



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

**Romans**

**Version 58**

[en]

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# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

## **Romans**

## Introduction to Romans

### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of the Book of Romans

Introduction (1:1-15)  
Righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ (1:16-17)  
All mankind is condemned because of sin (1:18-3:20)  
Righteousness through Jesus Christ by faith in him (3:21-4:25)  
The fruits of the Spirit (5:1-11)  
Adam and Christ compared (5:12-21)  
Becoming like Christ in this life (6:1-8:39)  
God's plan for Israel (9:1-11:36)  
Practical advice for living as Christians (12:1-15:13)  
Conclusion and greetings (15:14-16:27)

#### Who wrote the Book of Romans?

The Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul probably wrote this letter while he was staying in the city of Corinth during his third trip through the Roman Empire.

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

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome. Paul wanted to get them ready to receive him when he visited them. He said his purpose was to “bring about the obedience of faith” (16:26).

In this letter Paul most fully described the gospel of Jesus Christ. He explained that both Jews and non-Jews have sinned, and God will forgive them and declare them righteous only if they believe in Jesus (chapters 1-11). Then he gave them practical advice for how believers should live (chapters 12-16),

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

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, “Romans.” Or they may choose a clearer title, such as “Paul’s Letter to the Church in Rome,” or “A Letter to the Christians in Rome.” (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

#### What are the titles used to refer to Jesus?

In Romans, Paul described Jesus Christ by many titles and descriptions: Jesus Christ (1:1), the Seed of David (1:3), the Son of God (1:4), the Lord Jesus Christ (1:7), Christ Jesus (3:24), Propitiation (3:25), Jesus (3:26), Jesus our Lord (4:24), Lord of Hosts (9:29), a Stumbling Stone and Rock of Offence (9:33), the End of the Law (10:4), the Deliverer (11:26), Lord of the Dead and the Living (14:9), and the Root of Jesse (15:12).

## How should theological terms in Romans be translated?

Paul uses many theological terms that are not used in the four gospels. As early Christians learned more about the meaning of Jesus Christ and his message, they needed words and expressions for new ideas. Some examples of these words are “justification” (5:1), “works of the law” (3:20), “reconcile” (5:10), “propitiation” (3:25), “sanctification” (6:19), and “the old man” (6:6).

The “key terms” dictionary can help translators understand many of these terms. (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Terms such as those given above are difficult to explain. It is often hard or impossible for translators to find equivalent terms in their own languages. It can help to know that word equivalents of these terms are not necessary. Instead, translators can develop short expressions to communicate these ideas. For example, the term “gospel” can be translated as “the good news about Jesus Christ.”

Translators should also remember that some of these terms have more than one meaning. The meaning will depend on how the author is using the word in that particular passage. For example, “righteousness” sometimes means that a person obeys God’s law. At other times, “righteousness” means that Jesus Christ has perfectly obeyed God’s law for us.

## What did Paul mean by “a remnant” of Israel (11:5)?

The idea of a “remnant” is important both in the Old Testament and for Paul. Most of the Israelites were either killed or scattered among other people when the Assyrians and then the Babylonians conquered their land. Only a relatively few Jews survived. They were known as “the remnant.”

In 11:1-9, Paul speaks of another remnant. This remnant is the Jews whom God saved because they believed in Jesus. (See: [remnant](#))

## Part 3: Important Translation Issues

### What did Paul mean by being “in Christ”?

The phrase “in Christ” and similar phrases occur in 3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:1,2,39; 9:1; 12:5,17; 15:17; and 16:3,7,9,10. Paul used these kinds of phrases as a metaphor to express that Christian believers belong to Jesus Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God. The believer is also promised to live with God forever. However, this idea can be difficult to represent in many languages.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. For example, in 3:24 (“the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”), Paul referred to our being redeemed “because” of Jesus Christ. In 8:9 (“you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit”), Paul spoke of believers submitting “to” the Holy Spirit. In 9:1 (“I tell the truth in Christ”), Paul meant that he is telling the truth that “is in agreement with” Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, the basic idea of our being united with Jesus Christ (and with the Holy Spirit) is seen in these passages as well. Therefore, the translator has a choice in many passages that use “in.” He will often decide to represent the more immediate sense of “in,” such as, “by means of,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” But, if possible, the translator should choose a word or phrase that represents the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: [in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him](#))

## How are the ideas of “holy,” “saints” or “holy ones,” and “sanctify” represented in Romans in the ULT?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULT uses the following principles:

- Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God considers Christians to be sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact is that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless and faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULT uses “holy,” “holy God,” “holy ones” or “holy people.” (See: 1:7)
- Sometimes the meaning in a passage indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In cases where some other English versions have “saints” or “holy ones,” the ULT uses “believers.” (See: 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15)
- Sometimes the meaning in a passage indicates the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULT uses “set apart,” “dedicated to,” “consecrated,” or “reserved for.” (See: 15:16)

The UST will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

## What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Romans?

For the following verses, modern version of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULT includes the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote.

