify Jesus. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, he then handed him over to them so that he might be crucified, and they took Jesus and led him away.

**then...he...handed him over to them so that he might be crucified (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Pilate then ordered his soldiers to crucify Jesus" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 19:17

### to the place called “The Place of a Skull (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “to the place that the people called ‘The Place of a Skull,’” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### which in Hebrew is called “Golgotha (ULT)

Hebrew is the language of the people of Israel. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “which in Hebrew they call ‘Golgotha.’”

#### ULT

**17** And he went out, carrying the cross for himself, to the place called “The Place of a Skull,” which in Hebrew is called “Golgotha.”

## John 19:18

### with him two others (ULT)

This is an ellipsis. You can translate this, adding the implied words. Alternate translation: "they also nailed two other criminals to their crosses" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

**18** They crucified him there, and with him two others, on this side and on that side, and Jesus in the middle.

## John 19:19

### wrote...Pilate also...a title and put it on the cross (ULT)

Here, **Pilate** is a synecdoche for the person who wrote on the sign. Here, **on the cross** refers to Jesus' cross. Alternate translation: "Pilate also commanded someone to write on a sign and to attach it to Jesus' cross" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Now Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross. Now on it was written: JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

### was...on it...written: JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that person wrote on it the words: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 19:20

### the place...where Jesus was crucified (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the place where the soldiers crucified Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### And it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “The one who prepared the sign wrote the words in three languages: Hebrew, Latin, and Greek” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in Latin (ULT)

**Latin** was the language of the Roman government.

#### ULT

**20** Therefore, many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. And it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

## John 19:21

### Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate (ULT)

The chief priests had to go back to Pilate's headquarters to protest to him about the words on the sign. Alternate translation: "Then the chief priests went back to Pilate and said" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'That one said, "I am King of the Jews."'"



## John 19:22

### What I have written I have written (ULT)

Pilate implies that he will not change the words on the sign.  
Alternate translation: "I have written what I wanted to write, and I will not change it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

## John 19:23

### General Information:

At the end of verse 24 there is a break from the main story line as the John tells us how this event fulfills Scripture. (See: [Background Information](#))

### and the tunic (ULT)

“and they also took his tunic.” The soldiers kept the tunic separate and did not divide it. Alternate translation: “they kept his tunic separate” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**23** Then, when the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares—a share for each soldier—and the tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.

## John 19:24

### **we should cast lots for it, whose it will be (ULT)**

The soldiers will gamble and the winner will receive the shirt.

Alternate translation: "let us gamble for the tunic and the winner will get to keep it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **so that the scripture would be fulfilled which said**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled the scripture that said" or "This happened to make the scripture come true which said"

### **ULT**

<sup>24</sup> So they said to each other, "We should not tear it, but instead we should cast lots for it, whose it will be." This happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled which says, "They divided my garments among themselves and cast lots for my clothing." Therefore, the soldiers did this.

## John 19:25

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Now standing beside the cross of Jesus were his mother and the sister of his mother, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

## John 19:26

### the disciple...whom he loved (ULT)

This refers to John, the writer of this Gospel.

### Woman, behold, your son (ULT)

Here the word **son** is a metaphor. Jesus wants his disciple, John, to be like a son to his mother. Alternate translation: “Woman, here is the man who will act like a son to you” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**26** Then Jesus, having seen his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, says to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!”

## John 19:27

### Behold, your mother (ULT)

Here the word **mother** is a metaphor. Jesus wants his mother to be like a mother to his disciple, John. Alternate translation: "Think of this woman as if she were your own mother" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### from that hour (ULT)

Alternate translation: "from that very moment"

#### ULT

**27** Then he says to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

## John 19:28

### knowing...that all things had already been completed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he knew that he had done everything that God had sent him to do" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been completed, so that the scripture might be completed, says, "I thirst."

## John 19:29

### **A container full of sour wine was placed there (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had placed there a full container of sour wine" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **they lifted it up (ULT)**

The Roman guards did this.

### **a sponge (ULT)**

a small object that can soak up and hold much liquid

### **a hyssop staff (ULT)**

Alternate translation: "a branch of a plant called hyssop"

### **ULT**

<sup>29</sup> A container full of sour wine was placed there, so having put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop staff, they lifted it up to his mouth.



## John 19:30

### having bowed his head, he gave up his spirit (ULT)

John implies here that Jesus gave **his spirit** back to God. Alternate translation: “he bowed his head and gave God his spirit” or “he bowed his head and died” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Therefore, when Jesus took the sour wine, he said, “It is finished.” And having bowed his head, he gave up his spirit.

## John 19:31

### the...Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: “the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### the day of preparation (ULT)

This is the time before the Passover when people prepared food for the Passover.

### ULT

**31** Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross during the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was an especially important day), asked Pilate that their legs would be broken and they would be taken away.

### that their legs would be broken and they would be taken away (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “to have someone break the legs of the executed men and take their bodies down from the crosses” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 19:32

### of the other one who had been crucified with him (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “of the other man whom they had crucified near Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the other one who had been crucified with him.

## John 19:33

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>33</sup> But having come to Jesus, as they saw that he had already died, they did not break his legs.

## John 19:34

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>34</sup> However, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

## John 19:35

### the one who saw this (ULT)

This sentence gives background information to the story. John is telling readers that he was there and that we can trust what he has written. (See: [Background Information](#))

### has testified, and his testimony is true (ULT)

To “testify” means to tell about something that one has seen. Alternate translation: “has told the truth about what he has seen” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### so that you would also believe (ULT)

Here, **believe** means to put one’s trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: “so that you will also put your trust in Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> And the one who saw this has testified, and his testimony is true. And that one knows that he speaks the truth, so that you would also believe.

## John 19:36

### General Information:

In these verses there is a break from the main story line as John tells us about how these events have made Scripture come true. (See:

[Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>36</sup> For these things happened in order that the scripture would be fulfilled, "Not one of his bones will be broken."

### in order that the scripture would be fulfilled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the words that someone wrote in the scripture" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Not one of his bones will be broken (ULT)

This is a quotation from Psalm 34. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "No one will break any of his bones" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 19:37

### They will look at him whom they pierced (ULT)

This is a quotation from Zechariah 12.

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> And again, another scripture says,  
“They will look at him whom they  
pierced.”



## John 19:38

### Joseph who was from Arimathea (ULT)

**Arimathea** was a small town in Judea. Alternate translation: “Joseph from the town of Arimathea” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### for fear of the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: “for fear of the Jewish leaders” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### that he might take away the body of Jesus (ULT)

John implies that Joseph of Arimathea wants to bury the body of Jesus. Alternate translation: “for permission to take the body of Jesus down from the cross to bury it” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**38** Now after these things, Joseph who was from Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus (but secretly for fear of the Jews), asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body.

## John 19:39

### Nicodemus (ULT)

**Nicodemus** was one of the Pharisees who believed in Jesus. See how you translated this name in [John 3:1](#).

### also...of myrrh...aloes (ULT)

These are spices that people use to prepare a body for burial.

### about 100 litras in weight (ULT)

You may convert this to a modern measure. A “litra” is about one third of a kilogram. Alternate translation: “about 33 kilograms in weight” or “weighing about thirty-three kilograms” (See: [Biblical Weight](#))

#### ULT

<sup>39</sup> Now Nicodemus also came—who at first had come to him at night—bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 100 litras in weight.

## John 19:40

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>40</sup> So they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, just as was the custom of the Jews to prepare for burial.

## John 19:41

**Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried (ULT)**

Here John marks a break in the story line in order to provide background information about the location of the tomb where they would bury Jesus. (See: [Background Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>41</sup> Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried.

**Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now in the place where they crucified Jesus there was a garden" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**in which no one had yet been buried (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in which people had not yet buried anyone" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## John 19:42

### because of the day of preparation of the Jews (ULT)

According to Jewish law, no one could work after sundown on Friday. It was the beginning of the Sabbath and Passover. Alternate translation: "since the Passover was about to begin that evening" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>42</sup> Therefore, because of the day of preparation of the Jews and because the tomb was close by, they laid Jesus there.

## John 20

### John 20 General Notes

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (John 20:1) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

#### “Receive the Holy Spirit”

If your language uses the same word for “breath” and “spirit,” be sure that the reader understands that Jesus was performing a symbolic action by breathing, and that what the disciples received was the Holy Spirit, not Jesus’ breath. (See: [Symbolic Action](#) and [Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Rabboni

John used Greek letters to describe the sound of the word, and then he explained that it means “Teacher.” You should do the same, using the letters of your language.

#### Jesus’ resurrection body

No one is sure what Jesus’ body looked like after he became alive again. His disciples knew it was Jesus because they could see his face and touch the places where the soldiers had put the nails through his hands and feet. But he could also walk through solid walls and doors. It is best not to try to say more than what the ULT says.

#### Two angels in white

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus’ tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels were in human form. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULT without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

## John 20:1

### General Information:

This is the third day after Jesus was buried.

### the...on...first day of the week (ULT)

Alternate translation: "on Sunday"

### sees the stone having been rolled away (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "she saw that someone had rolled away the stone"  
(See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now early on the first day of the week, being still dark, Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb and sees the stone having been rolled away from the tomb.

## John 20:2

### disciple whom Jesus loved (ULT)

This phrase appears to be the way that John refers to himself throughout his book. Here the word “love” refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

### They took away the Lord from the tomb (ULT)

Mary Magdalene thinks that someone has stolen the Lord’s body. Alternate translation: “Someone has taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> So she runs and comes to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she says to them, “They took away the Lord from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”



## John 20:3

### Peter...other disciple (ULT)

John apparently shows his humility by referring to himself here as **the other disciple**, rather than including his name.

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Then Peter and the other disciple went out, and they went to the tomb.

## John 20:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Now the two were running together,  
and the other disciple quickly ran ahead  
of Peter and arrived at the tomb first.

## John 20:5

### linen cloths (ULT)

These were the burial cloths that people had used to wrap the body of Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> And having stooped down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not enter.

## John 20:6

### linen cloths (ULT)

These were the burial cloths that people had used to wrap the body of Jesus. See how you translated this in [John 20:5](#).

#### ULT

6 Simon Peter then also arrived following him and entered into the tomb. And he sees the linen cloths lying there

## John 20:7

### the cloth that had been on his head (ULT)

Here, **his head** refers to “Jesus’ head.” You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the cloth that someone had used to cover Jesus’ face” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### but having been folded up in one place by itself (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “but someone had folded it and put it aside, separate from the linen cloths” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> and the cloth that had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but having been folded up in one place by itself.

## John 20:8

### the other disciple (ULT)

John apparently expresses his humility by referring to himself as “the other disciple,” rather than including his name in this book.

### he saw and believed (ULT)

When John **saw** that the tomb was empty, he **believed** that Jesus had risen from the dead. Alternate translation: “he saw these things and began to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> So then the other disciple, the one who first arrived at the tomb, also went in, and he saw and believed.

## John 20:9

### not yet...they did...understand the scripture (ULT)

Here the word **they** refers to the disciples who did not **understand the scripture** that said Jesus would rise again. Alternate translation: "the disciples still did not understand the scripture" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For they did not yet understand the scripture that it was necessary for him to rise from the dead.

### to rise (ULT)

become alive again

### from the dead (ULT)

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld.

## John 20:10

### went away...again to their (ULT)

The disciples continued to stay in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: “went back to where they were staying in Jerusalem” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**10** So the disciples went away again to their own homes.



## John 20:11

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**11** But Mary was standing outside at the tomb, weeping. Then as she was weeping, she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

## John 20:12

### she sees two angels in white (ULT)

The angels were wearing **white** clothing. Alternate translation: “she saw two angels dressed in white clothing” (See: [Assumed Knowledge](#) and [Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**12** And she sees two angels in white having sat, one at the head and one at the foot of where the body of Jesus had lain.

## John 20:13

### those say to her (ULT)

Alternate translation: "they asked her"

### Because they took away my Lord (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Because they took away the body of my Lord"

### I do not know where they put him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "I do not know where they have put his body"

#### ULT

**13** And those say to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She says to them, "Because they took away my Lord, and I do not know where they put him."

## John 20:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**14** Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and she did not know that it was Jesus.

## John 20:15

### Jesus says to her (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Jesus asked her"

### Sir, if you carried him away (ULT)

Here the word **him** refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "if you have taken away the body of Jesus" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### him...tell me where you put (ULT)

Alternate translation: "tell me where you have put his body"

### and I will take him away (ULT)

Mary Magdalene wants to get Jesus' body and bury it again. Alternate translation: "I will get the body and bury it again" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**15** Jesus says to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, thinking that he is the gardener, says to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you put him, and I will take him away."

## John 20:16

### Rabboni (ULT)

The word **Rabboni** means rabbi or teacher in Aramaic, the language that Jesus and his disciples spoke.

#### ULT

**16** Jesus says to her, "Mary." Having turned, she says to him in Hebrew, "Rabboni" (which means "Teacher").

## John 20:17

### brothers (ULT)

Jesus used the word **brothers** to refer to his disciples.

### I go up to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God (ULT)

Jesus rose from the dead and then predicted he would go up into heaven, back to his Father, who is God. Alternate translation: "I am about to return to heaven to be with my Father and your Father, to the one who is my God and your God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** Jesus says to her, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet gone up to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I go up to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.'"

### my Father and your Father (ULT)

These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God, and between believers and God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

## John 20:18

### Mary Magdalene comes, telling the disciples (ULT)

**Mary Magdalene** went to where the disciples were staying and told them what she had seen and heard. Alternate translation: “Mary Magdalene went to where the disciples were and told them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene comes, telling the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that he said these things to her.



## John 20:19

### General Information:

It is now evening and Jesus appears to the disciples.

### on that day...first day of the week (ULT)

This refers to Sunday.

### the doors of where the disciples were having been closed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the disciples had locked the doors where they were” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### for fear of the Jews (ULT)

Here, **the Jews** is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who might arrest the disciples. Alternate translation: “because they were afraid that the Jewish leaders might arrest them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Peace to you (ULT)

This is a common greeting that means “May God give you peace.”

#### ULT

**19** Therefore, being evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of where the disciples were having been closed for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and says to them, “Peace to you.”

## John 20:20

### he showed them his hands and his side (ULT)

Jesus showed the disciples his wounds. Alternate translation: “he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> And having said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Therefore, the disciples rejoiced, having seen the Lord.

## John 20:21

### Peace to you (ULT)

This is a common greeting that means “May God give you peace.”

### Father (ULT)

**Father** is an important title for God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

**21** Then he said to them again, “Peace to you. Just as the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

## John 20:22

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>22</sup> And having said this, he breathed on them and says to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

## John 20:23

### they have been forgiven to them (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Whoever's...you may keep back (ULT)

Alternate translation: "if you do not forgive another's sins"

### they have been kept back (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**23** Whoever's sins you may forgive, they have been forgiven to them; whoever's sins you may keep back, they have been kept back."

## John 20:24

### Didymus (ULT)

**Didymus** is a male name that means “twin.” See how this name is translated in [John 11:15](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

**24** Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, who was called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

## John 20:25

### said...the other disciples...to him (ULT)

The word **him** refers to Thomas.

**Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails,  
and put my finger into the mark of the nails,  
and put my hand into his side, I will certainly  
not believe (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I will believe only if I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### in his hands...his...into...hand...side (ULT)

The word **his** refers to Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Then the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe."

## John 20:26

### his disciples (ULT)

The word **his** refers to Jesus.

### the doors having been closed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “when they had locked the doors” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Peace to you (ULT)

This is a common greeting that means “May God give you peace.”

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> And after eight days his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Jesus comes, the doors having been closed, and stood in their midst, and said, “Peace to you.”



## John 20:27

### do not be unbelieving, but believing (ULT)

Jesus uses the double negative “Do not be unbelieving” to emphasize the words that follow, “but believe.” If your language does not allow double negatives or the reader would not understand that Jesus is emphasizing the words that follow, you can leave these words untranslated. Alternate translation: “this is what is most important for you to do: you must believe” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### ULT

**27** Then he says to Thomas, “Place your finger here and see my hands. And reach out your hand and put it into my side. And do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

### believing (ULT)

Here, “believe” means to trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: “put your trust in me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## John 20:28

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered and said to him,  
"My Lord and my God."

## John 20:29

### you have believed (ULT)

Thomas believes that Jesus is alive because he has seen him.  
Alternate translation: "you have believed that I am alive" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### blessed are those (ULT)

This means "God gives great happiness to those."

### not having seen (ULT)

This means those who have not seen Jesus. Alternate translation: "who have not seen me alive" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Jesus says to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those not having seen, and having believed."

## John 20:30

### General Information:

As the story is nearing the end, the author comments about the many things Jesus did. (See: [End of Story](#))

### signs (ULT)

See how you translated this term in [2:11](#). See also the discussion of **signs** in Part 3 of the General Introduction to the Gospel of John. Alternate translation: “significant miracles”

### which have not been written in this book (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “signs that the author did not write about in this book” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Then Jesus also did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which have not been written in this book,

## John 20:31

### but these have been written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but the author wrote about these signs" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Son of God (ULT)

**Son of God** is an important title for Jesus. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

### life...in his name (ULT)

Here, **life** is a metonym that means Jesus gives life. Alternate translation: "you may have life because of Jesus" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### life (ULT)

This here refers to spiritual life.

#### ULT

**31** but these have been written so that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so that believing, you would have life in his name.

## **John 21**

### **John 21 General Notes**

### **Important figures of speech in this chapter**

#### **The metaphor of sheep**

Before Jesus died, he spoke of himself taking care of his people as if he were a good shepherd taking care of sheep (John 10:11). After he became alive again, he told Peter that Peter would be the one who took care of Jesus' sheep. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 21:1

### General Information:

Jesus shows himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Verses 2 and 3 tell us what happens in the story before Jesus appears. (See: [Background Information](#))

### After these things (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Some time later"

### ULT

<sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Now in this manner he showed himself:

## John 21:2

### and Thomas who was called Didymus (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “with Thomas whom we called Didymus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Didymus (ULT)

**Didymus** is a male name that means “twin.” See how this name is translated in [John 11:15](#). (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> they were together—Simon Peter, and Thomas who was called Didymus, and Nathaniel who was from Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others from his disciples.



## John 21:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Simon Peter says to them, "I am going fishing." They say to him, "We also are coming with you." They went out and got into a boat, but they caught nothing during that night.

## John 21:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Now, when it was already morning,  
Jesus stood on the beach, but the  
disciples did not know that it is Jesus.

## John 21:5

### Children (ULT)

This is a term of endearment that means “My dear friends.”

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> So Jesus says to them, “Children, do you not have any fish to eat?” They answered him, “No.”

## John 21:6

### you will find some (ULT)

Here, **some** refers to fish. Alternate translation: “you will catch some fish in your net” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to draw it in (ULT)

Alternate translation: “to pull the net in”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But he said to them, “Throw the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they threw their net and did not have the strength to draw it in because of the large number of fish.

## John 21:7

### loved (ULT)

This is love that comes from God and is focused on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### put on his outer garment (ULT)

Alternate translation: “he secured his outer garment around him” or “he put on his tunic”

### for he was undressed (ULT)

This is background information. Peter had taken off some of his clothes to make it easier to work, but now that he was about to greet the Lord, he wanted to wear more clothing. Alternate translation: “for he had taken off some of his clothes” (See: [Background Information](#))

### threw himself into the sea (ULT)

Peter jumped into the water and swam to shore. Alternate translation: “jumped into the sea and swam to shore” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### threw himself (ULT)

This is a idiom that means Peter jumped into the water very quickly. (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Then that disciple whom Jesus loved says to Peter, “It is the Lord.” Therefore Simon Peter, having heard that it was the Lord, put on his outer garment (for he was undressed), and threw himself into the sea.

## John 21:8

**for they were not far from the land, but about 200 cubits away (ULT)**

This is background information. (See: [Background Information](#))

**200 cubits (ULT)**

“90 meters.” A **cubit** was a little less than half a meter. (See: [Biblical Distance](#))

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But the other disciples came in the boat (for they were not far from the land, but about 200 cubits away), dragging the net of the fish.

## John 21:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, when they got out upon the land, they see a charcoal fire kindled, and fish laid on it, and bread.

## John 21:10

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Jesus says to them, "Bring some of the fish that you just caught."



## John 21:11

### Simon Peter then went up (ULT)

Here, **went up** means Simon Peter had to go back to the boat.  
 Alternate translation: "So Simon Peter went back to the boat" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** Simon Peter then went up and pulled the net to the shore, full of large fish; 153. But being so many, the net was not torn.