- “he [God] works all things together for good” (8:28). Some older versions read, “All things work together for good.”
- “But if it is by grace, it is no longer by works. Otherwise grace would no longer be grace” (11:6). Some older versions read: “But if it is by works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

The following verse is not in the best ancient copies of the Bible. Translators are advised not to include this verse. However, if in the translators’ region there are older Bible versions that have this verse, the translators can include it. If it is translated, it should be put inside square brackets ([ ]) to indicate that it is probably not original to the Book of Romans.

- “May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (16:24).

(See: [Textual Variants](#))

# Romans 1

## Romans 1 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

The first verse is a type of introduction. People in the ancient Mediterranean region often started their letters this way. Sometimes this is called a “salutation.”

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### The gospel

This chapter refers to the contents of the Book of Romans as “the gospel” ([Romans 1:2](#)). Romans is not a gospel like Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Instead, chapters 1-8 present the biblical gospel: All have sinned. Jesus died for our sins. He was raised again that we might have new life in him.

#### Fruit

This chapter uses the imagery of fruit. The image of fruit usually refers to a person’s faith producing good works in their life. In this chapter, it refers to the results of Paul’s work among the Roman Christians. (See: [fruit](#), [fruitful](#), [unfruitful](#) and [faith](#) and [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

#### Universal Condemnation and the Wrath of God

This chapter explains that everyone is without excuse. We all know about the true God, Yahweh, from his creation all around us. Because of our sin and our sinful nature, every person justly deserves the wrath of God. This wrath was satisfied by Jesus dying on a cross for those who believe in him. (See: [believe](#), [believer](#), [belief](#), [unbeliever](#), [unbelief](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### “God gave them over”

Many scholars view the phrases “God gave them over” and “God gave them up” as theologically significant. For this reason, it is important to translate these phrases with God playing a passive role in the action. God simply allows men to pursue their own desires, he does not force them. (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Difficult phrases and concepts

This chapter has many difficult ideas in it. How Paul writes makes many of the phrases in this chapter difficult to translate. The translator may need to use the UST to understand the meaning of the phrases. And it may be necessary to more freely translate these phrases. Some of the difficult phrases include: “obedience of faith,” “whom I serve in my spirit,” “from faith to faith” and “exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man.”

## Romans 1:1

### Paul (ULT)

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. You may also need to tell in this same verse who the people are to whom **Paul** wrote the letter ([Romans 1:7](#)). Alternate translation: "I, Paul, wrote this letter" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called {to be} an apostle, having been set apart for the gospel of God,

### called {to be} an apostle, having been set apart for the gospel of God (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God called to be an apostle and chose to tell people about the gospel" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### called {to be} (ULT)

This means that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.

## Romans 1:2

**which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures (ULT)**

God promised his people that he would set up his kingdom. He told the **prophets** to write these promises in the **scriptures**.

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures,

## Romans 1:3

### concerning his Son (ULT)

This refers to “the gospel of God,” the good news that God promised to send **his Son** into the world.

### Son (ULT)

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

### who was born from a seed of David according to the flesh (ULT)

Here the word **flesh** refers to the physical body. Alternate translation: “who is a descendant of David according to the physical nature” or “who was born into the family of David” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> concerning his Son—who was born from a seed of David according to the flesh,

## Romans 1:4

### who was designated the Son of God in power (ULT)

The pronoun **who** refers to Jesus Christ. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “whom God declared with power to be the Son of God” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> who was designated the Son of God in power through the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead—Jesus Christ our Lord,

### by the resurrection of the dead (ULT)

“by raising him from among the people who are dead.” This expression speaks of all dead people together in the underworld, and coming alive again is spoken of as **resurrection** from among them.

### the Spirit of holiness (ULT)

This refers to the Holy **Spirit**.

## Romans 1:5

### we received grace and apostleship (ULT)

God has given Paul the gift of being an apostle. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God caused me to be an apostle. This is a special privilege” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for the sake of his name (ULT)

Paul uses the word **name** as a metonym to refer to Jesus. Alternate translation: “in order to teach all nations to obey because of their faith in Jesus” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> through whom we received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for the sake of his name,

## Romans 1:6

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>6</sup> among whom are you also, called of  
Jesus Christ.

## Romans 1:7

### To all those being in Rome, beloved of God, called as saints (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “I am writing this letter to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has chosen to become his people” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> To all those being in Rome, beloved of God, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Grace to you and peace (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “May God give you grace and peace” or “May God bless you and give you inner peace” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### God our Father (ULT)

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

## Romans 1:8

### God...whole world (ULT)

the **world** Paul and his readers knew and could travel in, which was the Roman Empire

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

## Romans 1:9

### For God is my witness (ULT)

Paul emphasizes that he earnestly prays for them and that God has seen him praying. The word **For** is often left untranslated.

### in my spirit (ULT)

A person's **spirit** is the part of him that can know God and believe in him.

### spirit...gospel of his Son (ULT)

The **gospel** is that the **Son** of God has given himself as the Savior of the world.

### of...Son (ULT)

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

### I continually make mention of you (ULT)

"I always talk to God about you"

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For God is my witness, whom I serve  
in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how  
I continually make mention of you,

## Romans 1:10

**always requesting in my prayers if somehow now at last I will be successful by the will of God to come to you (ULT)**

“every time I pray, asking God that I might finally succeed in coming to visit you”

**if somehow (ULT)**

“in whatever way God allows”

**at last (ULT)**

“eventually” or “finally”

**by the will of God (ULT)**

“because God desires it,”

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> always requesting in my prayers if somehow now at last I will be successful by the will of God to come to you.

## Romans 1:11

### For I long to see you (ULT)

“Because I really want to see you”

### some...gift...spiritual...to strengthen you (ULT)

Paul wants to **strengthen** the Roman Christians spiritually. Alternate translation: “some gift that will help you to grow spiritually” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** For I long to see you so that I may give to you some spiritual gift, to strengthen you,

## Romans 1:12

**and that is to be mutually encouraged with you through the faith in one another, both yours and mine (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “and I mean that I want us to encourage each other by sharing our experiences of faith in Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> and that is to be mutually encouraged with you through the faith in one another, both yours and mine.

## Romans 1:13

### I do not want...you to be uninformed (ULT)

Paul is emphasizing that he wanted them to have this information. You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I want you to know" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### but I was hindered until now (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but something has always prevented me" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### so that I might have some fruit among you also (ULT)

The word **fruit** is a metaphor that represents people in Rome whom Paul wants to believe the gospel. Alternate translation: "that more people among you might trust in Jesus" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the rest of the Gentiles (ULT)

the Gentiles in the other regions where he had gone

#### ULT

**13** Now I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, that I often intended to come to you (but I was hindered until now), so that I might have some fruit among you also, just as also among the rest of the Gentiles.

## Romans 1:14

### I am a debtor (ULT)

Using the metaphor **debtor**, Paul speaks of his duty to serve God as if he owed God a financial debt. Alternate translation: "I am under obligation to take the gospel" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**14** I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

## Romans 1:15

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>15</sup> So, as it depends on me, {I am} eager to proclaim the gospel also to you who {are} in Rome.

## Romans 1:16

### not...I am...ashamed of the gospel (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “I trust completely in the gospel” (See: [Litotes](#))

### the power...it is...of God for salvation to everyone who believes (ULT)

Here, **believes** means that one puts his trust in Christ. Alternate translation: “it is through the gospel that God powerfully saves those who put their trust in Christ” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### both to the Jew first and to the Greek (ULT)

“for Jewish people first, and now also for Greek people”

### first (ULT)

Here, **first** means coming before all others in order of time.

#### ULT

**16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, both to the Jew first and to the Greek.

## Romans 1:17

### in it (ULT)

Here, **it** refers to the gospel. Paul explains why he completely trusts in the gospel.

### the righteousness...of God is revealed in it from faith to faith (ULT)

Paul speaks about the gospel message as if it were an object that God could physically show to people. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has told us that it is by faith from beginning to end that people become righteous" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### just as it has been written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as someone has written in the scriptures" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the...righteous will live by faith (ULT)

Here, **righteous** refers to those who trust in God. Alternate translation: "it is people who trust in God that he considers right with him, and they will live forever" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**17** For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith, just as it has been written, "But the righteous will live by faith."

## Romans 1:18

### For the wrath of God is revealed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God shows how angry he is" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### For (ULT)

Paul uses the word **For** to show he is about to tell why people know that what he has said in [Romans 1:17](#) is true.