## John 21:12

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> Jesus says to them, “Come, eat breakfast.” But none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” They knew that it is the Lord.

## John 21:13

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**13** Jesus comes and takes the bread and gives it to them, and the fish in the same way.

## John 21:14

### the third time that (ULT)

You can translate this ordinal term “third” as “time number 3.” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

#### ULT

**14** This was already the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples, having been raised from the dead.

## John 21:15

### General Information:

Jesus begins to have a conversation with Simon Peter.

### do you love me (ULT)

Here, **love** refers the type of love that comes from God, which focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself.

### ULT

**15** Then when they ate breakfast, Jesus says to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He says to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you." He says to him, "Feed my lambs."

### you know that I love you (ULT)

When Peter answers, he uses the word for **love** that refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

### Feed my lambs (ULT)

Here, **lambs** is a metaphor for those persons who love Jesus and follow him. Alternate translation: "Feed the people I care for" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## John 21:16

### do you love me (ULT)

Here, **love** refers the type of love that comes from God, which focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself.

### Take care of my sheep (ULT)

Here, **sheep** is a metaphor for those who love and follow Jesus.  
Alternate translation: "Care for the people I care for" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**16** He says to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He says to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He says to him, "Take care of my sheep."

## John 21:17

### He says to him the third time (ULT)

The pronoun **He** refers to Jesus. Here, **the third time** means “time number 3.” Alternate translation: “Jesus said to him a third time” (See: [Ordinal Numbers](#))

### do you love me (ULT)

This time when Jesus asks this question he uses the word for **love** that refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

### Feed my sheep (ULT)

Here, **sheep** is a metaphor that represents those who belong to Jesus and follow him. Alternate translation: “Care for the people I care for” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**17** He says to him the third time,  
“Simon, son of John, do you love me?”  
Peter was grieved because he said to  
him the third time, “Do you love me?”  
And he says to him, “Lord, you know all  
things; you know that I love you.” Jesus  
says to him, “Feed my sheep.”

## John 21:18

### Truly, truly, I say to you (ULT)

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the statement that follows. See how you translated this in [1:51](#). (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

**18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to clothe yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you become old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will clothe you and carry you where you do not want.”



## John 21:19

### Now (ULT)

John uses this word to show he is giving background information before he continues the story. (See: [Background Information](#))

### indicating with what manner of death he will glorify God (ULT)

Here John implies that Peter would die on a cross. Alternate translation: “to indicate that Peter would die on a cross to honor God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Follow me (ULT)

Here the word **Follow** means “to be a disciple.” Alternate translation: “Keep on being my disciple” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**19** Now he said this, indicating with what manner of death he will glorify God. And having said this, he says to him, “Follow me.”

## John 21:20

### Peter...the disciple whom...Jesus...loved (ULT)

John refers to himself in this way throughout the book, rather than mentioning his name.

### loved (ULT)

This is the kind of love that comes from God and always desires the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

### at the dinner (ULT)

This is a reference to the Last Supper ([John 13](#)).

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Having turned around, Peter sees the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also leaned back against his chest at the dinner and said, "Lord, who is the one betraying you?"

## John 21:21

### him...having seen...Peter (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to “the disciple whom Jesus loved.”

### But Lord, what about this one (ULT)

Peter wants to know what will happen to John. Alternate translation: “Lord, what will happen to this man?” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Therefore, having seen him, Peter says to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this one?”

## John 21:22

### Jesus says to him (ULT)

Alternate translation: "Jesus said to Peter"

### If I want him to remain (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to John, the "disciple whom Jesus loved" in [John 21:20](#).

### I come (ULT)

This refers to Jesus' second coming, his return to earth from heaven.

### what to you (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to express a mild rebuke. Alternate translation: "that is not your concern." or "you should not be concerned about that." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Jesus says to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what to you? You follow me."

## John 21:23

### among the brothers (ULT)

Here, **the brothers** refers to all the followers of Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> So this word spread among the brothers, that that disciple does not die. But Jesus did not say to him that he does not die, but, "If I want him to remain until I come, what to you?"

## John 21:24

### General Information:

This is the end of the Gospel of John. Here the author, the Apostle John, gives a closing comment about himself and what he has written in this book. (See: [End of Story](#))

### the disciple (ULT)

Alternate translation: "the disciple John"

### who testifies about these things (ULT)

Here, **testifies** means that he personally sees something. Alternate translation: "who has seen all these things" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### we know (ULT)

Here, **we** refers to those who trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "we who trust in Jesus know" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**24** This is the disciple who testifies about these things and who wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

## John 21:25

### if each one were written down (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “if someone wrote down all of them” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### not even...itself...the world...to have enough room for the...books (ULT)

John exaggerates to emphasize that Jesus did many more miracles than what people could write about in many books. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### the books being written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the books that people could write about what he did” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Now there are also many other things that Jesus did, which, if each one were written down, I imagine not even the world itself to have enough room for the books being written.



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Academy**

**Version 25**



# 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: [John 1:14](#); [1:16](#); [1:17](#); [2:11](#); [3:21](#); [3:25](#); [3:36](#); [4:22](#); [4:23](#); [5:22](#); [5:27](#); [5:30](#); [7:12](#); [7:18](#); [7:24](#); [7:43](#); [8:16](#); [8:32](#); [9:11](#); [9:15](#); [9:16](#); [9:39](#); [10:19](#); [10:33](#); [11:24](#))

## 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: [John 1:3](#); [1:6](#); [1:17](#); [1:24](#); [1:41](#); [1:42](#); [2:2](#); [2:17](#); [2:22](#); [3:6](#); [3:14](#); [3:17](#); [3:18](#); [3:20](#); [3:21](#); [3:23](#); [3:24](#); [3:25](#); [3:27](#); [3:28](#); [3:29](#); [5:7](#); [5:10](#); [5:13](#); [5:34](#); [6:12](#); [6:18](#); [6:26](#); [6:31](#); [6:45](#); [6:65](#); [7:23](#); [7:47](#); [7:49](#); [8:17](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#); [9:7](#); [9:10](#); [9:11](#); [9:19](#); [9:20](#); [9:32](#); [9:34](#); [10:9](#); [10:12](#); [10:13](#); [10:34](#); [10:35](#); [11:16](#); [11:17](#); [11:44](#); [11:52](#); [12:3](#); [12:14](#); [12:16](#); [12:31](#); [12:32](#); [12:38](#); [12:42](#); [13:17](#); [13:18](#); [13:31](#); [14:13](#); [14:21](#); [15:6](#); [15:7](#); [15:8](#); [15:11](#); [15:25](#); [16:20](#); [16:24](#); [16:32](#); [17:12](#); [17:13](#); [17:19](#); [17:22](#); [18:9](#); [18:15](#); [18:16](#); [18:32](#); [18:36](#); [19:11](#); [19:13](#); [19:16](#); [19:17](#); [19:19](#); [19:20](#); [19:28](#); [19:29](#); [19:31](#); [19:32](#); [19:36](#); [19:41](#); [20:1](#); [20:7](#); [20:19](#); [20:23](#); [20:26](#); [20:30](#); [20:31](#); [21:2](#); [21:25](#))

## 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: [John 1:1](#); [1:4](#); [1:6](#); [1:11](#); [1:14](#); [1:19](#); [1:21](#); [1:22](#); [1:24](#); [1:25](#); [1:26](#); [1:27](#); [1:28](#); [1:29](#); [1:31](#); [1:33](#); [1:36](#); [1:38](#); [1:39](#); [1:40](#); [1:41](#); [1:42](#); [1:48](#); [1:51](#); [2:10](#); [2:11](#); [2:14](#); [2:16](#); [2:17](#); [2:22](#); [2:25](#); [3:1](#); [3:6](#); [3:8](#); [3:10](#); [3:12](#); [3:13](#); [3:14](#); [3:16](#); [3:17](#); [3:23](#); [3:25](#); [3:26](#); [3:31](#); [3:32](#); [3:34](#); [3:36](#); [4:6](#); [4:18](#); [4:20](#); [4:21](#); [4:22](#); [4:23](#); [4:25](#); [4:27](#); [4:34](#); [4:37](#); [4:38](#); [4:39](#); [4:43](#); [4:45](#); [4:50](#); [4:53](#); [5:5](#); [5:10](#); [5:16](#); [5:19](#); [5:20](#); [5:21](#); [5:23](#); [5:24](#); [5:25](#); [5:26](#); [5:27](#); [5:28](#); [5:30](#); [5:31](#); [5:32](#); [5:33](#); [5:35](#); [5:37](#); [5:39](#); [5:40](#); [6:1](#); [6:11](#); [6:14](#); [6:16](#); [6:21](#); [6:22](#); [6:23](#); [6:24](#); [6:25](#); [6:27](#); [6:29](#); [6:31](#); [6:32](#); [6:33](#); [6:35](#); [6:37](#); [6:38](#); [6:39](#); [6:40](#); [6:44](#); [6:45](#); [6:49](#); [6:51](#); [6:53](#); [6:54](#); [6:56](#); [6:57](#); [6:58](#); [6:60](#); [6:61](#); [6:62](#); [6:63](#); [6:64](#); [6:65](#); [6:67](#); [6:70](#); [7:2](#); [7:3](#); [7:8](#); [7:10](#); [7:11](#); [7:12](#); [7:15](#); [7:16](#); [7:17](#); [7:18](#); [7:21](#); [7:22](#); [7:24](#); [7:26](#); [7:27](#); [7:28](#); [7:33](#); [7:35](#); [7:38](#); [7:39](#); [7:40](#); [7:47](#); [7:48](#); [7:52](#); [8:12](#); [8:13](#); [8:16](#);



8:17; 8:18; 8:19; 8:22; 8:23; 8:24; 8:26; 8:28; 8:29; 8:36; 8:41; 8:42; 8:44; 8:47; 8:48; 8:50; 8:58; 8:59; 9:2; 9:4; 9:6; 9:7;  
9:11; 9:14; 9:15; 9:16; 9:17; 9:21; 9:23; 9:24; 9:28; 9:29; 9:30; 9:33; 9:34; 9:35; 10:1; 10:3; 10:4; 10:8; 10:10; 10:25; 10:30;  
10:31; 10:32; 10:33; 10:38; 10:40; 11:19; 11:24; 11:25; 11:26; 11:27; 11:28; 11:32; 11:33; 11:35; 11:39; 11:47; 11:48;  
11:50; 11:51; 11:54; 12:7; 12:8; 12:11; 12:14; 12:19; 12:20; 12:23; 12:25; 12:26; 12:34; 12:44; 12:45; 12:47; 12:49; 13:8;  
13:11; 13:13; 13:15; 13:20; 13:23; 13:31; 14:6; 14:10; 14:18; 14:23; 14:24; 14:28; 14:30; 15:5; 15:7; 15:10; 15:16; 15:21;  
15:22; 15:26; 15:27; 16:1; 16:5; 16:13; 16:14; 16:15; 16:33; 17:5; 17:12; 17:15; 17:17; 17:24; 18:1; 18:5; 18:6; 18:8; 18:9;  
18:12; 18:18; 18:19; 18:26; 18:27; 18:28; 18:31; 18:37; 19:4; 19:12; 19:16; 19:21; 19:22; 19:23; 19:24; 19:30; 19:35;  
19:38; 19:42; 20:2; 20:8; 20:9; 20:10; 20:12; 20:15; 20:17; 20:18; 20:19; 20:20; 20:27; 20:29; 21:6; 21:7; 21:11; 21:19;  
21:21; 21:24)

## Background Information

### Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called background information. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

This page answers the question: *What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Order of Events](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

**Example** — The bolded phrases in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because **their village was going to have a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day!** They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope **they had brought with them** and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are: "their village was going to have a feast the next day," "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," and "that they had brought with them."

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were," rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a feast the next day," and "Peter **was** the best hunter in the village."

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are "because," "once," and "had."

### A writer may use background information:

- to help their listeners be interested in the story
- to help their listeners understand something in the story
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- to tell the setting of a story
  - > \* Setting includes:
    - > \* where the story takes place
    - > \* when the story takes place
    - > \* who is present when the story begins
    - > \* what is happening when the story begins

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

## Examples From the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram **was 86 years old** when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:15-16 ULT)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

And Jesus himself **was beginning about 30 years old**. He **was the son** (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli, (Luke 3:23 ULT)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story 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)

As here, English sometimes 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 phrase 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:

[Connecting Words and Phrases](#)

[Introduction of a New Event](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:24](#); [1:28](#); [1:44](#); [2:1](#); [2:9](#); [2:11](#); [4:1](#); [5:1](#); [5:9](#); [5:16](#); [6:1](#); [6:4](#); [6:6](#); [6:10](#); [6:17](#); [6:23](#); [6:59](#); [6:64](#); [6:71](#); [7:2](#); [7:5](#); [7:22](#); [7:39](#); [7:50](#); [8:20](#); [8:27](#); [9:7](#); [9:14](#); [9:22](#); [10:22](#); [11:1](#); [11:5](#); [11:13](#); [11:18](#); [11:19](#); [11:30](#); [11:38](#); [11:51](#); [12:6](#); [12:9](#); [12:14](#); [12:16](#); [12:17](#); [12:32](#); [12:33](#); [13:1](#); [13:3](#); [13:26](#); [13:30](#); [Notes](#); [18:1](#); [18:8](#); [18:12](#); [18:18](#); [18:25](#); [18:28](#); [18:31](#); [18:40](#); [19:14](#); [19:23](#); [19:35](#); [19:36](#); [19:41](#); [21:1](#); [21:7](#); [21:8](#); [21:19](#))

# 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**; <sup>1</sup> its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; <sup>2</sup> 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**; <sup>1</sup> its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; <sup>2</sup> and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

The footnotes would look like:

[<sup>1</sup>] two and a half cubits  
[<sup>2</sup>] one cubit and a half

(Go back to: [John 6:19](#); [11:18](#); [21:8](#))

# Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

An **extended metaphor** is an explicit metaphor that uses multiple images and multiple ideas at the same time. This is in contrast to a simple metaphor, which uses only a single Image and a single Idea. The difference between an extended metaphor and a complex metaphor is that an extended metaphor is explicitly stated by a writer/speaker, but a complex metaphor is not.

This page answers the question: *What is an extended metaphor?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Metaphor](#)

[Simile](#)

## Explanation of an Extended Metaphor

When using a metaphor, a writer/speaker uses a physical Image in order to express an abstract Idea about some immediate Topic, with at least one point of comparison between the Topic and the Image. In an extended metaphor, the writer/speaker explicitly states the Topic, and then describes multiple images and communicates multiple ideas.

In Isaiah 5:1b-7, the prophet Isaiah uses a vineyard (the **Image**) to express God's disappointment (the **Idea**) with the nation of Israel (the **Topic**) for their unfaithfulness to God and his covenant with them as his people. Farmers care for their gardens, and a farmer would feel disappointed if his vineyard produced bad fruit. If a vineyard produced only bad fruit for a long enough time, the farmer would eventually stop caring for it. We call this an extended metaphor because the prophet describes in detail multiple images relating to a vineyard as well as multiple aspects of God's disappointment.

1b My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill. 2 He **spaded it, removed the stones,** and **planted it** with an excellent kind of vine. He **built a tower** in the middle of it, and also **built a winepress**. He **waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced wild grapes**. 3 So now, inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah; judge between me and my vineyard. 4 What more could have been done for my vineyard, that I have not done for it? **When I looked for it to produce grapes, why did it produce wild grapes?** 5 Now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will remove the hedge; I will turn it into a pasture; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled down. 6 I will lay it waste, and it will not be pruned nor hoed. Instead, briars and thorns will spring up. I will also command the clouds not to rain on it. 7 For **the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel**, and the man of Judah his pleasant planting; **he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing; for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help**. (Isa 5:1b-7 ULT)

## Other Examples From the Bible

In Psalm 23, the psalmist uses the physical **Image** of a shepherd to describe the way that God (the **Topic**) shows great concern and care (the **Idea**) for his people. The psalmist describes multiple aspects of what shepherds do for sheep (leads them to pasture and to water, protects them, etc.). The psalmist also describes multiple aspects of how God takes care of him (gives him life, righteousness, comfort, etc.). Shepherds give sheep what they need, take them to safe places, rescue them, guide them, and protect them. What God does for his people is like these actions.

1 Yahweh is my shepherd; I will lack nothing.  
2 He **makes me** to lie down in green pastures;  
he **leads me** beside tranquil water.  
3 He **brings back** my life;  
he **guides me** along right paths for his name's sake.  
4 Even though I walk through a valley of darkest shadow,



I will not fear harm since you are with me;  
your rod and your staff comfort me. (Psalm 23:1-4 ULT)

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not realize that the images represent other things.
- People may not be familiar with the things that are used as images.
- Extended metaphors are often so profound that it would be impossible for a translator to show all of the meaning generated by the metaphor.

## Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of the extended metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning more clear to the target audience than it was to the original audience.
- When someone uses an extended metaphor, the images are an important part of what he is trying to say.
- If the target audience is not familiar with some of the images, you will need to find some way of helping them understand the images so that they can understand the whole extended metaphor.

## Translation Strategies

Consider using the same extended metaphor if your readers will understand it in the same way the original readers would have understood it. If not, here are some other strategies:

- (1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to do this in just the first sentence or two.
- (2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.
- (3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to do this in just the first sentence or two. See Psalm 23:1-2 as an example:

Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing.  
He makes **me** to lie down in green pastures;  
**he leads me** beside tranquil water. (ULT)

Can be translated as:

“Yahweh is **like** a shepherd to me, so I will lack nothing.  
**Like** a shepherd who makes his sheep lie down in green pastures and leads them by peaceful waters, Yahweh helps me to rest peacefully.”

- (2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.

My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill.  
He **spaded** it, removed the stones, and planted it with **an excellent kind of vine**.  
He built **a tower** in the middle of it, and also built a **winepress**.  
He waited for it to produce grapes, but it only produced **wild grapes**. (Isaiah 5:1b-2 ULT)

May be translated as:

My well beloved had a **grapevine garden** on a very fertile hill.  
 He **dug up the ground** and removed the stones, and planted it with **the best grapevines**.  
 He built a **watchtower** in the middle of it, and also built **a tank where he could crush the juice out of the grapes**.  
 He waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced **wild grapes that were not good for making wine**.

(3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing. (Psalm 23:1 ULT)

“Yahweh **cares for me** like a shepherd that cares for his sheep, so I will lack nothing.”

For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **is** the house of Israel,  
 and the men of Judah his pleasant planting;  
 he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing;  
 for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help. (Isaiah 5:7 ULT)

Can be translated as:

For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **represents** the house of Israel,  
 and the men of Judah **are like** his pleasant planting;  
 he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing;  
 for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

or as:

**So as a farmer stops caring for a grapevine garden that produces bad fruit,**  
**Yahweh will stop protecting** Israel and Judah,  
**because they do not do what is right.**  
 He waited for justice, but instead, there was killing;  
 for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [John 4:14](#); [4:36](#); [4:37](#); [4:38](#); [6:35](#); [6:50](#); [6:51](#); [11:10](#))

# Biblical Money

## Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of money in the Bible?*

In early Old Testament times, people weighed their metals, such as silver and gold, and would pay a certain weight of that metal in order to buy things. Later, people started to make coins that each contained a standard amount of a certain metal. The daric is one such coin. In New Testament times, people used silver and copper coins.

The two tables below show some of the most well-known units of money found in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). The table for Old Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it weighed. The table for New Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it was worth in terms of a day's wage.

Unit in OT	Metal	Weight
daric	gold coin	8.4 grams
shekel	various metals	11 grams
talent	various metals	33 kilograms

Unit in NT	Metal	Day's Wage
denarius/denarii	silver coin	1 day
drachma	silver coin	1 day
mite	copper coin	1/64 day
shekel	silver coin	4 days
talent	silver	6,000 days

## Translation Principle

Do not use modern money values since these change from year to year. Using them will cause the Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate.

## Translation Strategies

The value of most money in the Old Testament was based on its weight. So when translating these weights in the Old Testament, see [Biblical Weight](#). The strategies below are for translating the value of money in the New Testament.

- (1) Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)
- (2) Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many coins were used.
- (3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.
- (4) Use the biblical term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

(5) Use the biblical term and explain it in a footnote.

## Translation Strategies Applied

The translations strategies are all applied to Luke 7:41 below.

█ The one owed 500 denarii, and the other, 50. (Luke 7:41b ULT)

Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)

█ "The one owed **500 denali**, and the other, **50**."

Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many pieces or coins were used.

█ "The one owed **500 silver coins**, and the other, **50**."

(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.

█ "The one owed **500 days' wages**, and the other, **50**."

(4) Use the Bible term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

█ "The one owed **500 denarii** 1, and the other owed **50 denarii**. 2"

The footnotes would look like:

█ [1] 500 days' wages [2] 50 days' wages

(5) Use the Bible term and explain it in a footnote.

█ "The one owed **500 denarii**,<sup>1</sup> and the other, **50**." (Luke 7:41 ULT)

█ <sup>[1]</sup> A denarius was the amount of silver that people could earn in one day of work.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate\]\]](#)  
[Translate Unknowns](#)

(Go back to: [John 6:7](#); [12:5](#))

# 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	lethek	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 liters<sup>1</sup>, and 220 liters<sup>2</sup> of seed will yield only 22 liters<sup>3</sup>.”

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: [John 2:6](#))



# 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: [John 12:3](#); [19:39](#))

## Collective Nouns

### Description

A collective noun is a singular noun that refers to a group of something. Examples: a **family**, **clan**, or **tribe** is a group of people who are related to each other; a **flock** is a group of birds or sheep; a **fleet** is a group of ships; and an **army** is a group of soldiers.

Many collective nouns are used exclusively as a singular replacement for a group as in the examples above. Frequently in the Bible the name of an ancestor is used, through a process of metonymy, as a collective noun referencing the group of his descendants. In the Bible, sometimes the singular noun will take a singular verb form, other times it will take a plural verb form. This may depend on how the author is thinking about the group, or whether the action is being done as a group or as individuals.

### Reason This is a Translation Issue

There are several issues that require care when translating collective nouns. Further care is needed because the language you are translating into may not use collective nouns in the same way as the language you are translating from. Issues include:

The source language may have a collective noun for a group that the target language does not and vice-versa. You may have to translate a collective noun with a plural noun in your language, or you may need to translate a plural noun with a collective noun in your language.

Subject-verb agreement. Different languages or dialects may have different rules about using singular or plural verbs with collective nouns.

Examples (from Wikipedia):

- a singular noun with a singular verb: The team *is* in the dressing room.
- a singular noun with a plural verb which is correct in British, but not American, English: The team *are* fighting among themselves. The team *have* finished the project.

Pronoun agreement. Similar to the previous, care needs to be taken to use the correct pronoun plurality and possibly gender or noun class to agree with the number/gender/class of the noun used. See the biblical examples below.

Clarity of referent. Especially if there is a mismatch in your translation between the verb and noun or pronoun concerning any of the factors above, readers may be confused about who or what is being referenced.

### Examples from the Bible

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

The word in bold is written in singular form in both Hebrew and English, but it refers to a group of warriors that fight together.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

The word in bold is singular and refers to a group of sheep.

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

Note in this example that the noun is singular but the pronoun is plural. This may or may not be allowed or natural in your language.

Do not let **your heart** be troubled. **You** believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14:1 ULT)

In this verse, the words translated “your” and “you” are plural, referring to many people. The word “heart” is singular in form, but it refers to all of their hearts as a group.

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

The word **hair** is singular, but it refers to many hairs, not just one.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

Here, “Israel” is singular, but means “the Israelites” by metonymy.

## Translation Strategies

If your language has a collective (singular) noun that refers to the same group as referenced by the collective noun in the source text, then translate the word using that term. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.
- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.
- (3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.
- (4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the Israelites** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the Israelites** go.”

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

And he shall take the **hairs** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **them** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.

- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

And Joab and all the **army men who were** with him arrived

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **people of the crowd were** coming to him, and he was teaching **them**.

(3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

and though the **group of sheep** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls.

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go." (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the people of Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the people of Israel** go."

(4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

Now this John had his clothing from the **hairs** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist (Matthew 3:4a ULT)

Now this John had his clothing from the **hair** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that {is} in **the heavens** above, or that {is} in the earth beneath, or that {is} in **the waters** under the earth. (Deuteronomy 5:8 ULT)

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that is in **heaven** above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in **the water** under the earth.

(Go back to: [John 1:17](#); [5:13](#); [6:2](#); [6:5](#); [6:22](#); [6:24](#); [7:12](#); [7:19](#); [7:20](#); [7:23](#); [7:31](#); [7:32](#); [7:40](#); [7:43](#); [7:49](#); [10:5](#); [11:42](#); [12:9](#); [12:12](#); [12:17](#); [12:29](#); [12:34](#))

## Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate contrary-to-fact conditions?*

Conditional connectors connect two clauses to indicate that one of them will happen when the other one happens. In English, the most common way to connect conditional clauses is with the words, “if ... then.” Often, however, the word “then” is not stated.

### Contrary-to-Fact Conditions

#### Description

A Contrary-to-Fact Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical, but the speaker is already certain that it is NOT true.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Usually there are no special words that indicate a Contrary-to-Fact Condition. The writer assumes that the reader knows that it is NOT a true condition. For this reason it often requires knowledge of implied information to know that it is not true. If this kind of condition is difficult for translators to communicate, they may want to consider using the same strategies that they used for [Rhetorical Questions](#) or [Implied Information](#).

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you keep changing your mind? If Yahweh is God, follow him. But **if Baal is God**, then follow him.” Yet the people did not answer him a word. (1 Kings 18:21 ULT)

Baal is not God. Elijah is not suggesting that Baal might be God, and he does not want the people to follow Baal. But Elijah used a conditional statement to show them that what they were doing was wrong. In the example above, we see two conditions that have the same construction. The first one, “If Yahweh is God,” is a Factual Condition because Elijah is certain that it is true. The second one, “if Baal is God,” is a Contrary-to-Fact Condition because Elijah is certain that it is not true. You will need to consider if people would say both of these in the same way in your language or if they would say them in different ways.

But his wife replied to him, “**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this.” (Judges 13:23 ULT)

Manoah’s wife thinks that the second part of her conditional statement is not true, therefore the first part is also not true. God received their burnt offering; therefore, He does not want to kill them.

>

“**If only we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full.” (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)

Of course the people speaking here did not die in Egypt, and so this is a Contrary-to-Fact condition that is used to express a wish.

“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)

The English reader knows that these last two examples are Contrary-to-Fact conditions because of the past-tense verbs used in the first part (they are not things that might happen). The last example also has a second part that uses “would have.” These words also signal something that did not happen.

## Translation Strategies

If Contrary-to-Fact conditions are clear in your language, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.
- (2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.
- (3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.
- (4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.
- (5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.

But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

If you believe that Baal is God, then worship him!

- (2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.

If Baal is not God, then you should not worship him!

But his wife replied to him, “**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this.” (Judges 13:23 ULT)

“**Yahweh does not want to kill us**, or he would not have received the burnt offering and the offering we gave him.”

- (3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.

“**If only we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full.” (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)

“**I wish we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt...”

(4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.

“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)

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! The mighty deeds which were done in you **were not done** in Tyre and Sidon. But **if they had been done there, those people would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

(5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact Conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Is Baal the one who is truly God? Should you worship him?

“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)

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! You think that you are better than Tyre and Sidon, but you are not! **They would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes at seeing the mighty deeds that you have seen! **You should be like them!**”

(Go back to: [John 4:10](#); [5:46](#); [8:19](#); [8:42](#); [9:33](#); [11:21](#))



## Connect — Contrast Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a contrast relationship?*

### Contrast Relationship

#### Description

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

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave with the humble way that he behaves. The contrast is marked by the word “yet.”

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

It was unexpected that the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would be able to conquer and lay claim to the promised land.

#### Translation Strategies

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

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

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

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

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

The hill country will also be yours. It is a forest, **but** you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders. They have chariots of iron, and they are strong, **but** you will drive out the Canaanites.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

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

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

(Go back to: [John 1:10](#); [1:11](#); [1:17](#); [8:35](#))

## Connect — Factual Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate factual conditions?*

Conditional connectors connect two clauses to indicate that one of them will happen when the other one happens. In English, the most common way to connect conditional clauses is with the words, “if ... then.” Often, however, the word “then” is not stated.

### Factual Conditions

#### Description

A Factual Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true in the speaker’s mind. In English, a sentence containing a Factual Condition can use the words “even though,” “since,” or “this being the case” to indicate that it is a factual condition and not a hypothetical condition.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not state something as a condition if it is certain or true. Translators from these languages may misunderstand the original languages and think that the condition is uncertain. This would lead to mistakes in their translations. Even if the translators understand that the condition is certain or true, the readers may misunderstand it. In this case, it would be best to translate it as a statement of fact rather than as a conditional statement.

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

“**If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you keep changing your mind? **If Yahweh is God**, follow him. But if Baal is God, then follow him.” Yet the people did not answer him a word. (1 Kings 18:21 ULT)

This sentence has the same construction as a hypothetical condition. The condition is “if Yahweh is God.” If that is true, then the Israelites should worship Yahweh. But the prophet Elijah does not question whether or not Yahweh is God. In fact, he is so certain that Yahweh is God that later in the passage he pours water all over his sacrifice. He is confident that God is real and that he will burn even an offering that is completely wet. Over and over again, the prophets taught that Yahweh is God, so the people should worship him. The people did not worship Yahweh, however, even though He is God. By putting the statement or instruction into the form of a Factual Condition, Elijah is trying to get the Israelites to understand more clearly what they should do.

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)

Yahweh has said that he is a father and a master to Israel, so even though this sounds like a hypothetical condition because it begins with “if,” it is not hypothetical. This verse begins with the proverb that a son honors his father. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh. The other proverb in the verse says that a servant honors his master. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh, so it seems that he is not their master. But Yahweh is the master. Yahweh uses the form of a hypothetical condition to demonstrate that the Israelites are wrong. The second part of the condition that should occur naturally is not happening, even though the conditional statement is true.

## Translation Strategies

If using the form of a hypothetical condition is confusing or would make the reader think that the speaker doubts what he is saying in the first part of the sentence, then use a statement instead. Words such as “since” or “you know that ...” or “it is true that ...” can be helpful to make the meaning clear.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- “If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)
- “It is true that** Yahweh is God, so worship him!”
- “A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)
- “A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **Since** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **Since** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?”

(Go back to: [John 3:12](#); [5:47](#); [7:4](#); [7:23](#); [8:46](#); [10:35](#); [10:38](#))

## Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a goal (purpose) relationship?*

### Goal (or Purpose) Relationship

#### Description

A Goal Relationship is a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first event. In order for something to be a goal relationship, someone must do the first event with the intention that it will cause the second event.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, the goal or purpose may be stated either first or second. But in some languages, the goal or purpose must always occur in the same position (either first or second) in order for that logical relationship to be understood. You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between the two parts and communicate those accurately in your language. This may require changing the order of the two events. It may also require specific words to indicate that one is the goal or purpose of the other. Words commonly used to indicate a goal relationship in English are “in order to,” “in order that” or “so that.” It is important that the translator recognize the words that signal a goal relationship and translate that relationship in a natural way.

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

She became angry and falsely accused Joseph **so that he was arrested and sent to prison.**  
(Story 8 Frame 5 OBS)

The goal or purpose of the woman’s false accusation was to get Joseph arrested and sent to prison.

Meanwhile Gideon, his son, was threshing out wheat at the winepress **in order to hide from the presence of Midian.** (Judges 6:11b ULT)

Here the prepositional phrase begins with “in order to.”

Now if I have found favor in your eyes, show me your ways **so that I may know you and continue to find favor in your eyes.** Remember that this nation is your people. (Exodus 33:13 ULT)

Moses wants God to show him God’s ways for the goal or purpose of Moses knowing God and continuing to find favor with God.

Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean,** and do not rebuke her! (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

The goal or purpose of Boaz instructing the men to pull out the grain from their bundles and leave it was for Ruth to gather (glean) it.

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened,** which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The purpose of going to Bethlehem was to see the thing that had happened. Here the purpose is not marked and might be misunderstood.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

The goal of keeping the commandments is to enter into life.

Do not turn from it to the right or to the left **so that you may be wise** in everything in which you walk. (Joshua 1:7c ULT)

The purpose of not turning away from the instructions that Moses gave to the Israelites was so that they would be wise.

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance**.’ So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

The purpose of the vine growers killing the heir was so they could take his inheritance. They state both events as a plan, joining them only with “and.” Then the word “so” marks the reporting of the first event, but the second event (the goal or purpose) is not stated.

## Translation Strategies

If your language uses Goal or Purpose relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the construction of the Goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.
- (2) If the order of the statements makes the Goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the construction of the goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean**, and do not rebuke her!” (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **so that she can glean it**, and do not rebuke her!”

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem **so that we can see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.”

- (2) If the order of the statements makes the goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

“... keep the commandments if you want **to enter into life**.” or: “... keep the commandments **so that you can enter into life**.”

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

(1) and (2)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **so that we can take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him **so that they could take over his inheritance.**

(Go back to: [John 1:31](#); [3:15](#); [6:6](#); [6:24](#); [6:52](#); [9:39](#); [11:4](#))

## Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the reason-result relationship?*

### Reason-and-Result Relationships

#### Description

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

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

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

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

The **result** is that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The **reason** is because he rested on the seventh day from his work.

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



The **result** is that the poor are blessed. The **reason** is that the kingdom of God is theirs.

But he raised up in their place their sons that Joshua circumcised, being uncircumcised, **because** they had not been circumcised on the way. (Joshua 5:7 ULT)

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

## Translation Strategies

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

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

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

- (1) The kingdom of God belongs to you who are poor. **Therefore**, the poor are blessed.
- (2) Blessed are the poor, **because** yours is the kingdom of God.
- (3) **The reason that** the poor are blessed **is because** yours is the kingdom of God.

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

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

**Since** he was not able to find out anything for certain because of the noise, he ordered that he be brought into the fortress. (Acts 21:34b ULT)

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

(Go back to: [John 1:16](#); [1:50](#); [2:15](#); [2:22](#); [2:23](#); [3:16](#); [3:17](#); [3:20](#); [3:34](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:44](#); [4:45](#); [5:13](#); [5:18](#); [5:19](#); [6:18](#); [6:24](#); [6:38](#); [6:40](#); [7:30](#); [9:18](#); [11:4](#); [11:6](#); [11:51](#); [11:53](#))

## Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

### Time Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How do I translate clauses with a sequential time relationship?*

### Sequential Clause

#### Description

A sequential clause is a time relation that connects two events in which one happens and then the other happens.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate sequences of events in different ways; some use ordering, some use connecting words, some even use relative tense (Relative tense is a tense that refers to a time in relation to a reference point in the context.) Connecting words that may indicate sequence are words such as “then,” “later,” “after,” “afterward,” “before,” “first,” and “when.” Translators need to be certain that they communicate the order of the events in a way that is natural in their language. This may require ordering clauses differently than in the original languages.

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

**When** Joseph came to his brothers, they kidnapped him and sold him to some slave traders.  
(OBS Story 8 Frame 2)

First Joseph came to his brothers, and then they kidnapped and sold him. We know this because of the connecting word “**when**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but **after** I ate it, my stomach became bitter.  
(Revelation 10:10b ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs first, and the event of the last clause occurs later. We know this because of the connecting word “**after**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs after the event of the second clause. First the land they dread will be desolate, and then the child will know to refuse evil and choose good. We know this because of the connecting word “**before**.” However, stating the clauses in this order may communicate the wrong order of events in your language. The translator may have to change the order so that the clauses come in the order that they happen. Or it may be possible to keep the order of the original language text and mark the ordering of sequence so that it is clear to the readers. You (the translator) need to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Here the general connector “**and**” connects four events. These are sequential events—each happens after the one before it. We know this because that is the only way that these events would happen. So in English, the general

connector “and” is enough to make the sequence clear for events such as these. You will need to decide if this also communicates this sequence clearly and correctly in your language.

## Translation Strategies

If the sequence of events is clear in your language, then translate the sequence as it is.

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.
- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Then Mary arose in those days. **Then** she quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah. **Then** she entered into the house of Zechariah, **and then** she greeted Elizabeth.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

For the time will come when the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, **but even before that time**, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.

- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

For the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.

For more about sequences of events, see [Sequence of Events](#).

(Go back to: [John 1:29](#); [1:35](#); [1:43](#); [3:22](#); [4:5](#); [4:6](#); [4:46](#); [5:1](#); [5:14](#); [6:1](#); [6:5](#); [7:1](#); [7:40](#); [10:12](#))

## Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

### Time Relationships

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

This page answers the question: *How can I translate clauses with a simultaneous time relationship?*

### Simultaneous Clause

#### Description

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

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

But in truth I say to you that there were many widows in Israel **during** the days of Elijah. (Luke 4:25b ULT)

The connecting word “**during**” tells us clearly that two things happened at the same time, but one event did not cause the other.

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

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

**While** they were looking intensely into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

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

## Translation Strategies

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

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

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

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

(Go back to: [John 8:30](#))

## Connecting Words and Phrases

### Description

This page answers the question: *How do connecting words work to join parts of the text in different ways?*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sometimes people might not use a connecting word because they expect the context to help the readers understand the relationship between the thoughts. Some languages do not use connecting words as much as other languages do. They might say:

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

You (the translator) will need to use the method that is most natural and clear in the target language. But in general, using connecting words whenever possible helps the reader to understand the ideas in the Bible most clearly.

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You need to understand the relationship between paragraphs, between sentences, and between parts of sentences in the Bible, and how connecting words and phrases can help you to understand the relationship between the thoughts that they are connecting.
- Each language has its own ways of showing how thoughts are related.
- You need to know how to help readers understand the relationship between the thoughts in a way that is natural in your language.

### Translation Principles

- You need to translate in a way that readers can understand the same relationship between thoughts that the original readers would have understood.
- Whether or not a connecting word is used is not as important as readers being able to understand the relationship between the ideas.

## The Different Types of Connections

Listed below are different types of connections between ideas or events. These different types of connections can be indicated by using different connecting words. When we write or translate something, it is important to use the right connecting word so that these connections are clear for the reader. If you would like additional information, simply click the colored, hyperlinked word to be directed to a page containing definitions and examples for each type of connection.

- [Sequential Clause](#) — a time relationship between two events in which one happens and then the other happens.
- [Simultaneous Clause](#) — a time relationship between two or more events that occur at the same time.
- Background Clause — a time relationship in which the first clause describes a long event that is happening at the time when the beginning of the second event happens, which is described in the second clause.
- Exceptional Relationship — one clause describes a group of people or items, and the other clause excludes one or more items or people from the group.
- Hypothetical Condition — the second event will only take place if the first one takes place. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.
- [Factual Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true, so that the condition is guaranteed to happen.
- [Contrary-to-Fact Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain that it is not true. See also: Hypothetical Statements.
- [Goal Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first.
- [Reason and Result Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which one event is the reason for the other event, the result.
- [Contrast Relationship](#) — one item is being described as different or in opposition to another.

## Examples from the Bible

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT)

The word “instead” introduces something that contrasts with what was said before. The contrast here is between what Paul did not do and what he did do. The word “then” introduces a sequence of events. It introduces something that Paul did after he returned to Damascus.

**Therefore**, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

The word “therefore” links this section with the section before it, signaling that the section that came before gave the reason for this section. “Therefore” usually links sections larger than one sentence. The word “and” links only two actions within the same sentence, that of breaking commandments and teaching others. In this verse the word “but” contrasts what one group of people will be called in God’s kingdom with what another group of people will be called.

We place nothing as a stumbling block in front of anyone, **so that** our ministry might not be discredited. **Instead**, we commend ourselves in everything as God’s servants. (2 Corinthians 6:3-4 ULT)

Here the words “so that” connect what follows as the reason for what came before; the reason that Paul does not place stumbling blocks is that he does not want his ministry brought into disrepute. “Instead” contrasts what Paul does (prove by his actions that he is God’s servant) with what he said he does not do (place stumbling blocks).



## General Translation Strategies

### See each type of Connecting Word above for specific strategies

If the way the relationship between thoughts is shown in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).
- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be strange to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.
- (3) Use a different connecting word.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Then immediately they left the nets and followed him. (Mark 1:17-18 ULT)

They followed Jesus because he told them to. Some translators may want to mark this clause with the connecting word "so."

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." **So**, immediately they left the nets and followed him.

- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one, and if people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Some languages would prefer not to use connecting words here because the meaning is clear without them and using them would be unnatural. They might translate like this:

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments, teaching others to do so as well, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT) (Galatians 1:16-18 ULT)

Some languages might not need the words "instead" or "then" here. They might translate like this:

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days.