### ULT

**18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who through unrighteousness are holding back the truth,

### is revealed...the wrath of God...from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (ULT)

The words **ungodliness** and **unrighteousness** are abstract nouns that can be expressed using the adjectives "ungodly," which describes the people, and "unrighteous," which describes their deeds. Alternate translation: "the wrath of God is revealed against ungodly and unrighteous deeds" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### is revealed...the wrath of God...from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (ULT)

The words **ungodliness** and **unrighteousness** are are metonyms for the people with whom God is angry. Alternate translation: "the wrath of God is revealed against people because they are ungodly and do unrighteous deeds" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### is revealed...the wrath of God...from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "God reveals from heaven how angry he is with people because they are ungodly and do unrighteous deeds" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### who...through unrighteousness...are holding back...the truth (ULT)

Here, **truth** refers to true information about God. Alternate translation: "who hide the true information about God because they are unrighteous" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 1:19

### that which {is} known about God is visible to them (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “they can know about God because of what they can plainly see” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> because that which {is} known about God is visible to them, for God has made it known to them.

### for God has made it known to them (ULT)

Here, **made it known them** means God has shown them the truth about him. Alternate translation: “because God has shown everyone what he is like” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 1:20

**For his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and divine nature, are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood through the things that have been made (ULT)**

Paul speaks of people understanding God's invisible qualities as if people have seen those qualities. Alternate translation: "For God's invisible qualities are clearly seen by people, namely his eternal power and divine nature, from the things God has created" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>20</sup> For his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and divine nature, are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood through the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

**For his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and divine nature, are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood through the things that have been made (ULT)**

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "For people have clearly understood God's invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature, from the things God has created" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**divine nature (ULT)**

"all the qualities and characteristics of God" or "the things about God that make him God"

**of the world (ULT)**

This refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.

**through the things that have been made (ULT)**

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "because of the things that God has made" or "because people have seen the things that God has made" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**So...they...are...without excuse (ULT)**

"Therefore, these people can never say that they did not know"

## Romans 1:21

### they became foolish in their thoughts (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “began to think foolish things” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### their senseless heart was darkened (ULT)

Here, **darkness** is a metaphor that represents the people’s lack of understanding. Alternate translation: “they became unable to understand what God wanted them to know” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### their senseless heart was darkened (ULT)

Here, **hearts** is a metonym for a person’s mind or inner being. Alternate translation: “their minds became unable to understand what God wanted them to know” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**21** For having known God, they did not glorify him as God, nor did they give him thanks. Instead, they became foolish in their thoughts, and their senseless heart was darkened.

## Romans 1:22

### Claiming to be wise, they became foolish (ULT)

“While they were claiming that they were wise, they became foolish”

### they became foolish (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the people in [Romans 1:18](#).

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became foolish,

## Romans 1:23

### exchanged the glory of the imperishable God (ULT)

“traded the truth that God is glorious and will never die” or “stopped believing that God is glorious and will never die”

### for the likenesses of an image (ULT)

“and instead chose to worship idols that were images”

### of perishable man (ULT)

“of human beings that will die”

### of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things

“or that looked like birds, four-footed beasts, or creeping things”

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.

## Romans 1:24

### Therefore (ULT)

"Because what I have just said is true,"

### God gave them over to (ULT)

"God allowed them to indulge in"

### them...their...themselves (ULT)

These words refer to the "mankind" of [Romans 1:18](#).

### the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness (ULT)

Here, **lusts of their hearts** is a synecdoche that represents the evil things they wanted to do. Alternate translation: "the morally impure things they desired greatly" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### to dishonor their bodies among themselves (ULT)

This is a euphemism that means they committed immoral sexual acts. Alternate translation: "and they committed sexually immoral and degrading acts" (See: [Euphemism](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, God gave them over to the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness, to dishonor their bodies among themselves;

## Romans 1:25

### who (ULT)

The word **who** refers to the “mankind” of [Romans 1:18](#).

### worshiped and served the creation (ULT)

Here, **creation** refers to what God created. Alternate translation: “they worshiped things that God created” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### instead of (ULT)

“rather than”

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and worshiped and served the creation instead of the Creator, who is blessed to eternity. Amen.

## Romans 1:26

### For this reason (ULT)

"Because of idolatry and sexual sin"

### God gave them over to (ULT)

"God allowed them to indulge in"

### dishonorable passions (ULT)

"shameful sexual desires"

### for both their women (ULT)

"because their women" The second clause indicated by **both** occurs in the next verse.