- (3) Use a different connecting word.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Instead of a word like “therefore,” a language might need a phrase to indicate that there was a section before it that gave the reason for the section that follows. Also, the word “but” is used here because of the contrast between the two groups of people. But in some languages, the word “but” would show that what comes after it is surprising because of what came before it. So “and” might be clearer for those languages. They might translate like this:

**Because of that**, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.  
**And** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

(Go back to: [John 9:1](#))

## 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

[Quotations and Quote Margins](#)

## 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](https://ufw.io/figs_quotations).

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Quotes within Quotes](#)

(Go back to: [John 4:51](#); [4:52](#); [4:53](#); [6:10](#); [6:12](#); [11:20](#))

## Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

### Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

This page answers the question: *When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that it is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
  - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the sentence is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
  - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

### Examples From the Bible

#### Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

■ The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

## Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

... for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is the reason that Abraham did not think that Sarah could bear a son. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age, and he was not telling anyone something new about her age. He simply did not think that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

## Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.
- (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

>

**Because idols are worthless**, I hate those who serve them.

... for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

... for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.

Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child.

>

Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

I will call on Yahweh, **who is worthy to be praised**. (2 Samuel 22:4a ULT) There is only one Yahweh. The phrase “who is worthy to be praised” gives a reason for calling on Yahweh.

I will call on Yahweh, because **he is worthy to be praised**

(2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information.

You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)

You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

**Receiving my love**, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Double Negatives](#)

(Go back to: [John 6:27](#); [11:31](#))

# 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: [John 1:3](#); [4:48](#); [9:33](#); [10:10](#); [13:8](#); [15:24](#); [16:7](#); [18:28](#); [18:30](#); [19:11](#); [20:25](#); [20:27](#))

# 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

A very similar issue is the repetition of the same word or phrase for emphasis, usually with no other words between them. Because these figures of speech are so similar and have the same effect, we will treat them here together.

## 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.

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, “**Master! Master!** We are perishing!” (Luke 8:24 ULT)

The repetition of “Master” means that the disciples called to Jesus urgently and continually.

## 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**."

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, "**Master! Master!** We are perishing!" (Luke 8:24 ULT)

Then they approached {and} woke him up, **urgently shouting, "Master!**  
We are perishing!"

(Go back to: [John 1:31](#); [1:51](#); [3:3](#); [3:5](#); [3:11](#); [3:29](#); [3:31](#); [5:19](#); [5:24](#); [5:25](#); [6:26](#); [6:32](#); [6:35](#); [6:47](#); [6:53](#); [6:54](#); [6:55](#); [7:10](#); [8:34](#); [8:51](#); [8:58](#); [10:1](#); [10:7](#); [10:38](#); [11:33](#); [12:24](#); [13:16](#); [13:20](#); [13:21](#); [13:38](#); [14:12](#); [16:20](#); [16:23](#); [21:18](#))

# Ellipsis

## Description

An ellipsis<sup>1</sup> 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.

[<sup>1</sup>] 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: [John 1:13](#); [1:22](#); [1:38](#); [1:45](#); [1:50](#); [3:34](#); [4:2](#); [4:7](#); [4:12](#); [5:13](#); [5:30](#); [5:33](#); [5:44](#); [6:11](#); [6:23](#); [6:27](#); [6:47](#); [6:56](#); [6:58](#); [6:60](#); [6:62](#); [7:52](#); [8:15](#); [8:35](#); [8:50](#); [9:3](#); [9:8](#); [9:38](#); [10:3](#); [10:10](#); [10:16](#); [10:36](#); [11:3](#); [11:15](#); [11:40](#); [11:52](#); [11:56](#); [12:22](#); [12:34](#); [13:27](#); [18:40](#); [19:18](#))

# End of Story

## Description

There are different types of information that may be given at the end of a story. Often this is background information. This background information is different from the actions that make up the main part of the story. A book of the Bible is often made up of many smaller stories that are part of the larger story of the book itself. For example, the story of Jesus' birth is a smaller story in the larger story of the book of Luke. Each of these stories, whether large or small, can have background information at the end of it.

This page answers the question: *What kinds of information are given at the end of a story?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

[Background Information](#)

## The following are purposes for end of story information:

- to summarize the story
- to give a comment about what happened in the story
- to connect a smaller story to the larger story it is a part of
- to tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends
- to tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends
- to tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of presenting these kinds of information. If you (the translator) do not use your language's ways of doing this, readers may not know:

- that this information is ending the story
- what the purpose of the information is
- how the information is related to the story

## Translation Strategies

- Translate the particular kind of information at the end of a story the way your language expresses that kind of information.
- Translate it so that people will understand how it relates to the story it is part of.
- If possible, translate the end of the story in a way that people will know where that story ends and the next begins.

## Examples From the Bible

- To summarize the story

Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. **In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to the land.** (Acts 27:44 ULT)

- To give a comment about what happened in the story

Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. Then they counted the value of them, and found it was 50,000 pieces of

silver. **So the word of the Lord was spreading and prevailing with power.** (Acts 19:19-20 ULT)

- To tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my savior." **And Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her house.** (Luke 1:46-47, 56 ULT)

- To tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends

All who those who heard it were amazed concerning the things that were spoken to them by the shepherds. **But Mary kept all the things, pondering them in her heart.** (Luke 2:18-19 ULT)

- To tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

"Woe to you, experts in the Jewish law, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering." **After he went from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to fiercely oppose him and argued against him about many things, lying in wait to trap him in something from his mouth.** (Luke 11:52-54 ULT)

(Go back to: [John 2:21](#); [20:30](#); [21:24](#))



# 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.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

... 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.

## 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: [John 10:11](#); [10:15](#); [10:17](#); [10:18](#); [11:11](#); [11:12](#); [11:34](#); [12:28](#))

# Exclamations

## Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people said helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes\]\]](#)

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULT)

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

## Examples From the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

**Oh**, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULT)

The word "Alas" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, "**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

**How** unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is "is" or "are."
- (2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
- (3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
- (4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

“You **are** such a worthless person!”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God **are** so deep!”

(2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. In the first suggested translation below, the word “wow” shows that they were astonished. In the second suggested translation, the expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.

They were extremely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” (Mark 7:37 ULT)

“They were extremely astonished, saying, ‘**Wow!** He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”

Alas, oh my Lord Yahweh! For because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face! (Judges 6:22b ULT)

“**Oh no**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.

“**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

“Lord Yahweh, **what will happen to me?** For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

“**Help**, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“His judgments are **so** unsearchable and his ways are **far** beyond discovering!”

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, “**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. **He was terrified** and said, “**Alas**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(Go back to: [John 9:30](#))

# Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

## Description

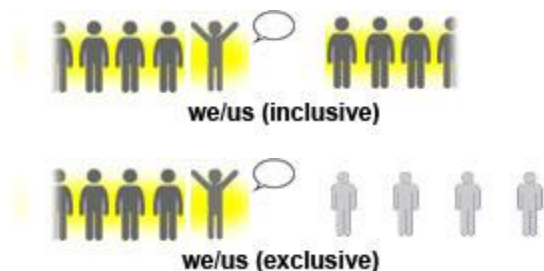
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

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:

[When Masculine Words Include Women](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:14](#); [1:16](#); [1:22](#); [3:2](#); [3:11](#); [4:22](#); [4:25](#); [4:42](#); [6:69](#); [9:4](#); [9:28](#))

# First, Second or Third Person

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms other than “I” or “you.”

## Description

- First person — This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- Second person — This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- Third person — This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

This page answers the question: *What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns]]

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

## Examples From the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,  
“... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

## Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34)

But David said to Saul, “**I, your servant**, used to keep **my** father’s sheep.”

- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **mine**? Can you thunder with a voice like **mine**?”

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Forms of You](#)

(Go back to: [John 1 General Notes](#); 1:51; [Notes](#); 3:13; 3:14; 3:17; 3:19; 3:20; 3:21; 3:29; 3:31; 4:10; 4:26; [Notes](#); 5:19; 5:20; 5:21; 5:22; 5:23; 5:25; 5:26; 5:27; 5:28; 5:38; [Notes](#); 6:27; 6:29; 6:46; 6:50; 6:53; 6:58; 6:62; [Notes](#); 8:28; 8:36; [Notes](#); 9:37; 10:34; 10:36; 11:4; [Notes](#); 12:23; [Notes](#); 13:31)



## 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.

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Forms of ‘You’ — Singular](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual]]

You may also want to watch the video at [https://ufw.io/figs\\_younum](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](https://ufw.io/figs_youform).

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of “You” — Formal or Informal

(Go back to: [John 1:51](#); [3:10](#); [3:11](#); [3:12](#); [3:28](#); [4:20](#); [4:22](#); [4:38](#); [4:48](#); [5:19](#); [5:24](#); [5:25](#); [5:33](#); [6:61](#); [8:14](#); [8:23](#); [8:31](#); [14:2](#); [15:3](#))

# Forms of 'You' — Singular

## Description

Some languages have a singular form of "you" for when the word "you" refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word "you" refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for "you" in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is singular?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech\]\]](#)

[Forms of You](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have both a singular form of "you" and a plural form of "you." When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one. When we read the Bible in a language that does not have different forms of you, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular and plural forms of "you" will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for "you" in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning "you," translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people the speaker was speaking to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used the singular form of "you" even though they were speaking to a group of people. (See Forms of 'You' — Singular to a Crowd.)

## Examples From the Bible

But he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." But when he heard this, Jesus said to him, "One thing is still lacking to **you**. All things, as much as **you** have, sell all and distribute to the poor, and **you** will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me." (Luke 18:21-22 ULT)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said "I." This shows us that when Jesus said "you" he was referring only to the ruler. So languages that have singular and plural forms of "you" need the singular form here.

The angel said to him, "Dress **yourself** and put on **your** sandals." So he did that. He said to him, "Put on **your** outer garment and follow me." (Acts 12:8 ULT)

The context makes it clear that the angel was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of "you" would need the singular form here for "yourself" and "your." Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, then the verbs "dress" and "put on" need the form that indicates a singular subject.

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. For this purpose I left **you** in Crete, that **you** might set in order things not yet complete and ordain elders in every city as I directed **you**. But **you**, say what fits with sound teaching. (Titus 1:4a, 5; 2:1 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus. Most of the time the word "you" in this letter refers only to Titus.

## Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the notes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see how many people the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at [https://ufw.io/figs\\_younum](https://ufw.io/figs_younum).

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual]]

(Go back to: [John 2:17](#); [7:6](#))

# 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.

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]]

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."

(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:

[When Masculine Words Include Women](#)

(Go back to: [John 2:22](#); [3:27](#); [3:33](#); [3:36](#); [5:34](#); [7:22](#); [7:23](#); [7:51](#); [8:21](#); [8:35](#); [10:10](#))

# Go and Come

## Description

This page answers the question: *What do I do if the word "go" or "come" is confusing in a certain sentence?*

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words "go" or "come" and whether to use the words "take" or "bring" when talking about motion. For example, when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say "I'm coming," while Spanish speakers say "I'm going." You will need to study the context in order to understand what is meant by the words "go" and "come" (and also "take" and "bring"), and then translate those words in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of talking about motion. The biblical languages or your source language may use the words "go" and "come" or "take" and "bring" differently than your language uses them. If these words are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving.

## Examples From the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.  
Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham's relatives lived far away from where he and his servant were standing and he wanted his servant to **go** to them, not **come** toward Abraham.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14a ULT)

Moses is speaking to the people in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them. In some languages, it would make more sense to say, "When you have **gone** into the land ..."

They **brought** him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to say that they**took** or **carried** Jesus to the temple.

Then see, there was a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a leader of the synagogue. And falling at the feet of Jesus, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to **go** with him to his house.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to ask what did you come out to see.

## Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other strategies.

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.
- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

But you will be free from my oath if you **go** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you come out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULT)

“When you have **arrived** in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ...”

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark ...” (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Enter**, you and all your household, into the ark ...”

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you travel out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

(Go back to: [John 9:7](#))

# 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**.

(Go back to: [John 4:48](#))

# 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** <sup>1</sup>

The footnote would look like:

<sup>[1]</sup> Most versions say "Saul" here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called "Paul."

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:

<sup>[1]</sup> 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**<sup>1</sup> and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

<sup>[1]</sup> 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 the Gospel of John](#); [John 1:17](#); [1:21](#); [1:23](#); [1:25](#); [1:28](#); [1:40](#); [1:41](#); [1:42](#); [1:43](#); [1:45](#); [2:1](#); [2:11](#); [2:12](#); [3:23](#); [4:3](#); [4:4](#); [4:5](#); [4:46](#); [4:47](#); [5:2](#); [6:5](#); [6:8](#); [6:17](#); [6:67](#); [6:68](#); [6:71](#); [8:37](#); [8:52](#); [10:23](#); [11:16](#); [11:47](#); [11:55](#); [14:22](#); [18:1](#); [18:10](#); [19:38](#); [20:24](#); [21:2](#))

# 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: [John 2:10](#); [3:26](#); [3:32](#); [4:29](#); [4:39](#); [4:45](#); [10:8](#); [11:49](#); [12:19](#); [13:35](#); [18:20](#); [21:25](#))

## 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: [John 1:18](#); [1:43](#); [3:35](#); [4:35](#); [5:18](#); [6:5](#); [6:27](#); [6:39](#); [6:40](#); [6:44](#); [6:54](#); [6:66](#); [7:23](#); [7:30](#); [7:44](#); [8:12](#); [8:31](#); [8:37](#); [8:44](#); [9:24](#); [10:9](#); [10:24](#); [10:27](#); [10:38](#); [11:11](#); [11:23](#); [11:24](#); [11:41](#); [11:56](#); [12:1](#); [13:2](#); [13:18](#); [13:27](#); [14:11](#); [17:1](#); [17:6](#); [18:37](#); [21:7](#))

# Imperatives — Other Uses

## Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for imperative sentences in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes]]

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

## Examples From the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, “**Do not go down** to Egypt; **live** in the land that I tell you to live in.” (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

## Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command “Be clean” means to “be healed” so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

“I am willing. **Be clean.**” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general, second-person command, as in the ULT:

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like “light must be.”

## Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

## Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the **condition** under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen **if** they love wisdom.

**Do not abandon** wisdom and she will watch over you;  
**love** her and she will keep you safe. (Proverbs 4:6 ULT)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6, below, is to teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

**Teach** a child the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
- (3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

**Be clean.** (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

“You are now clean.”  
“I now cleanse you.”

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, “**There is now light**” and there was light.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

God blessed them and said to them, “**My will for you is that you be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. I want you to have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, ‘Let there be light,’ **so** there was light.  
God said, “Light must be;” **as a result**, there was light.

(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

**“If** you teach a child the way he should go,  
**then** when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”

(Go back to: [John 2:19](#); [4:7](#); [4:31](#); [4:49](#))

## Information Structure

### Description

Different languages arrange the parts of the sentence in different ways. In English, a sentence normally has the subject first, then the verb, then the object, then other modifiers, like this: Peter painted his house yesterday.

Many other languages normally put these things in a different order such as: Painted yesterday Peter his house.

Although all languages have a normal order for parts of a sentence, this order can change depending on what information the speaker or writer considers to be the most important.

Suppose that someone is answering the question, “What did Peter paint yesterday?” The person asking the question already knows all of the information in our sentence above except for the object, “his house.” Therefore, that becomes the most important part of the information, and a person answering in English might say “His house is what Peter painted (yesterday).”

This puts the most important information first, which is normal for English. Many Other Languages would normally put the most important information last. In the flow of a text, the most important information is usually what the writer considers to be new information for the reader. In some languages the new information comes first, and in others it comes last.

This page answers the question: *How do languages arrange the parts of a sentence?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Different languages arrange the parts of a sentence in different ways. If you (the translator) copy the order of the parts of a sentence from the source, it may not make sense in your language.
- Different languages put important or new information in different places in the sentence. If you keep the important or new information in the same place that it had in the source language, it may be confusing or give the wrong message in your language.

### Examples From the Bible

They all ate until they were satisfied. (Mark 6:42 ULT)

The parts of this sentence were in a different order in the original Greek source language. They were like this: And they ate all and they were satisfied.

In English, this means that the people ate everything. But the next verse says that they took up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces of food. In order for this to not be so confusing, the translators of the ULT put the parts of the sentence in the right order for English.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in an desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

In this verse, what the disciples say to Jesus puts the important information first, that he should send the crowd away. In languages that put the important information last, people would understand that the reason that they gave, being in an isolated place, is the most important part of their message to Jesus. They might then think that the disciples are afraid of the spirits in that place, and that sending the people to buy food is a way to protect them from the spirits. That is the wrong message.



Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

In this verse, the most important part of the information is first, that “woe” is coming on the people for what they are doing. The reason that supports that warning comes last. This could be confusing for people who expect the important information to come last.

## Translation Strategies

(1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

(2) Study where your language puts the new or important information, and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

## Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

This is the verse in the original Greek order:

And he went out from there and came to the hometown his, and they followed him the disciples his. (Mark 6:1)

The ULT has put this into the normal order for English:

Now Jesus went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. (Mark 6:1 ULT)

(2) Study where your language puts the new or important information and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in a desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Because we are here in an desolate place, send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food.”

Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

When all men speak well of you, which is just as people’s ancestors treated the false prophets, then woe to you!

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-order\]\]](#)  
[Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:12](#); [4:1](#); [6:10](#); [7:34](#); [7:38](#); [8:21](#); [8:26](#); [10:17](#))

# 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

[Order of 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](#)

[Introduction of New and Old Participants](#)

(Go back to: [John 2:1](#); [2:12](#); [2:23](#); [3:1](#); [4:1](#); [4:43](#); [8:12](#); [8:21](#); [12:1](#); [12:12](#); [18:1](#))

# Introduction of New and Old Participants

## Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are **new participants**. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are **old participants**.

Now **there was a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus** ... **This man** came to Jesus at night ... Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a)

This page answers the question: *Why cannot the readers of my translation understand who the author was writing about?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]  
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

The first bolded phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. After being introduced, he is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he has become an old participant.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

## Examples From the Bible

### New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man,” as in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who his family was, and what his name was.

**Now there was a man** from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2a ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important participant is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah’s wife is simply referred to as “his wife.” This phrase shows her relationship to him.

Now there was one man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah.  
**His wife** was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

Now King David was old, he had advanced in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm enough for him. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

## Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his,” and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she.”

His wife was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah’s wife is referred to by the noun phrase “the wife.”

The angel of Yahweh appeared to the wife and he said to her ... (Judges 13:3a ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant’s name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to by his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh. (Judges 13:8a ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages, people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See Verbs.)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.
- (2) If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
- (3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language’s ways of introducing new participants.

Then Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated as Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth ... (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) — Starting the sentence with Joseph’s name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.

There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement). There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

- (2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

And it happened that when he was praying in a certain place, when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1 ULT) — Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who “he” refers to.

It happened when Jesus finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”

(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20) — Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might prefer the pronoun.

Joseph's master took **him** and put **him** in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and **he** stayed there in the prison.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Pronouns — When to Use Them](#)

(Go back to: [John 3:1](#); [4:46](#); [5:5](#); [11:1](#); [11:49](#); [12:20](#))

# Irony

## Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "People who are well do not have need of a physician, but those who have sickness. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."  
(Luke 5:31-32 ULT)

When Jesus spoke of "righteous people," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

## Examples From the Bible

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9b ULT)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?  
Can you find the way back to their houses for them?  
**Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then; "the number of your days is so large!"** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two phrases in bold above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They



emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! **You began to reign** apart from us, and I wish you really did reign, so that we also might reign with you. (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULT)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

## Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
- (2) The irony is **not** found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

**You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!  
**You act like it is good to reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!

I did not come to call **the righteous**, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32 ULT)

I did not come to call **people who think that they are righteous** to repentance, but to call sinners to repentance.

- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

**You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God** so you may keep your tradition!

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

'Present your case,' says Yahweh; 'present your best arguments for your idols,' says the King of Jacob. Your idols **cannot bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen** so we may know these things well. We cannot hear them because **they cannot speak** to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?

Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

**Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;  
the number of your days is so large!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Litotes](#)

(Go back to: [John 9 General Notes](#); [9:27](#); [10:32](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [19:3](#))

# Kinship

## Description

This page answers the question: *What are kinship terms and how can I translate them?*

Kinship terms refer to those words used to describe people related to one another in familial relationships. These terms vary widely in their specificity from language to language. They range from the (Western) nuclear or immediate family (father-son, husband-wife) out to broad clan relationships in other cultures.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Depending on the language translators may need to use specific terms to designate the accurate kinship relationship. In some languages a different term may be used based on siblings' birth order. In others, the side of the family (father's or mother's), age, marital status, etc. may determine the term used. Different terms may be used based on the gender of the speaker and/or addressee. Translators may need to make sure they know the exact relationship between two related people in the Bible to find the correct term. Sometimes these terms are difficult even for native speakers to remember and translators may need to seek community help in finding the correct term. Another complicating issue is that the Bible may not give enough information about the relationship for translators to determine the correct term in the language being translated into. In this case, translators will have to use a more general term or simply pick a satisfactory term based on the limited information available.

Sometimes terms that seem like kinship terms are used for people who are not necessarily related. For instance, an older person may refer to a younger man or woman as "my son" or "my daughter."

## Examples from the Bible

Then Yahweh said to Cain, "Where is Abel **your brother**?" He said, "I do not know. Am I **my brother's** keeper?" (Genesis 4:9 ULT)

Abel was Cain's younger brother.

Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock and said to them, "I see **your father's** attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me." (Genesis 31:4-5 ULT)

Jacob is referring here to his father-in-law. In some languages there may be a specific term for a man's father-in-law, however, in this case it is better to retain the form **your father** as Jacob may be using it to distance himself from Laban.

And Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro **his father-in-law**, the priest of Midian. (Exodus 3:1a ULT)

Unlike the previous instance, if your language has a term for a man's father-in-law this is a good place to use it.

And **his sister** stationed herself at a distance to know what would be done to him. (Exodus 2:4 ULT)

From context we know that this was Miriam, Moses's older sister. In some languages this may require a specific term. In others, the term for older sister may be only used when the younger sibling is addressing and/or referring to his or her sister.

Then she and **her daughters-in-law** arose to return from the fields of Moab (Ruth 1:6a ULT)

Ruth & Orpah are Naomi's daughters-in-law.

Then she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has turned back to her people and to her gods.” (Ruth 1:15 ULT)

Orpah had been the wife of Ruth’s husband’s brother. This may be a different term in your language than if she had been Ruth’s husband’s sister.

Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Will you not listen to me, **my daughter**?” (Ruth 2:8a ULT)

Boaz is not Ruth’s father; he is simply using the term to address a younger woman.

And behold, **your relative** Elizabeth—she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren. (Luke 1:36 ULT)

While the KJV translated this as **cousin**, the term simply means a related woman.

## Translation Strategies

- (1) Find out the exact relationship specified and translate using the term your language uses.
- (2) If the text does not specify the relationship as clearly as your language would, either:
  - (a) settle on a more general term.
  - (b) use a specific term if required by your language, choosing the one that is most likely to be correct.

## Translation Strategies Applied

This is not an issue in English, so the following illustrations draw on other languages.

In Korean, there are several terms for brother and sister, the use of them depends on the speaker’s (or referent’s) sex and birth order. Examples are from the Korean Living Bible, found on [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)

Genesis 30:1 Rachel is jealous of her “eonni,” which is the term a woman uses for her older sister.

Genesis 34:31 Simeon and Levi refer to Dinah as “nui,” a general term for sister.

Genesis 37:16 Joseph refers to his brothers as “hyeong,” which is the term a man uses for his older brother(s).

Genesis 45:12 Joseph refers to Benjamin as “dongsaeng,” which roughly means sibling, usually younger.

In Russian, in-law terms are complex. For instance, “nevěstka” is the term for a brother’s (or brother-in-law’s) wife; a woman uses the same term for her daughter-in-law but her husband would call the same daughter-in-law “snoxá.”

Examples from the Russian Synodal Version.

Genesis 38:25 Tamar sends a message to her father-in-law, Judah. The term used is “svekor.” This is used for a woman’s husband’s father.

Exodus 3:1 Moses is watching his father-in-law’s herd. The term used is “test’.” This is used for a man’s wife’s father.

(Go back to: [John 7:3](#); [7:5](#); [7:10](#); [11:1](#); [11:2](#); [11:5](#); [11:19](#); [11:21](#); [11:23](#); [11:28](#); [11:39](#))

# 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: [John 1:47](#); [3:34](#); [6:35](#); [6:37](#); [6:39](#); [11:26](#))

# 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: [John 1 General Notes](#); [1:4](#); [1:5](#); [1:7](#); [1:8](#); [1:9](#); [1:12](#); [1:13](#); [1:14](#); [1:23](#); [1:27](#); [1:29](#); [1:33](#); [1:36](#); [1:47](#); [2:17](#); [3:2](#); [3:3](#); [3:5](#); [3:8](#); [3:19](#); [3:20](#); [3:21](#); [3:26](#); [3:29](#); [3:30](#); [3:31](#); [3:36](#); [4:19](#); [4:34](#); [4:35](#); [5:14](#); [5:19](#); [5:20](#); [5:24](#); [5:35](#); [5:38](#); [Notes](#); [6:18](#); [6:31](#); [6:40](#); [6:41](#); [6:48](#); [6:49](#); [6:50](#); [6:51](#); [6:58](#); [6:66](#); [Notes](#); [7:12](#); [7:37](#); [7:38](#); [8:12](#); [8:15](#); [8:29](#); [8:34](#); [8:36](#); [8:39](#); [8:43](#); [8:44](#); [8:47](#); [8:51](#); [8:52](#); [8:53](#); [8:56](#); [Notes](#); [9:4](#); [9:5](#); [9:22](#); [9:31](#); [9:34](#); [9:35](#); [9:39](#); [9:40](#); [9:41](#); [10:3](#); [10:7](#); [10:8](#); [10:9](#); [10:10](#); [10:11](#); [10:12](#); [10:13](#); [10:14](#); [10:15](#); [10:16](#); [10:17](#); [10:18](#); [10:26](#); [10:27](#); [10:35](#); [11:3](#); [11:9](#); [11:52](#); [11:54](#); [Notes](#); [12:24](#); [12:35](#); [12:36](#); [12:40](#); [12:46](#); [13:10](#); [14:4](#); [14:6](#); [Notes](#); [15:1](#); [15:2](#); [15:3](#); [15:5](#); [15:6](#); [15:8](#); [15:16](#); [18:11](#); [19:26](#); [19:27](#); [Notes](#); [21:15](#); [21:16](#); [21:17](#))

# 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: [John 1:10](#); [1:12](#); [1:13](#); [1:23](#); [1:29](#); [1:31](#); [2:4](#); [2:23](#); [3:6](#); [3:16](#); [3:17](#); [3:18](#); [3:27](#); [3:31](#); [4:41](#); [4:42](#); [4:50](#); [5:24](#); [5:38](#); [5:43](#); [5:45](#); [5:47](#); [6:33](#); [6:51](#); [6:52](#); [6:60](#); [6:63](#); [6:68](#); [7:4](#); [7:6](#); [7:7](#); [7:30](#); [7:36](#); [7:38](#); [7:40](#); [8:12](#); [8:20](#); [8:23](#); [8:26](#); [8:35](#); [8:37](#); [8:43](#); [8:47](#); [8:51](#); [8:55](#); [8:56](#); [9:5](#); [9:10](#); [9:14](#); [9:17](#); [9:26](#); [9:30](#); [9:32](#); [10:19](#); [10:21](#); [10:25](#); [10:28](#); [10:29](#); [10:35](#); [10:39](#); [11:37](#); [12:13](#); [12:15](#); [12:19](#); [12:27](#); [12:28](#); [12:31](#); [12:38](#); [12:40](#); [12:46](#); [13:3](#); [14:1](#); [14:13](#); [14:14](#); [14:17](#); [14:19](#); [14:22](#); [14:27](#); [14:31](#); [15:16](#); [15:18](#); [15:19](#); [15:20](#); [15:21](#); [15:25](#); [15:27](#); [16:4](#); [16:6](#); [16:8](#); [16:20](#); [16:22](#); [16:23](#); [16:26](#); [16:28](#); [16:33](#); [17:1](#); [17:4](#); [17:6](#); [17:9](#); [17:11](#); [17:12](#); [17:13](#); [17:14](#); [17:15](#); [17:18](#); [17:21](#); [17:23](#); [17:25](#); [17:26](#); [18:20](#); [18:36](#); [20:31](#))

## 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.

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]]

### 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.

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: [John 6:67](#); [6:70](#); [6:71](#))



## Order of Events

### Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

This page answers the question: *Why are some events not listed in the order they happened, and how do I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro]]

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs]]

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

### Examples From the Bible

He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

### Translation Strategies

- (1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
- (2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)
- (3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

20 But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison**, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at [https://ufw.io/figs\\_events](https://ufw.io/figs_events).

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Background Information](#)

[Connecting Words and Phrases](#)

[Introduction of a New Event](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-versebridge\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [John 11:2](#); [11:56](#); [11:57](#))

# 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-numbers\]\]](#)

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: [John 21:14](#); [21:17](#))

## Parables

A parable is a short story that teaches something(s) that is true, and delivers the lesson in a way that is easy to understand and hard to forget.

This page answers the question: *What is a parable?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

## Description

A parable is a short story that is told to teach something(s) that is true. Though the events in a parable could happen, they did not actually happen. They are told only to teach the lesson(s) that the listener is meant to learn. Parables rarely contain the names of specific people. (This may help you identify what is a parable and what is an account of a real event.) Parables often use figures of speech such as [simile](#) and [metaphor](#).

Then he also told them a parable. "A blind man is not able to guide a blind man, is he? Would not both fall into a pit?" (Luke 6:39 ULT)

This parable teaches that if a person does not have spiritual understanding, he cannot help someone else to understand spiritual things.

## Examples From the Bible

Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket but, rather, on the lampstand, and it shines for everyone in the house. Let your light shine before people in such a way that they see your good deeds and praise your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:15-16 ULT)

This parable teaches us not to hide the way we live for God from other people.

>

Then Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. This seed is indeed the smallest of all other seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." (Matthew 13:31-32 ULT)

This parable teaches that the kingdom of God may seem small at first, but it will grow and spread throughout the world.

## Translation Strategies

(1) If a parable is hard to understand because it has unknown objects in it, you can replace the unknown objects with objects that people in your culture know. However, be careful to keep the lesson the same.

(2) If the teaching of the parable is unclear, consider telling a little about what it teaches in the introduction, such as "Jesus told this story about being generous."

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If a parable is hard to understand because it has unknown objects in it, you can replace the unknown objects with objects that people in your culture know. However, be careful to keep the lesson the same.

Jesus also said to them, "The lamp is not brought in order to put it under a basket, or under the bed, is it? Is it not so that it might be put on the **lampstand**?" (Mark 4:21 ULT)

If people do not know what a lampstand is, you could substitute something else that people put a light on so it can give light to the house.

Jesus also said to them, "The lamp is not brought in order to put it under a basket, or under the bed, is it? Is it not so that it might be put on **a high shelf?**"

Then Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and **sowed** in his field. It is indeed the smallest of all the seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." (Matthew 13:31-32 ULT)

To sow seeds means to toss them so that they scatter on the ground. If people are not familiar with sowing, you can substitute planting.

Then Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and **planted** in his field. This seed is indeed the smallest of all the seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

(2) If the teaching of the parable is unclear, consider telling a little about what it teaches in the introduction, such as "Jesus told this story about being generous."

**Jesus also said to them,** "The lamp is not brought in order to put it under a basket, or under the bed, is it? Is it not so that it might be put on the lampstand?" (Mark 4:21 ULT)

**Jesus told them a parable about why they should witness openly.** Jesus also said to them, "The lamp is not brought in order to put it under a basket, or under the bed, is it? Is it not so that it might be put on the lampstand?" (Mark 4:21 ULT)

**Then Jesus presented another parable to them.** He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is indeed the smallest of all the seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." (Matthew 13:31-32 ULT)

**Then Jesus presented another parable to them about how the kingdom of God grows.** He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. This seed is indeed the smallest of all the seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

(Go back to: [John 10:1](#); [10:6](#))

# 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: [John 3:17](#))

# Personification

## Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

## Examples From the Bible

You cannot **serve** God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom **call** out? Does not Understanding **raise her voice**? (Proverbs 8:1 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

## Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

- (1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
- (2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
- (3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

**Sin crouches** at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

Sin is at your door, **waiting to attack you**.

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

**NOTE:** We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-apostrophe\]\]](#)  
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [John 5:36](#); [5:39](#); [7:38](#); [7:42](#); [7:51](#); [8:32](#); [10:25](#); [10:35](#))

# Possession

## Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word “**of**,” by using **an apostrophe and the letter “s”**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my grandfather’s house
- **his** house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.
  - My clothes — The clothes that I own
- Social Relationship — Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.
  - my mother — the woman who gave birth to me, or the woman who cared for me
  - my teacher — the person who teaches me
- Association — A particular thing is associated with a particular person, place, or thing.
  - David’s sickness — the sickness that David is experiencing
  - the fear of the Lord — the fear that is appropriate for a human being to have when relating to the Lord
- Contents — Something has something in it.
  - a bag of clothes — a bag that has clothes in it, or a bag that is full of clothes
- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.
  - my head — the head that is part of my body
  - the roof of a house — the roof that is part of a house

In some languages there is a special form of possession, termed **inalienable possession**. This form of possession is used for things that cannot be removed from you, as opposed to things you could lose. In the examples above, *my head* and *my mother* are examples of inalienable possession (at least in some languages), while *my clothes* or *my teacher* would be alienably possessed. What may be considered alienable vs. inalienable may differ by language.

This page answers the question: *What is possession and how can I translate phrases that show it?*

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]]

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between two ideas represented by the two nouns when one is in the grammatical relationship of possessing the other.
- Some languages do not use grammatical possession for all of the situations that your source text Bible might use it for.

## Examples From the Bible

**Ownership** — In the example below, the son owned the money.

█ The younger son ... wasted his wealth by living recklessly. (Luke 15:13b)

**Social Relationship** — In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

█ Then **the disciples of John** came to him. (Matthew 9:14a ULT)

**Association** — In the example below, the gospel is the message associated with Paul because he preaches it.

█ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to **my gospel**, (2 Timothy 2:8 ULT)

**Material** — In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

█ On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

**Contents** — In the example below, the cup has water in it.

█ For whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

**Part of a whole** — In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

█ But Uriah slept at **the door of the king's palace**. (2 Samuel 11:9a ULT)

**Part of a group** — In the example below, “us” refers to the whole group and “each one” refers to the individual members.

█ Now to **each one of us** grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7 ULT)

## Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

**Subject** — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, **John baptized people**.

█ The **baptism of John**, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me. (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, **Christ loves us**.

█ Who will separate us from the **love of Christ**? (Romans 8:35)

**Object** — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who or what something would happen to. In the example below, **people love money**.

For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10a ULT)

**Instrument** — Sometimes the word after “of” tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would **punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords**.

Then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings **the punishment of the sword**. (Job 19:29a ULT)

**Representation** — In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their **baptism represented their repentance**.

John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance** for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULT)

## Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

- (1) Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
- (2) Read the verse in the UST. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
- (3) See what the notes say about it.

## Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.
- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.
- (3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.

On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

“On their heads were **gold crowns**”

- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.

Whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Whoever gives you a **cup that has water in it** to drink ... will not lose his reward.

Wealth is worthless on **the day of wrath**. (Proverbs 11:4a ULT)

Wealth is worthless on **the day when God shows his wrath**.  
or:

Wealth is worthless on the **day when God punishes people because of his wrath**.

(3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. (In the example below, there are two possession relationships, “punishment of Yahweh” and “your God.”)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen **the punishment of Yahweh your God**. (Deuteronomy 11:2a ULT)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen **how Yahweh, the God whom you worship, punished the people of Egypt**.

You will only observe and see the **punishment of the wicked**. (Psalms 91:8 ULT)

You will only observe and see **how Yahweh punishes the wicked**.

You will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (Acts 2:38b ULT)

You will receive the **Holy Spirit, whom God will give to you**.

(Go back to: [John 1:4](#); [4:10](#); [5:29](#); [5:42](#); [6:33](#); [6:35](#); [6:68](#); [6:69](#); [7:13](#); [7:35](#); [8:12](#); [8:39](#); [9:3](#); [9:4](#); [9:7](#); [10:2](#); [10:7](#); [10:23](#); [10:37](#); [11:13](#); [11:40](#))



# Pronouns — When to Use Them

## Description

When we talk or write, we use pronouns to refer to people or things without always having to repeat the noun or name. Usually, the first time we refer to someone in a story, we use a descriptive phrase or a name. The next time we might refer to that person with a simple noun or by name. After that we might refer to him simply with a pronoun as long as we think that our listeners will be able to understand easily to whom the pronoun refers.

This page answers the question: *How do I decide whether or not to use a pronoun?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. **This man** came to Jesus at night. Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a ULT)

In John 3, Nicodemus is first referred to with noun phrases and his name. Then he is referred to with the noun phrase “this man.” Then he is referred to with the pronoun “him.”

Each language has its rules and exceptions to this usual way of referring to people and things.

- In some languages, the first time something is referred to in a paragraph or chapter, it is referred to with a noun rather than a pronoun.
- The main character is the person whom a story is about. In some languages, after a main character is introduced in a story, he is usually referred to with a pronoun. Some languages have special pronouns that refer only to the main character.
- In some languages, marking on the verb helps people know who the subject is. (See Verbs.) In some of these languages, listeners rely on this marking to help them understand who the subject is. Speakers will use a pronoun, noun phrase, or proper name only when they want either to emphasize or to clarify who the subject is.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- If translators use a pronoun at the wrong time for their language, readers might not know about whom the writer is talking.
- If translators too frequently refer to a main character by name, listeners of some languages might not realize that the person is a main character, or they might think that there is a new character with the same name.
- If translators use pronouns, nouns, or names at the wrong time, people might think that there is some special emphasis on the person or thing to which it refers.

## Examples From the Bible

The example below occurs at the beginning of a chapter. In some languages it might not be clear to whom the pronouns refer.

Then Jesus entered into the synagogue again, and there was a man who had a withered hand. Some people watched **him** closely to see if **he** would heal **him** on the Sabbath so that they might accuse **him**. (Mark 3:1-2 ULT)

In the example below, two men are named in the first sentence. It might not be clear whom “he” in the second sentence refers to.

Now after some days had passed, **King Agrippa** and Bernice came down to Caesarea to pay their respects to **Festus**. After **he** had been there for many days, Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul. (Acts 25:13-14)

Jesus is the main character of the book of Matthew, but in the verses below he is referred to four times by name. This may lead speakers of some languages to think that Jesus is not the main character. Or it might lead them to think that there is more than one person named Jesus in this story. Or it might lead them to think that there is some kind of emphasis on him, even though there is no emphasis.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, "See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath." But **Jesus** said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?" Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.
- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.

Again **he** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **him** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:1-2)

Again **Jesus** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **Jesus** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath.

- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, "See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath." But **Jesus** said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?" Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

This may be translated as:

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **him**, "See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath." But **he** said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?" Then **he** left from there and went into their synagogue.

(Go back to: [John 1:2](#); [1:3](#); [1:4](#); [1:5](#); [1:7](#); [1:8](#); [1:10](#); [1:11](#); [1:12](#); [1:13](#); [1:14](#); [1:15](#); [1:16](#); [1:18](#); [1:21](#); [1:22](#); [1:23](#); [1:25](#); [1:28](#); [1:31](#); [1:32](#); [1:34](#); [1:37](#); [1:38](#); [1:41](#); [1:42](#); [1:46](#); [1:50](#); [2:7](#); [2:8](#); [2:12](#); [2:15](#); [2:18](#); [2:21](#); [2:23](#); [3:2](#); [3:9](#); [3:10](#); [3:16](#); [3:17](#); [3:18](#);

3:26; 3:28; 3:30; 3:32; 3:33; 3:34; 4:3; 4:9; 4:19; 4:25; 4:30; 4:40; 4:42; 4:43; 4:46; 4:47; 4:51; 4:52; 5:12; 5:14; 5:16; 5:17;  
5:18; 5:19; 5:20; 5:27; 5:28; 5:34; 5:35; 5:39; 6:6; 6:8; 6:29; 6:31; 6:39; 6:59; 6:61; 6:65; 7:7; 7:30; 7:38; 7:44; 8:25; 8:40;  
8:42; 8:44; 9:3; 9:22; 9:25; 10:3; 10:6; 10:10; 10:41; 11:13; 11:56)

# Quotations and Quote Margins

## Description

This page answers the question: *What are quote margins and where should I put them?*

When saying that someone said something, we often tell who spoke, whom they spoke to, and what they said. The information about who spoke and whom they spoke to is called the quote margin. What the person said is the quotation. (This is also called a quote.) In some languages the quote margin may come first, last, or even in between two parts of the quotation.

The quote margins are bolded below.

- **She said**, "The food is ready. Come and eat."
- "The food is ready. Come and eat," **she said**.
- "The food is ready," **she said**. "Come and eat."

Also in some languages, the quote margin may have more than one verb meaning "said."

But his mother **answered** and **said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John." (Luke 1:60 ULT)

When writing that someone said something, some languages put the quote (what was said) in quotation marks called inverted commas (" "). Some languages use other symbols around the quotation, such as these angle quote marks (« »), or something else.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to put the quote margin where it is most clear and natural in their language.
- Translators need to decide whether they want the quote margin to have one or two verbs meaning "said."
- Translators need to decide which marks to use around the quotation.

## Examples From the Bible

### Quote margin before the quote

**Then Zechariah said to the angel**, "How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days." (Luke 1:18 ULT)

Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and **they said to him**, "Teacher, what should we do?" (Luke 3:12 ULT)

So **he said to them**, "Collect nothing more than what you have been ordered." (Luke 3:13 ULT)

### Quote margin after the quote

Yahweh relented concerning this. "It will not happen," **he said**. (Amos 7:3 ULT)

### Quote margin between two parts of the quote

"I will hide my face from them," **he said**, "and I will see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful." (Deuteronomy 32:20 ULT)

For look, days are coming—**this is Yahweh’s declaration**—when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah. (Jeremiah 30:3a ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.
- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning “said.”

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.

**He said**, “Therefore, those among you who are leaders should go down with us. If there is something wrong with the man, let them accuse him.” (Acts 25:5 ULT)

“Therefore, those who can should go there with us,” **he said**. “If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him.”

“Therefore, those who can should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him,” **he said**.

“Therefore, those who can,” **he said**, “should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him.”

- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning “said.”

But his mother **answered and said**, “No. Rather, he will be called John.” (Luke 1:60 ULT)

But his mother **replied**, “No. Rather, he will be called John.”

But his mother **said**, “No. Rather, he will be called John.”

But his mother **answered** like this. “No. Rather, he will be called John,” she **said**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Direct and Indirect Quotations](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:15](#); [1:26](#); [1:32](#); [1:42](#))

# Quote Markings

## Description

Some languages use quotation marks to mark off direct quotes from the rest of the text. English uses the mark " immediately before a quote and " immediately after it.

- John said, "I do not know when I will arrive."

Quotation marks are not used with indirect quotes.

- John said that he did not know when he would arrive.

When there are several layers of quotations inside of other quotations, it might be hard for readers to understand who is saying what. Alternating two kinds of quotation marks can help careful readers to keep track of them. In English, the outermost quotation has double quote marks, and the next quotation within it has single marks. If there is a third embedded quote, that quotation again has double quotation marks.

- Mary said, "John said, 'I do not know when I will arrive.' "
- Bob said, "Mary told me, 'John said, "I do not know when I will arrive." ' "

Some languages use other kinds of quotation marks: Here are some examples: , ' ' „ " " " < > « » 7 — .

## Examples From the Bible

The examples below show the kind of quotation markings used in the ULT.

### A quotation with only one layer

A first layer direct quote has double quotation marks around it.

So the king replied, "That is Elijah the Tishbite." (2 Kings 1:8b ULT)

### Quotations with two layers

A second layer direct quote has single quotation marks around it. We have printed it and the phrase in bold type for you to see them clearly.

They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, '**Pick it up and walk**'?" (John 5:12 ULT)

He sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you. As you enter, you will find a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. If any one asks you, '**Why are you untying it?**' you will say thus, '**The Lord has need of it.**'" (Luke 19:29b-31 ULT)

### A quotation with three layers

A third layer direct quote has double quotation marks around it. We have printed it in bold type for you to see them clearly.

Abraham said, "Because I thought, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.' Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. When God caused me to leave my

This page answers the question: *How can quotes be marked, especially when there are quotes within quotes?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Direct and Indirect Quotations](#)

father's house and travel from place to place, I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "**He is my brother.**"' (Genesis 20:11-13 ULT)

## A quotation with four layers

A fourth layer direct quote has single quotation marks around it. We have printed it in bold for you to see it clearly.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: '**Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.**' " " " (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

## Quote Marking Strategies

Here are some ways you may be able to help readers see where each quote starts and ends so they can more easily know who said what.

- (1) Alternate two kinds of quote marks to show layers of direct quotation. English alternates double quote marks and single quote marks.
- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes in order to use fewer quote marks, since indirect quotes do not need them. (See [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#).)
- (3) If a quotation is very long and has many layers of quotation in it, indent the main overall quote, and use quote marks only for the direct quotes inside of it.

## Examples of Quote Marking Strategies Applied

- (1) Alternate two kinds of quotation marks to show layers of direct quotation as shown in the ULT text below.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"'" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

- (2) Translate one or more of the quotes as indirect quotes in order to use fewer quotation marks, since indirect quotes do not need them. In English, the word "that" can introduce an indirect quote. In the example below, everything after the word "that" is an indirect quote of what the messengers said to the king. Within that indirect quote, there are some direct quotes marked with double and single quotation marks.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"'" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They told him **that** a man came to meet them who said to them, "Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"'"

- (3) If a quotation is very long and has many layers of quotation in it, indent the main overall quote, and use quote marks only for the direct quotes inside of it.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They said to him,

A man came to meet us who said to us, "Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'""

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Quotes within Quotes](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:23](#))



# Quotes within Quotes

## Description

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When a quote has quotes within it, we say there are “layers” of quotation, and each of the quotes is a layer. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to know who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

This page answers the question: *What is a quote within a quote, and how can I help the readers understand who is saying what?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Direct and Indirect Quotations](#)

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

When there is a quote within a quote, the listener needs to know who the pronouns refer to. For example: if a quote that is inside a quote has the word “I,” the listener needs to know whether “I” refers to the speaker of the inner quote or the outer quote.

Some languages make this clear by using different kinds of quotes when there are quotes within quotes.

They may use direct quotes for some and indirect quotes for others.

Some languages do not use indirect quotes.

## Examples From the Bible

### A quotation with only one layer

But Paul said, “I, however, was indeed born a citizen.” (Acts 22:28b ULT)

### Quotations with two layers

Jesus answered and said to them, “Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name. They will say, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will lead many astray.” (Matthew 24:4-5 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to his disciples. The second layer is what other people will say.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king.” (John 18:37b ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to Pilate. The second layer is what Pilate said about Jesus.

### A quotation with three layers

Abraham said, “... I said to her, ‘You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, **“He is my brother.”**’” (Genesis 20:11a, 13 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Abraham responded to Abimelech. The second layer is what Abraham had told his wife. The third layer is what he wanted his wife to say. (We have bolded the third layer.)

## A quotation with four layers

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: **'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal- Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'**"'" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

The outermost layer is what the messengers said to the king. The second layer is what the man who had met the messengers told them. The third is what that man wanted the messengers to say to the king. The fourth is what Yahweh said. (We have bolded the fourth layer.)

## Translation Strategies

Some languages use only direct quotes. Other languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes. In those languages it might sound strange and perhaps even be confusing if there are many layers of direct quotes.

- (1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes.
- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. (See [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#).)

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes. In the example below we have bolded the indirect quotes in the ULT and the quotes that we have changed to direct quotes below it.

Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul, saying, "There is a certain man was left here as a prisoner by Felix. So I am uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked **if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there to be judged concerning these things**. But when Paul appealed **to keep him in custody for the decision of the emperor**, I ordered him **to be held in custody until when I could send him to Caesar**." (Acts 25:14b, 20-21 ULT)

Festus presented Paul's case to the king. He said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. I was uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked him, **'Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged there concerning these things?'** But when Paul said, **'I want to be kept in custody for the emperor's decision,'** I told the guard, **'Keep him in custody until when I can send him to Caesar.'**"

- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. In English the word "that" can come before indirect quotes. It is bolded in the examples below. The pronouns that changed because of the indirect quote are also bolded.

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Speak to them and say, 'During the evenings you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be satisfied with bread. And you will know that I am Yahweh your God.'" (Exodus 16:11-12 ULT)

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Tell them **that** during the evenings **they** will eat meat, and in the morning **they** will be satisfied with bread. And **they** will know that I am Yahweh **their** God."

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'""'" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They told him **that** a man had come to meet **them** who said to **them**, "Go back to the king who sent you, and tell him **that** Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Quote Markings](#)

(Go back to: [John 1:15](#); [1:23](#); [3:28](#); [4:10](#); [4:17](#); [5:11](#); [5:12](#); [6:31](#); [6:42](#); [6:45](#); [7:36](#); [7:38](#); [8:22](#); [8:33](#); [8:52](#); [8:54](#); [9:41](#); [10:34](#); [10:36](#))

## 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

### 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 it’s own place.**”

(Go back to: [John 4:2](#); [4:44](#); [4:53](#); [5:37](#); [6:6](#); [6:15](#); [7:4](#); [10:18](#); [13:32](#))

# 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: [John 1:46](#); [1:50](#); [2:4](#); [2:20](#); [3:4](#); [3:9](#); [3:10](#); [3:12](#); [4:9](#); [4:12](#); [4:35](#); [5:44](#); [5:47](#); [6:9](#); [6:42](#); [6:52](#); [6:60](#); [6:68](#); [6:70](#); [7:15](#); [7:19](#); [7:20](#); [7:23](#); [7:25](#); [7:31](#); [7:35](#); [7:41](#); [7:42](#); [7:48](#); [7:51](#); [7:52](#); [8:25](#); [8:33](#); [8:43](#); [8:46](#); [8:48](#); [8:53](#); [8:57](#); [9:8](#); [9:16](#); [9:27](#); [9:34](#); [9:40](#); [10:20](#); [10:21](#); [10:34](#); [10:36](#); [11:8](#); [11:9](#); [11:37](#); [11:40](#); [11:56](#); [12:5](#); [12:27](#); [12:38](#); [13:6](#); [13:12](#); [13:38](#); [14:9](#); [14:10](#); [16:19](#); [16:31](#); [18:11](#); [18:17](#); [18:21](#); [18:22](#); [18:23](#); [18:25](#); [18:26](#); [18:35](#); [18:38](#); [19:10](#); [21:22](#))

# 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: [John 1:32](#); [3:14](#); [Notes](#))

# Statements — Other Uses

## Description

Normally statements are used to give information. Sometimes they are used in the Bible for other functions.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use a statement for some of the functions that statements are used for in the Bible.

## Examples From the Bible

Statements are normally used to give **information**. All of the sentences in John 1:6-8 below are statements, and their function is to give information.

There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness in order to testify about the light, that all might believe through him. John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light. (John 1:6-8 ULT)

A statement can also be used as a **command** to tell someone what to do. In the examples below, the high priest used statements with the verb “will” to tell people what to do.

He commanded them, saying, “This is what you **must** do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath **will** keep watch over the king’s house, and a third **will** be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse.” (2 Kings 11:5 ULT)

A statement can also be used to give **instructions**. The speaker below was not just telling Joseph about something Joseph would do in the future; he was telling Joseph what he needed to do.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

A statement can also be used to make a **request**. The man with leprosy was not just saying what Jesus was able to do. He was also asking Jesus to heal him.

Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, **you can make me clean.**” (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

A statement can also be used to **perform** something. By telling Adam that the ground was cursed because of him, God actually cursed it.

... **cursed is the ground** because of you; (Genesis 3:17b ULT)

By telling a man that his sins were forgiven, **Jesus forgave** the man’s sins.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “**Son, your sins are forgiven.**” (Mark 2:5 ULT)

## Translation Strategies

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a sentence type** that would express that function.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for statements?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentencetypes]]

(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **add a sentence type** that would express that function.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a verb form** that would express that function.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a sentence type that would express that function.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

The phrase “you will call his name Jesus” is an instruction. It can be translated using the sentence type of a normal instruction.

She will give birth to a son. **Name him Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins.

(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, add a sentence type that would express that function.

Lord, **please heal me**, because I know you are able to heal me if you are willing to. (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

The function of “I know you can” is to make a request. In addition to the statement, a request can be added.

Lord, **I know you can heal me**. If you are willing, please do so.

Lord, if you are willing, please heal me. **I know you can do so**.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a verb form that would express that function.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

She will give birth to a son, and **you must call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins.

Son, your sins are forgiven. (Mark 2:5 ULT)

Son, I forgive your sins.

Son, God has forgiven your sins.

(Go back to: [John 2:3](#); [11:3](#))

# 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: [John 13 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))



# Synecdoche

## Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

■ **My soul** magnifies the Lord. (Luke 1:46b ULT)

Mary was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

■ So **the Pharisees** said to him, “Look, why are they doing that which is not lawful?” (Mark 2:24a ULT)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some readers may not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

## Example From the Bible

■ Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments. The hands are chosen to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

## Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

■ **“My soul** magnifies the Lord.” (Luke 1:46b ULT)

■ **“I** magnify the Lord.”

So **the Pharisees** said to him ... (Mark 2:24a ULT)

■ **A representative of the Pharisees** said to him ...

Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is a synecdoche, and how can I translate such a thing into my language?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

I looked on all the deeds that I had accomplished

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Metonymy](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part2]]

(Go back to: [John 1:14](#); [1:19](#); [5:10](#); [5:15](#); [5:16](#); [5:18](#); [Notes](#); [6:11](#); [6:31](#); [6:32](#); [6:34](#); [6:41](#); [6:52](#); [7:1](#); [7:11](#); [7:13](#); [7:14](#); [7:15](#); [7:28](#); [7:35](#); [8:22](#); [8:31](#); [8:48](#); [8:52](#); [8:57](#); [8:59](#); [9:18](#); [9:22](#); [10:19](#); [10:23](#); [10:24](#); [10:31](#); [10:33](#); [10:34](#); [11:8](#); [11:48](#); [11:50](#); [11:51](#); [11:52](#); [11:54](#); [11:56](#); [13:33](#); [18:12](#); [18:31](#); [18:36](#); [18:37](#); [18:38](#); [19:1](#); [19:7](#); [19:12](#); [19:13](#); [19:14](#); [19:15](#); [19:19](#); [19:31](#); [19:38](#))

## Textual Variants

### Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. Because people who use the ULT may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULT translators have sometimes included information about some of the differences between them, either in the ULT footnotes or in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULT and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULT. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

This page answers the question: *Why does the ULT have missing or added verses, and should I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-source-text\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-manuscripts\]\]](#)

### Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

<sup>10</sup> See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> <sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest manuscripts. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([ ]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

53 [Then everyone went to his own house ... 11 She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."] <sup>[2]</sup>

<sup>[2]</sup> Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

### Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULT or another version that you have access to.

- (1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.
- (2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man." <sup>16</sup> <sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man." <sup>16</sup> <sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man. <sup>16</sup> If any man has ears to hear, let him hear." <sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-chapverse\]\]](#)  
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-manuscripts\]\]](#)  
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-terms\]\]](#)  
[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-original\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Introduction to the Gospel of John](#); [John 1:34](#); [Notes](#); [7:53](#); [Notes](#); [8:1](#))

## 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 are 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: [John 3:33](#); [6:9](#); [6:11](#); [6:13](#); [6:19](#); [8:20](#); [10:1](#); [10:3](#); [10:12](#); [10:22](#); [10:23](#); [11:44](#); [12:3](#))

# Translating Son and Father

Door43 supports Bible translations that represent these concepts when they refer to God.

## Biblical Witness

**“Father” and “Son” are names that God calls himself in the Bible.**

The Bible shows that God called Jesus his Son:

After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and ... a voice came out of the heavens saying, **“This is my beloved Son.** I am very pleased with him.” (Matthew 3:16-17 ULT)

The Bible shows that Jesus called God his Father:

Jesus ... said, “I praise you **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth ... no one knows the **Son** except the **Father**, and no one knows the **Father** except the **Son.**” (Matthew 11:25a, 27b ULT) (See also: John 6:26-57)

Christians have found that “Father” and “Son” are the ideas that most essentially describe the eternal relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity to each other. The Bible indeed refers to them in various ways, but no other terms reflect the eternal love and intimacy between these Persons, nor the interdependent eternal relationship between them.

Jesus referred to God in the following terms:

Baptize them into **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** (Matthew 28:19b ULT)

The intimate, loving relationship between the Father and the Son is eternal, just as they are eternal. The Father **loves** the Son. (See John 3:35-36; 5:19-20 ULT)

**I love** the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do. (John 14:31 ULT)

**No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son.** (Luke 10:22b ULT)

The terms “Father” and “Son” also communicate that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; they are both eternal God.

Jesus said, “Father, ... glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you ... I glorified you on the earth ... Now Father, glorify me ... with the glory that **I had with you before the world was made.**” (John 17:1, 4a, 5 ULT)

But in these last days, he [God the Father] has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. Through him, he also made the universe. He is the brightness of God’s glory and **the very exact representation of his being.** He holds everything together by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:2-3a ULT)

Jesus said to him, “I have been with you for so long and you still do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (John 14:9 ULT)

This page answers the question: *Why are these concepts important in referring to God?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/guidelines-faithful\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/guidelines-sonofgod\]\]](#)



## Human Relationships

**Human fathers and sons are not perfect, but the Bible still uses those terms for the Father and Son, who are perfect.**

Just as today, human father-son relationships during Bible times were never as loving or perfect as the relationship between Jesus and his Father. But this does not mean that the translator should avoid the concepts of father and son. The Scriptures use these terms to refer to God, the perfect Father and Son, as well as to sinful human fathers and sons. In referring to God as Father and Son, choose words in your language that are widely used to refer to a human “father” and “son.” In this way you will communicate that God the Father and God the Son are of the same divine essence (they are both God), just as a human father and son are of the same human essence (they are both human and share the same human characteristics).

## Translation Strategies

(1) Think through all the possibilities within your language to translate the words “son” and “father.” Determine which words in your language best represent the divine “Son” and “Father.”

(2) If your language has more than one word for “son,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “only son” (or “first son” if necessary).

(3) If your language has more than one word for “father,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “birth father,” rather than “adoptive father.”

(See *God the Father* and *Son of God* pages in [unfoldingWord® Translation Words](#) for help translating “Father” and “Son.”)

(Go back to: [John 1:14](#); [1:18](#); [1:34](#); [1:49](#); [2:16](#); [3:16](#); [3:17](#); [3:18](#); [3:35](#); [3:36](#); [4:21](#); [4:23](#); [5:17](#); [5:18](#); [5:19](#); [5:20](#); [5:21](#); [5:22](#); [5:23](#); [5:25](#); [5:26](#); [5:36](#); [5:43](#); [6:27](#); [6:32](#); [6:37](#); [6:40](#); [6:44](#); [6:45](#); [6:46](#); [6:57](#); [6:65](#); [8:16](#); [8:18](#); [8:19](#); [8:27](#); [8:28](#); [8:36](#); [8:38](#); [8:54](#); [10:15](#); [10:17](#); [10:18](#); [10:25](#); [10:29](#); [10:30](#); [10:32](#); [10:36](#); [10:37](#); [11:4](#); [11:27](#); [11:41](#); [12:26](#); [12:27](#); [12:49](#); [13:1](#); [13:3](#); [14:2](#); [14:6](#); [14:8](#); [14:9](#); [14:10](#); [14:12](#); [14:13](#); [14:20](#); [14:21](#); [14:23](#); [14:24](#); [14:26](#); [14:28](#); [14:31](#); [15:1](#); [15:8](#); [15:9](#); [15:10](#); [15:15](#); [15:16](#); [15:23](#); [15:26](#); [16:3](#); [16:10](#); [16:15](#); [16:17](#); [16:23](#); [16:25](#); [16:26](#); [16:27](#); [16:28](#); [16:32](#); [17:1](#); [17:5](#); [17:11](#); [17:21](#); [17:24](#); [17:25](#); [18:11](#); [19:7](#); [20:17](#); [20:21](#); [20:31](#))

## When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate “brother” or “he” when it could refer to anyone, male or female?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[Generic Noun Phrases](#)

### Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

A wise son makes **his** father rejoice  
but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

### Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

### Examples From the Bible

Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

**Caution:** Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **his brother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **his brother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

## Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

- (1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)

“The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies.”

“Wise **people** die just like fools die.”

- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.

“For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia.”

- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

“If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”  
(Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, “he,” “himself,” and “his” to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, “they,” “themselves,” and “their” in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

“If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me.”

(Go back to: [John 1:4](#); [1:9](#); [2:10](#); [2:24](#); [2:25](#); [3:19](#); [4:28](#); [5:41](#); [6:10](#); [6:14](#); [6:44](#); [8:47](#))

## When to Keep Information Implicit

### Description

Sometimes it is better not to state assumed knowledge or implicit information explicitly. This page gives some direction about when not to do this.

This page answers the question: *When should I not make implicit information explicit?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#)  
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo]]

### Translation Principles

- If a speaker or author intentionally left something unclear, do not try to make it more clear.
- If the original audience did not understand what the speaker meant, do not make it so clear that your readers would find it strange that the original audience did not understand.
- If you need to explicitly state some assumed knowledge or implicit information, try to do it in a way that does not make your readers think that the original audience needed to be told those things.
- Do not make implicit information explicit if it confuses the message or leads the reader to forget what the main point is.
- Do not make assumed knowledge or implicit information explicit if your readers already understand it.

### Examples From the Bible

From the eater came forth food;  
and from the strong one came forth sweetness. (Judges 14:14 ULT)

This was a riddle. Samson purposely said this in a way that it would be hard for his enemies to know what it meant. Do not make it clear that the eater and the strong thing was a lion and that the sweet thing to eat was honey.

Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They reasoned among themselves saying, "It is because we did not take bread." (Matthew 16:6-7 ULT)

Some possible implicit information here is that the disciples should beware of the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But Jesus' disciples did not understand this. They thought that Jesus was talking about real yeast and bread. So it would not be appropriate to state explicitly that the word "yeast" here refers to false teaching. The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant until they heard what Jesus said in Matthew 16:11.

"How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of yeast in bread, but to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16:11-12 ULT)

Only after Jesus explained that he was not talking about bread did they realize that he was talking about the false teaching of the Pharisees. Therefore, it would be wrong to explicitly state the implicit information in Matthew 16:6.

### Translation Strategies

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies applied.

(Go back to: [John 2:19](#); [3:3](#); [3:7](#); [4:10](#); [4:32](#); [6:27](#); [6:32](#); [6:33](#); [6:51](#); [6:53](#); [6:54](#); [6:55](#); [6:56](#); [6:57](#); [6:58](#); [7:33](#); [7:38](#); [8:21](#); [8:26](#); [8:38](#); [8:41](#); [8:51](#); [9:35](#))



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Words**

**Version 28**

# barley

## Definition:

The term “barley” refers to a kind of grain that is used to make bread.

- The barley plant has a long stalk with a head at the top where the seeds or grains grow.
- Barley does well in warmer weather so it is often harvested in spring or summer.
- When barley is threshed, the edible seeds are separated from the worthless chaff.
- Barley grain is ground up into flour, which is then mixed with water or oil to make bread.
- If barley is not known, this could be translated as “grain called barley” or “barley grain.”

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

(See also: grain, thresh, wheat)

## Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:12-14
- Job 31:40
- Judges 7:14
- Numbers 5:15
- Revelation 6:6

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8184, G29150, G29160

(Go back to: [John 6:9](#))

# 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: [John 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

# blasphemy, blaspheme, blasphemous

## Definition:

In the Bible, the term “blasphemy” refers to speaking in a way that shows a deep disrespect for God or people. To “blaspheme” someone is to speak against that person so that others think something false or bad about him.

- Most often, to blaspheme God means to slander or insult him by saying things that are not true about him or by behaving in an immoral way that dishonors him.
- It is blasphemy for a human being to claim to be God or to claim that there is a God other than the one true God.
- Some English versions translate this term as “slander” when it refers to blaspheming people.

## Translation Suggestions:

- To “blaspheme” can be translated as to “say evil things against” or to “dishonor God” or to “slander.”
- Ways to translate “blasphemy” could include “speaking wrongly about others” or “slander” or “spreading false rumors.”

(See also: dishonor, slander)

## Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:12-14
- Acts 6:11
- Acts 26:9-11
- James 2:5-7
- John 10:32-33
- Luke 12:10
- Mark 14:64
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 26:65
- Psalms 74:10

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1288, H1442, H2778, H5006, H5007, H5344, G09870, G09880, G09890

(Go back to: [John 10 General Notes](#))

## blood

### Definition:

The term “blood” refers to the red liquid that comes out of a person’s skin when there is an injury or wound. Blood brings life-giving nutrients to a person’s entire body. In the Bible, the term “blood” is often used figuratively to mean “life” and/or several other concepts.

- When people made sacrifices to God, they killed an animal and poured its blood on the altar. This symbolized the sacrifice of the animal’s life to pay for people’s sins.
- The expression “flesh and blood” refers to human beings.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to people who are biologically related.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term should be translated with the term that is used for blood in the target language.
- The expression “flesh and blood” could be translated as “people” or “human beings.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “my own flesh and blood” could be translated as “my own family” or “my own relatives” or “my own people.”
- If there is an expression in the target language that is used with this meaning, that expression could be used to translate “flesh and blood.”

(See also: bloodshed; [flesh](#); [life](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Samuel 14:32
- Acts 2:20
- Acts 5:28
- Colossians 1:20
- Galatians 1:16
- Genesis 4:11
- Psalms 16:4
- Psalms 105:28-30

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:3** Before Joseph’s brothers returned home, they tore Joseph’s robe and dipped it in goat’s **blood**.
- **10:3** God turned the Nile River into **blood**, but Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go.
- **11:5** All the houses of the Israelites had **blood** around the doors, so God passed over those houses and everyone inside was safe. They were saved because of the lamb’s **blood**.
- **13:9** The **blood** of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person’s sin and made that person clean in God’s sight.
- **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.”
- **48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the **blood** of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s punishment passes over him.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1818, H5332, G01290, G01300, G01310

(Go back to: [John 6 General Notes](#))

## born again, born of God, new birth

### Definition:

The term “born again” was first used by Jesus to describe what it means for God to change a person from being dead spiritually to being alive spiritually. The terms “born of God” and “born of the Spirit” also refer to a person being given new spiritual life.

- All humans are born spiritually dead and are given a “new birth” when they accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- At the moment of the spiritual new birth, God’s Holy Spirit begins to live in the new believer and empowers him to produce good spiritual fruit in his life.
- It is God’s work to cause a person to be born again and become his child.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “born again” could include “born anew” or “born spiritually.”
- It is best to translate this term literally and use the normal word in the language that would be used for being born.
- The term “new birth” might be translated as “spiritual birth.”
- The phrase “born of God” could be translated as “caused by God to have new life like a newborn baby” or “given new life by God.”
- In the same way, “born of the Spirit” could be translated as “given new life by the Holy Spirit” or “empowered by the Holy Spirit to become God’s child” or “caused by the Spirit to have new life like a newborn baby.”

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), save)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 3:9
- 1 Peter 1:3
- 1 Peter 1:23
- John 3:4
- John 3:7
- Titus 3:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G03130, G05090, G10800, G38240

(Go back to: [John 1:13](#); [Notes](#); [3:6](#))

## Christ, Messiah

### Facts:

The terms “Messiah” and “Christ” mean “Anointed One” and refer to Jesus, God’s Son.

- Both “Messiah” and “Christ” are used in the New Testament to refer to God’s Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning “anointed (one)” is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word “Christ” is often used as a title, as in “the Christ” and “Christ Jesus.”
- “Christ” also came to be used as part of his name, as in “Jesus Christ.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, “the Anointed One” or “God’s Anointed Savior.”
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like “Christ” or “Messiah.” (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, “Christ, the Anointed One.”
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of “Messiah” and “Christ” work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

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

(See also: Son of God, David, Jesus, anoint)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 5:1-3
- Acts 2:35
- Acts 5:40-42
- John 1:40-42
- John 3:27-28
- John 4:25
- Luke 2:10-12
- Matthew 1:16

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:7** The **Messiah** was God’s Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- **17:8** As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- **21:1** From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- **21:4** God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David’s own descendants.
- **21:5** The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- **21:6** God’s prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.

- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- **43:7** "But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.'"
- **43:9** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah**!"
- **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."
- **46:6** Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H4899, G33230, G55470

(Go back to: [John 7 General Notes](#))



## council

### Definition:

A council is a group of people who meet to discuss, give advice, and make decisions about important matters.

- A council is usually organized in an official and somewhat permanent way for a specific purpose, such as making decisions about legal matters.
- The “Jewish Council” in Jerusalem, also known as the “Sanhedrin,” had 70 members, which included Jewish leaders such as chief priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees who met regularly to decide matters of Jewish law. It was this council of religious leaders who put Jesus on trial and decided that he should be killed.
- There were also smaller Jewish councils in other cities.
- The apostle Paul was brought before a Roman council when he was arrested for teaching the gospel.
- Depending on the context, the word “council” could also be translated as “legal assembly” or “political assembly.”
- To be “in council” means to be in a special meeting to decide something.
- Note that this is a different word than “counsel,” which means “wise advice.”

(See also: assembly, counsel, Pharisee, [law](#), priest, Sadducee, scribe)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:57-58
- Acts 24:20
- John 3:2
- Luke 22:68
- Mark 13:9
- Matthew 5:22
- Matthew 26:59

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4186, H5475, G10100, G48240, G48920

(Go back to: [John 3:1](#); [7:26](#); [7:48](#))

## day of the Lord, day of Yahweh

### Description:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

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

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 Thessalonians 5:2
- 2 Peter 3:10
- 2 Thessalonians 2:2
- Acts 2:20-21
- Philippians 1:9-11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3068, H3117, G22500, G29620

(Go back to: [John 6:39](#); [6:40](#); [6:44](#); [6:54](#); [11:24](#))

## ewe, ram, sheep, sheepfold, sheepshearers, sheepskins

### Definition:

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. A male sheep is called a “ram.” A female sheep is called a “ewe.” The plural of “sheep” is also “sheep.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially male sheep and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

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

(See also: Israel, [lamb](#), sacrifice, shepherd)

### Bible References:

- Acts 8:32
- Genesis 30:32
- John 2:14
- Luke 15:5
- Mark 6:34
- Matthew 9:36
- Matthew 10:6
- Matthew 12:12
- Matthew 25:33

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:12** One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- **17:2** David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father’s **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- **30:3** To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.
- **38:8** Jesus said, “All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.’”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H1494, H1798, H2169, H3104, H3532, H3535, H3733, H3775, H5739, H5763, H6260, H6629, H6792, H7353, H7462, H7716, G41650, G42620, G42630

(Go back to: [John 10 General Notes](#))

# faith

## Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

## Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression “keep the faith” could be translated by “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: [believe](#), faithful)

## Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, “You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?”
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, “Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace.”
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, “Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.”

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

(Go back to: [John 4 General Notes](#))

# flesh

## Definition:

In the Bible, the term “flesh” literally refers to the soft tissue of the physical body of a human being or animal.

- The Bible also uses the term “flesh” in a figurative way to refer to all human beings or all living creatures.
- In the New Testament, the term “flesh” is used to refer to the sinful nature of human beings. This is often used in contrast to their spiritual nature.
- The expression “own flesh and blood” refers to someone who is biologically related to another person, such as a parent, sibling, child, or grandchild.
- The expression “flesh and blood” can also refer to a person’s ancestors or descendants.
- The expression “one flesh” refers to the physical uniting of a man and woman in marriage.

## Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of an animal’s body, “flesh” could be translated as “body” or “skin” or “meat.”
- When it is used to refer generally to all living creatures, this term could be translated as “living beings” or “everything that is alive.”
- When referring in general to all people, this term could be translated as “people” or “human beings” or “everyone who lives.”
- The expression “flesh and blood” could also be translated as “relatives” or “family” or “kinfolk” or “family clan.” There may be contexts where it could be translated as “ancestors” or “descendants.”
- Some languages may have an expression that is similar in meaning to “flesh and blood.”
- The expression “become one flesh” could be translated as “unite sexually” or “become as one body” or “become like one person in body and spirit.” The translation of this expression should be checked to make sure it is acceptable in the project language and culture. (See: [euphemism](#)). It should also be understood that this is figurative, and does not mean that a man and a woman who “become one flesh” literally become one person.

## Bible References:

- 1 John 2:16
- 2 John 1:7
- Ephesians 6:12
- Galatians 1:16
- Genesis 2:24
- John 1:14
- Matthew 16:17
- Romans 8:8

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0829, H1320, H1321, H2878, H3894, H4207, H7607, H7683, G29070, G45590, G45600, G45610

(Go back to: [John 6 General Notes](#))

## heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

### Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we can’t directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.

### Translation Suggestions:

- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See also: [kingdom of God](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:22-24
- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Deuteronomy 9:1
- Ephesians 6:9
- Genesis 1:1
- Genesis 7:11
- John 3:12
- John 3:27
- Matthew 5:18
- Matthew 5:46-48

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- **14:11** He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- **29:9** Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- **37:9** Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- **42:11** Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G09320, G20320, G33210, G37700, G37710, G37720

(**Go back to:** [John 14 General Notes](#))

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

### Facts:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

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

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- Acts 8:17
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 1:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 51:10-11

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1** But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.
- **24:8** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **26:1** After overcoming Satan’s temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **26:3** Jesus read, “God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed.”
- **42:10** “So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- **43:3** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **43:8** “And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are now seeing and hearing.”
- **43:11** Peter answered them, “Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your sins. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit.**”
- **45:1** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.



## Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G00400, G41510

(Go back to: [John 14 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## John (the Baptist)

### Facts:

John was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Since “John” was a common name, he is often called “John the Baptist” to distinguish him from the other people named John, such as the Apostle John.

- John was the prophet whom God sent to prepare people to believe in and follow the Messiah.
- John told people to confess their sins, turn to God, and stop sinning, so that they would be ready to receive the Messiah.
- John baptized many people in water as a sign that they were sorry for their sins and were turning away from them.
- John was called “John the Baptist” because he baptized many people.

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

(See also: baptize, Zechariah (NT))

### Bible References:

- John 3:22-24
- Luke 1:11-13
- Luke 1:62-63
- Luke 3:7
- Luke 3:15-16
- Luke 7:27-28
- Matthew 3:13
- Matthew 11:14

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:2** The angel said to Zechariah, “Your wife will have a son. You will name him **John**. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, and will prepare the people for Messiah!”
- **22:7** After Elizabeth gave birth to her baby boy, Zechariah and Elizabeth named the baby **John**, as the angel had commanded.
- **24:1 John**, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, grew up and became a prophet. He lived in the wilderness, ate wild honey and locusts, and wore clothes made from camel hair.
- **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!”
- **24:6** The next day, Jesus came to be baptized by **John**. When **John** saw him, he said, “Look! There is the Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G09100 G24910

(Go back to: [John 1:6](#); [1:19](#); [1:26](#); [1:28](#); [1:40](#); [3:23](#); [3:25](#); [5:33](#); [5:35](#); [10:40](#))

## kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven

### Definition:

The terms “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven” both refer to God’s rule and authority over his people and over all creation.

- The Jews often used the term “heaven” to refer to God, to avoid saying his name directly. (See: [metonymy](#))
- In the New Testament book that Matthew wrote, he referred to God’s kingdom as “the kingdom of heaven,” probably because he was writing primarily for a Jewish audience.
- The kingdom of God refers to God ruling people spiritually as well as ruling over the physical world.
- The Old Testament prophets said that God would send the Messiah to rule with righteousness. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Messiah who will rule over God’s kingdom forever.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “kingdom of God” can be translated as “God’s rule (as king)” or “when God reigns as king” or “God’s rule over everything.”
- The term “kingdom of heaven” could also be translated as “God’s rule from heaven as king” or “God in heaven reigning” or “heaven’s reign” or “heaven ruling over everything.” If it is not possible to translate this simply and clearly, the phrase “kingdom of God” could be translated instead.
- Some translators may prefer to capitalize “Heaven” to show that it refers to God. Others may include a note in the text, such as “kingdom of heaven (that is, ‘kingdom of God’).”
- A footnote at the bottom of the page of a printed Bible may also be used to explain the meaning of “heaven” in this expression.

(See also: God, [heaven](#), king, kingdom, King of the Jews, reign)

### Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 1:5
- Acts 8:12-13
- Acts 28:23
- Colossians 4:11
- John 3:3
- Luke 7:28
- Luke 10:9
- Luke 12:31-32
- Matthew 3:2
- Matthew 4:17
- Matthew 5:10
- Romans 14:17

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:2** He (John) preached to them, saying, “Repent, for the **kingdom of God** is near!”
- **28:6** Then Jesus said to his disciples, “It is extremely hard for rich people to enter into the **kingdom of God**! Yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the **kingdom of God**.”
- **29:2** Jesus said, “The **kingdom of God** is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.”
- **34:1** Jesus told many other stories about the **kingdom of God**. For example, he said, “The **kingdom of God** is like a mustard seed that someone planted in his field.”

- **34:3** Jesus told another story, "The **kingdom of God** is like yeast that a woman mixes into some bread dough until it spreads throughout the dough."
- **34:4** "The **kingdom of God** is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again."
- **34:5** "The **kingdom of God** is also like a perfect pearl of great value."
- **42:9** He proved to his disciples in many ways that he was alive, and he taught them about the **kingdom of God**.
- **49:5** Jesus said that the **kingdom of God** is more valuable than anything else in the world.
- **50:2** When Jesus was living on earth he said, "My disciples will preach the good news about the **kingdom of God** to people everywhere in the world, and then the end will come."

## Word Data:

- Strong's: G09320, G23160, G37720

(Go back to: [John 3:3](#))

## lamb, Lamb of God

### Definition:

The term “lamb” refers to a young sheep. Sheep are four-legged animals with thick, woolly hair, used for sacrifices to God. Jesus is called the “Lamb of God” because he was sacrificed to pay for people’s sins.

- These animals are easily led astray and need protecting. God compares human beings to sheep.
- God instructed his people to sacrifice physically perfect sheep and lambs to him.
- Jesus is called the “Lamb of God” who was sacrificed to pay for people’s sins. He was a perfect, unblemished sacrifice because he was completely without sin.

### Translation Suggestions:

- If sheep are known in the language area, the name for their young should be used to translate the terms “lamb” and “Lamb of God.”
- “Lamb of God” could be translated as “God’s (sacrificial) Lamb,” or “Lamb sacrificed to God” or “(sacrificial) Lamb from God.”
- If sheep are not known, this term could be translated as “a young sheep” with a footnote that describes what sheep are like. The note could also compare sheep and lambs to an animal from that area that lives in herds, that is timid and defenseless, and that often wanders away.
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation of a nearby local or national language.

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

(See also: [sheep](#), shepherd)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 12:3
- Ezra 8:35-36
- Isaiah 66:3
- Jeremiah 11:19
- John 1:29
- John 1:36
- Leviticus 14:21-23
- Leviticus 17:1-4
- Luke 10:3
- Revelation 15:3-4

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:7** As Abraham and Isaac walked to the place of the sacrifice Isaac asked, “Father, we have wood for the sacrifice, but where is the **lamb**?”
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him. Each family had to choose a perfect **lamb** or goat and kill it.
- **24:6** The next day, Jesus came to be baptized by John. When John saw him, he said, “Look! There is the **Lamb of God** who will take away the sin of the world.”
- **45:8** He read, “They led him like a **lamb** to be killed, and as a **lamb** is silent, he did not say a word.”
- **48:8** When God told Abraham to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice, God provided a **lamb** for the sacrifice instead of his son, Isaac. We all deserve to die for our sins! But God provided Jesus, the **Lamb** of God, as a sacrifice to die in our place.

- **48:9** When God sent the last plague on Egypt, he told each Israelite family to kill a perfect **lamb** and spread its blood around the tops and sides of their door frames.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H7716, G07210, G23160

(Go back to: [John 1:29](#); [1:36](#))

## 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: [John 5:10](#); [Notes](#); [9:14](#); [Notes](#))



# life, live, living, alive

## Definition:

The term “life” refers to being physically alive as opposed to being physically dead.

## 1. Physical life

- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

## 2. Eternal life

- A person has eternal life when he believes in Jesus. God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

## Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives” could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about eternal life, the term “life” could be translated in the following ways: “eternal life” or “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: death, everlasting)

## Bible References:

- 2 Peter 1:3
- Acts 10:42
- Genesis 2:7
- Genesis 7:22
- Hebrews 10:20
- Jeremiah 44:2
- John 1:4
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 12:23
- Matthew 7:14

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were *\_living\_* in the world.
- **8:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- **17:9** However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- **35:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- **44:5** "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G01980, G02220, G02270, G08060, G05900

(Go back to: [John 1:4](#))

## light, luminary, shine, brighten, enlighten

### Definition:

The term “light” is used figuratively in various ways in the Bible. Light is often used as a metaphor for wisdom, life, righteousness, truth, or happiness.

- Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” to express that he brings God’s true message to the world and rescues people from the darkness of their sin.
- Christians are commanded to “walk in the light,” which means they should be living the way God wants them to and avoiding evil.
- The apostle John stated that “God is light” and in him there is no darkness at all.
- Jesus said that he was “the light of the world” and that his followers should shine like lights in the world by living in a way that clearly shows how great God is.
- “Walking in the light” represents living in a way that pleases God, doing what is good and right. Walking in darkness represents living in rebellion against God, doing evil things.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When translating, it is important to keep the literal terms “light” and “darkness” even when they are used figuratively.
- It may be necessary to explain the comparison in the text. For example, “walk as children of light” could be translated as “live openly righteous lives, like someone who walks in bright sunlight.”
- Make sure that the translation of “light” does not refer to an object that gives light, such as a lamp. The translation of this term should refer to the light itself.

(See also: darkness, wisdom, [life](#), [righteous](#), true, joy)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 John 2:8
- 2 Corinthians 4:6
- Acts 26:18
- Isaiah 2:5
- John 1:5
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 6:23
- Nehemiah 9:12-13
- Revelation 18:23-24

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0216, H0217, H3313, H3974, H5051, H5094, H5105, H5216, H7837, G06810, G07960, G16450, G29850, G30880, G53380, G54570, G54580, G54600, G54620

(Go back to: [John 8 General Notes](#))

## lord, Lord, master, sir

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “lord” generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When “Lord” is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULT and UST, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.
- Some languages translate “Lord” as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of “master” when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as “master.”
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, “lord” could be translated with a respectful form of address such as “sir.” This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as “Lord” (capitalized) in English.

(See also: God, Jesus, ruler, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- Genesis 39:2
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Psalms 86:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:4
- Lamentations 2:2

- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 9:9
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Malachi 3:1
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 16:13
- Romans 6:23
- Ephesians 6:9
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 12:14
- James 2:1
- 1 Peter 1:3
- Jude 1:5
- Revelation 15:4

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:5** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, "In God's word, he commands his people, 'Do not test the **Lord** your God.'"
- **25:7** Jesus replied, "Get away from me, Satan! In God's word he commands his people, 'Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.'"
- **26:3** This is the year of the **Lord's** favor.
- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind."
- **31:5** Then Peter said to Jesus, "**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water"
- **43:9** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!"
- **47:3** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- **47:11** Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved."

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0113, H0136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G02030, G06340, G09620, G12030, G29620

(Go back to: [John 4:11](#); [4:15](#); [4:19](#); [4:49](#); [5:7](#); [6:34](#); [9:36](#); [9:38](#))

## manna

### Definition:

Manna was a white, grain-like food that God provided for the Israelites to eat during the 40 years of living in the wilderness after they left Egypt.

- Manna looked like white flakes which appeared each morning on the ground under the dew. It tasted sweet, like honey.
- The Israelites gathered the manna flakes every day except on the Sabbath.
- On the day before the Sabbath, God told the Israelites to gather twice the amount of manna so they wouldn't have to gather it on their day of rest.
- The word "manna" means "what is it?"
- In the Bible, manna is also referred to as "bread from heaven" and "grain from heaven."

### Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could include "thin white flakes of food" or "food from heaven."
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: bread, desert, grain, [heaven](#), [Sabbath](#))

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Exodus 16:27
- Hebrews 9:3-5
- John 6:30-31
- Joshua 5:12

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4478, G31310

(Go back to: [John 6:31](#))

## Passover

### Facts:

The “Passover” is the name of a religious festival that the Jews celebrate every year, to remember how God rescued their ancestors, the Israelites, from slavery in Egypt.

- The name of this festival comes from the fact that God “passed over” the houses of the Israelites and did not kill their sons when he killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians.
- The Passover celebration includes a special meal of a perfect lamb that they have killed and roasted, as well as bread made without yeast. These foods remind them of the meal that the Israelites ate the night before they escaped from Egypt.
- God told the Israelites to eat this meal every year in order to remember and celebrate how God “passed over” their houses and how he set them free from slavery in Egypt.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “Passover” could be translated by combining the words “pass” and “over” or another combination of words that has this meaning.
- It is helpful if the name of this festival has a clear connection to the words used to explain what the angel of the Lord did in passing by the houses of the Israelites and sparing their sons.

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:7
- 2 Chronicles 30:13-15
- 2 Kings 23:23
- Deuteronomy 16:2
- Exodus 12:26-28
- Ezra 6:21-22
- John 13:1
- Joshua 5:10-11
- Leviticus 23:4-6
- Numbers 9:3

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:14** God commanded the Israelites to remember his victory over the Egyptians and their deliverance from slavery by celebrating the **Passover** every year.
- **38:1** Every year, the Jews celebrated the **Passover**. This was a celebration of how God had saved their ancestors from slavery in Egypt many centuries earlier.
- **38:4** Jesus celebrated the **Passover** with his disciples.
- **48:9** When God saw the blood, he passed over their houses and did not kill their firstborn sons. This event is called the **Passover**.
- **48:10** Jesus is our **Passover** Lamb. He was perfect and sinless and was killed at the time of the **Passover** celebration.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H6453, G39570

(Go back to: [John 11 General 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: [John 7 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness

### Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

The term “unrighteous” means to be sinful and morally corrupt. “Unrighteousness” refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God’s teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes “the unrighteous” refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

The terms “upright” and “uprightness” refer to acting in a way that follows God’s laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is “upright” is someone who obeys God’s rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as “integrity” and “righteous” have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as “integrity and uprightness.” (See: [parallelism](#))

### Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good.”
- The term “unrighteous” could simply be translated as “not righteous.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include “wicked” or “immoral” or “people who rebel against God” or “sinful.”
- The phrase “the unrighteous” could be translated as “unrighteous people.”
- The term “unrighteousness” could be translated as “sin” or “evil thoughts and actions” or “wickedness.”
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to “righteous, righteousness.”
- Ways to translate “upright” could include “acting rightly” or “one who acts rightly” or “following God’s laws” or “obedient to God” or “behaving in a way that is right.”
- The term “uprightness” could be translated as “moral purity” or “good moral conduct” or “rightness.”
- The phrase “the upright” could be translated as “people who are upright” or “upright people.”

(See also: evil, faithful, good, holy, integrity, just, law, [law](#), obey, pure, [righteous](#), [sin](#), unlawful)

## Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 19:16
- Job 1:8
- Psalms 37:30
- Psalms 49:14
- Psalms 107:42
- Ecclesiastes 12:10-11
- Isaiah 48:1-2
- Ezekiel 33:13
- Malachi 2:6
- Matthew 6:1
- Acts 3:13-14
- Romans 1:29-31
- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- Galatians 3:7
- Colossians 3:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 5:16-17

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **4:8** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:2** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:1** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1368, H2555, H3072, H3474, H3476, H3477, H3483, H4334, H4339, H4749, H5228, H5229, H5324, H5765, H5766, H5767, H5977, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, H6968, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G00930, G00940, G04580, G13410, G13420, G13430, G13440, G13450, G13460, G21180, G37160, G37170

(Go back to: [John 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## Sabbath

### Definition:

The term “Sabbath” refers to the seventh day of the week, which God commanded the Israelites to set apart as a day of rest and doing no work.

- After God finished creating the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day. In the same way, God commanded the Israelites to set aside the seventh day as a special day to rest and worship him.
- The command to “keep the Sabbath holy” is one of the ten commandments that God wrote on the stone tablets that he gave Moses for the Israelites.
- Following the Jewish system of counting days, the Sabbath begins on Friday at sundown and lasts until Saturday at sundown.
- Sometimes in the Bible the Sabbath is called “Sabbath day” rather than only the Sabbath.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “resting day” or “day for resting” or “day of not working” or “God’s day of rest.”
- Some translations capitalize this term to show that it is a special day, as in “Sabbath Day” or “Resting Day.”
- Consider how this term is translated in a local or national language.

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

(See also: rest)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:2-3
- Acts 13:26-27
- Exodus 31:14
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Lamentations 2:6
- Leviticus 19:3
- Luke 13:14
- Mark 2:27
- Matthew 12:2
- Nehemiah 10:32-33

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:5** “Always be sure to keep the **Sabbath day** holy. That is, do all your work in six days, for the seventh day is a day for you to rest and to honor me.”
- **26:2** Jesus went to the town of Nazareth where he had lived during his childhood. On the **Sabbath**, he went to the place of worship.
- **41:3** The day after Jesus was buried was a **Sabbath** day, and the Jews were not permitted to go to the tomb on that day.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4868, H7676, H7677, G43150, G45210

(Go back to: [John 5:10](#); [Notes](#); [9:14](#))

## Samaria, Samaritan

### Facts:

Samaria was the name of a city and its surrounding region in the northern part of Israel. The region was located between the Plain of Sharon on its west and the Jordan River on its east.

- In the Old Testament, Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. Later the region surrounding it was also called Samaria.
- When the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, they captured the city of Samaria and forced most of the northern Israelites to leave the region, moving them far away to different cities in Assyria.
- The Assyrians also brought many foreigners into the region of Samaria to replace the Israelites who had been moved.
- Some of the Israelites who remained in that region married the foreigners who had moved there, and their descendants were called Samaritans.
- The Jews despised the Samaritans because they were only partly Jewish and because their ancestors had worshiped pagan gods.
- In New Testament times, the region of Samaria was bordered by the region of Galilee on its north and the region of Judea on its south.

(See also: Assyria, Galilee, Judea, Sharon, kingdom of Israel)

### Bible References:

- Acts 8:1-3
- Acts 8:5
- John 4:4-5
- Luke 9:51-53
- Luke 10:33

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:4** Then the Assyrians brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been. The foreigners rebuilt the destroyed cities and married the Israelites who were left there. The descendants of the Israelites who married foreigners were called **Samaritans**.
- **27:8** "The next person to walk down that road was a **Samaritan**. (**Samaritans** were the descendants of Jews who had married people from other nations. **Samaritans** and Jews hated each other.)"
- **27:9** "The **Samaritan** then lifted the man onto his own donkey and took him to a roadside inn where he took care of him."
- **45:7** He (Philip) went to **Samaria** where he preached about Jesus and many people were saved.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H8111, H8115, H8118, G45400, G45410, G45420

(Go back to: [John 4 General Notes](#))

# Sea of Galilee, Sea of Kinnereth, lake of Gennesaret, Sea of Tiberias

## Facts:

The “Sea of Galilee” is a lake in eastern Israel. In the Old Testament it was called the “Sea of Kinnereth.”

- The water of this lake flows south through the Jordan River down to the Salt Sea.
- Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gennesaret, and Tiberias were some of the towns located on the Sea of Galilee during New Testament times.
- Many events of Jesus’ life took place on or near the Sea of Galilee.
- The Sea of Galilee was also referred to as the “Sea of Tiberias” and the “lake of Gennesaret.”
- This term could also be translated as “lake in the region of Galilee” or “Lake Galilee” or “lake near Tiberias (Gennesaret).”

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

(See also: Capernaum, Galilee, Jordan River, Salt Sea)

## Bible References:

- John 6:1-3
- Luke 5:1
- Mark 1:16-18
- Matthew 4:12-13
- Matthew 4:18-20
- Matthew 8:18-20
- Matthew 13:1-2
- Matthew 15:29-31

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3220, H3672, G10560, G10820, G22810, G30410, G50850

(Go back to: [John 6:1](#))



## seal, sealed, unsealed

### Definition:

To term “seal” means to close an object with something (usually called a “seal”) that makes the object impossible to open without breaking the seal.

- Often a seal is marked with a design to show who it belongs to.
- Melted wax was used to seal letters or other documents that needed to be protected. When the wax cooled and hardened, the letter could not be opened without breaking the wax seal. The person who received the letter would see the unbroken seal and know that no one had opened it.
- A seal was put on the stone in front of Jesus’ grave in order to keep anyone from moving the stone.
- Paul figuratively refers to the Holy Spirit as a “seal” showing that our salvation is secure.

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), tomb)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 2:3
- Isaiah 29:11
- John 6:27
- Matthew 27:66
- Revelation 5:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2368, H2560, H2856, H2857, H2858, H5640, G26960, G49720, G49730

(Go back to: [John 3:33](#))

## sign, proof, reminder

### Definition:

The term “sign” usually refers an object, event, or action that communicates a special meaning.

- In the Bible, signs are sometimes given in connection to a promise or covenant that God has made:
  - The book of Genesis describes the rainbow God created in the sky as a sign (or reminder) to himself that he has promised he will never again destroy all life with a worldwide flood.
  - In the book of Genesis, God commanded the Israelites to circumcise their sons as a sign (or indicator) of the fact that he had made his covenant with them.
- Signs can reveal or point to something:
  - The book of Luke describes that an angel gave shepherds a sign that would help them know which baby in Bethlehem was the newborn Messiah.
  - Judas kissed Jesus as a sign to the religious leaders that Jesus was the one they should arrest.
- Signs can prove that something is true:
  - The book of Exodus describes the plagues that destroyed Egypt as signs that showed who Yahweh was and proved that he was greater than Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods.
  - The book of Acts describes the miracles performed by the prophets and apostles as signs that proved they were speaking God’s message.
  - The book of John describes the miracles that Jesus performed as signs that proved he was truly the Messiah.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The frequent expression “signs and wonders” could be translated as “proofs and miracles” or “miraculous works that prove God’s power” or “amazing miracles that show how great God is.”
- Depending on its context, “sign” could also be translated as “signal” or “symbol” or “mark” or “evidence” or “proof” or “gesture.”
- To “make signs with the hands” could also be translated as “motion with the hands” or “gesture with the hands” or “make gestures.”
- In some languages, there may be one word for a “sign” that proves something and a different word for a “sign” that is a miracle.

(See also: miracle, apostle, [Christ](#), covenant, circumcise)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:18-19
- Exodus 4:8-9
- Exodus 31:12-15
- Genesis 1:14
- Genesis 9:12
- John 2:18
- Luke 2:12
- Mark 8:12
- Psalms 89:5-6

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0226, H0852, H2368, H2858, H4150, H4159, H4864, H5251, H5824, H6161, H6725, H6734, H7560, G03640, G08800, G12130, G12290, G17180, G17300, G17320, G17700, G39020, G41020, G45910, G45920, G49530, G49730, G52800

(Go back to: [Introduction to the Gospel of John](#))

## 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 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: [Introduction to the Gospel of John](#); [John 9 General Notes](#))

## Son of Man, son of man

### Definition:

The title “Son of Man” was used by Jesus to refer to himself. He often used this term instead of saying “I” or “me.”

- In the Bible, “son of man” could be a way of referring to or addressing a man. It could also mean “human being.”
- Throughout the Old Testament book of Ezekiel, God frequently addressed Ezekiel as “son of man.” For example he said, “You, son of man, must prophesy.”
- The prophet Daniel saw a vision of a “son of man” coming with the clouds, which is a reference to the coming Messiah.
- Jesus also said that the Son of Man will be coming back someday on the clouds.
- These references to the Son of Man coming on the clouds reveal that Jesus the Messiah is God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When Jesus uses the term “Son of Man” it could be translated as “the One who became a human being” or “the Man from heaven.”
- Some translators occasionally include “I” or “me” with this title (as in “I, the Son of Man”) to make it clear that Jesus was talking about himself.
- Check to make sure that the translation of this term does not give a wrong meaning (such as referring to an illegitimate son or giving the wrong impression that Jesus was only a human being).
- When used to refer to a person, “son of man” could also be translated as “you, a human being” or “you, man” or “human being” or “man.”

(See also: [heaven](#), son, Son of God, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:56
- Daniel 7:14
- Ezekiel 43:6-8
- John 3:12-13
- Luke 6:5
- Mark 2:10
- Matthew 13:37
- Psalms 80:17-18
- Revelation 14:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0120, H0606, H1121, H1247, G04440, G52070

([Go back to: Introduction to the Gospel of John; John 1 General Notes; Notes; Notes; Notes; Notes; Notes; Notes; Notes](#))

## stone, stoning

### Definition:

A stone is a small rock. To “stone” someone is to throw stones and larger rocks at that person with the intention of killing him. A “stoning” is an event in which someone was stoned.

- In ancient times, stoning was a common method of executing people as punishment for crimes they had committed.
- God commanded the Israelite leaders to stone people for certain sins, such as adultery.
- In the New Testament, Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery and stopped people from stoning her.
- Stephen, who was the first person in the Bible to be killed for testifying about Jesus, was stoned to death.
- In the city of Lystra, the apostle Paul was stoned, but he did not die from his wounds.

(See also: adultery, commit, crime, death, Lystra, testimony)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:57-58
- Acts 7:59-60
- Acts 14:5
- Acts 14:19-20
- John 8:4-6
- Luke 13:34
- Luke 20:6
- Matthew 23:37-39

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0068, H0069, H0810, H1382, H1496, H1530, H2106, H2672, H2687, H2789, H4676, H4678, H5553, H5601, H5619, H6344, H6443, H6697, H6864, H6872, H7275, H7671, H8068, G26420, G29910, G30340, G30350, G30360, G30370, G40740, G43480, G55860

(Go back to: [John 8:59](#))

## word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term “word of truth” is another way of referring to “God’s word,” which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God’s word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”
- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.
- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”
- “Word of truth” could be translated as “God’s true message” or “God’s word, which is true.”
- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: [prophet](#), true, [Yahweh](#))

### Bible References:

- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Kings 13:1
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 8:11
- John 5:39
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 12:24
- Romans 1:2



- 2 Corinthians 6:7
- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- James 1:18
- James 2:8-9

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:7** In **God's word** he commands his people, "Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him."
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the **word of God**."
- **42:3** Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:7** Jesus said, "I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word**.
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0561, H0565, H1697, H3068, G30560, G44870

(Go back to: [John 1 General Notes](#))

## work, works, deeds

### Definition:

The term “work” refers generally either to the action of expending effort in order to accomplish something, or to the result of that action. The term “works” refers generally to actions as a whole (that is, things that have been done or that need to be done).

- In the Bible, these terms are commonly used both in reference to God and humans.
- When used in reference to God, the term “work” in the Bible often refers to God’s action of creating the universe or saving his people (either from enemies, from sin, or both).
- God’s works refer to all the things he does or has done, including creating the world, saving sinners, providing for the needs of all creation and keeping the entire universe in place.
- The works or deeds that a person does can be either good or evil.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “works” could be “deeds” or “actions” or “things that are done.”
- God’s “works” or “deeds” or the “work of his hands” could also be translated as “miracles” or “mighty acts” or “things that God does.”
- The expression “the work of God” could be translated as “the things that God is doing” or “the miracles God does” or “everything that God has accomplished.”
- The term “work” can just be the singular of “works” as in “every good work” or “every good deed.”
- When work is done for God or others, it can be translated as “service” or “ministry.”

(See also: fruit, [Holy Spirit](#), miracle)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 3:12
- Acts 2:8-11
- Daniel 4:37
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Galatians 2:15-16
- James 2:17
- Matthew 16:27-28
- Micah 2:7
- Romans 3:28
- Titus 3:4-5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4399, H4566, H4567, H4611, H4659, H5949, G20410

(Go back to: [John 5:10](#); [9:14](#))

# Yahweh

## Facts:

The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name in the Old Testament. The specific origin of this name is unknown, but it is probably derived from the Hebrew verb meaning, “to be.”

- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term “LORD” or “the LORD” to represent “Yahweh.” This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh’s name and started saying “Lord” every time the term “Yahweh” appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write “LORD” with all capital letters to show respect for God’s personal name and to distinguish it from “Lord” which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULT and UST texts always translate this term as, “Yahweh,” in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” never occurs in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even when quoting the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.

## Translation Suggestions:

- “Yahweh” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “I am” or “living one” or “the one who is” or “he who is alive.”
- This term could also be written in a way that is similar to how “Yahweh” is spelled.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term “Yahweh” and instead use the traditional rendering, “LORD.” An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title “Lord.” Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish “LORD” as a name (Yahweh) from “Lord” as a title.
- It is best if possible to keep the name Yahweh where it literally occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places, to make the text more natural and clear.
- Introduce the quote with something like, “This is what Yahweh says.”

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

(See also: God, [Lord](#))

## Bible References:

- 1 Kings 21:20
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- Daniel 9:3
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 2:4
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 28:13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:4
- Isaiah 38:8
- Job 12:10
- Joshua 1:9
- Lamentations 1:5
- Leviticus 25:35
- Malachi 3:4
- Micah 2:5

- Micah 6:5
- Numbers 8:11
- Psalm 124:3
- Ruth 1:21
- Zechariah 14:5

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:14** God said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **13:4** 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."
- **13:5** "Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God."
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant."

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

(Go back to: [John 8 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

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