### exchanged natural relations for those contrary to nature (ULT)

The idea of relations that were **contrary to nature** is a euphemism for immoral sexuality. Alternate translation: "started practicing sexuality in a way God did not design" (See: [Euphemism](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> For this reason, God gave them over to dishonorable passions, for both their women exchanged natural relations for those contrary to nature,

## Romans 1:27

### the men also, having left the natural use of the female (ULT)

Here, **natural relations** is a euphemism for sexual relationships.  
Alternate translation: "many men also stopped having natural sexual desire for women" (See: [Euphemism](#))

### burned in their lust for one another (ULT)

"experienced strong sexual desire for other men"

### the...committing...shameless acts (ULT)

"committed acts for which they should have been ashamed, but they were not ashamed"

### also...the...the...in their...receiving...themselves...penalty they deserved...for...error (ULT)

", and God has punished them justly for the error they committed"

### for...error (ULT)

moral wrong, not a mistake about facts

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> and likewise, the men also, having left the natural use of the female, burned in their lust for one another, male with male committing shameless acts and receiving in themselves the penalty they deserved for their error.

## Romans 1:28

### And just as they did not approve of having God in {their} awareness (ULT)

“And they did not think it was necessary to know God”

### them (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the “mankind” of [Romans 1:18](#).

### God gave them up to a depraved mind (ULT)

Here, **a depraved mind** means a mind that thinks only about immoral things. Alternate translation: “God allowed their minds, which they had filled with worthless and immoral thoughts, to completely control them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### are not proper (ULT)

“are disgraceful” or “are sinful”

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not approve of having God in {their} awareness, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper.

## Romans 1:29

### Having been filled with all unrighteousness (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “They have in them a strong desire for every kind of unrighteousness” or “They strongly desire to do all kinds of unrighteous deeds” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Having been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, {and} malice, {they} are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, {and} evil intentions. {They are} gossips,

### they} are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, {and} evil intentions (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “many are constantly envying other people, constantly desiring to murder people, causing arguments and quarrels among people, deceiving others, and speaking hatefully about others” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 1:30

### slanderers (ULT)

The word **slanderers** refers to people who say false things about other people in order to damage the reputation of those people.

### inventors of evil (ULT)

“thinking of new ways to do evil things to others”

### ULT

<sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

## Romans 1:31

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>31</sup> senseless, faithless, heartless, {and}  
unmerciful.

## Romans 1:32

### They, having understood the righteous decree of God (ULT)

“They know how God wants them to live”

### that those who practice such things (ULT)

Here, **practice** refers to continually or habitually doing things that are evil. Alternate translation: “and that those who keep on doing wicked things” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### are deserving of death (ULT)

“deserve to die”

### these things (ULT)

“these kinds of evil things”

### those who do them (ULT)

Here the verb **do** refers to continuing to do things that are evil. Alternate translation: “who keep on doing evil things” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> They, having understood the righteous decree of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do these things, but also approve of those who do them.

## Romans 2

### Romans 2 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter shifts its audience from Roman Christians to those who “judge” other people and do not believe in Jesus. (See: [judge, judgment](#) and [believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief](#))

### “Therefore you are without excuse”

This phrase looks back at Chapter 1. In some ways, it actually concludes what Chapter 1 teaches. This phrase explains why everyone in the world must worship the true God.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### “Doers of the Law”

Those who try to obey the law will not be justified by trying to obey it. Those who are justified by believing in Jesus show that their faith is real by obeying God’s commands. (See: [just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification](#) and [law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the reader see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: [Rhetorical Question, guilt, guilty](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#) and [faith](#))

#### Hypothetical Situation

In context, “he will give eternal life” in verse 7 is a hypothetical statement. If a person could live a perfect life, they would earn eternal life as a reward. But only Jesus was able to live a perfect life.

Paul gives another hypothetical situation in verses 17-29. Here he explains that even those who earnestly try to obey the law of Moses are guilty of violating the law. In English, this is about those who follow the “letter” of the law but cannot follow the “spirit” or general principles of the law. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### “You who judge”

At times, You can translate this in a simpler way. But it is translated in this relatively awkward way because when Paul refers to “people who judge” he is also saying that everyone judges. It is possible to translate this as “those who judge (and everyone judges).”

## Romans 2:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul has affirmed all men are sinners and continues to remind them that all people are wicked.

### Therefore, you are without excuse (ULT)

The word **Therefore** marks a new section of the letter. It also makes a concluding statement based on what Paul has said in [Romans 1:1-32](#). Alternate translation: “Since God will punish those who continually sin, he will certainly not excuse your sins” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, you are without excuse, O man—anyone who judges—for in that which you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

### O man (ULT)

Paul is writing here as if he were addressing a Jewish person who is arguing with him. Paul is doing this to teach his audience that God will punish everyone who continually sins, whether Jew or Gentile. (See: [Apostrophe](#))

### you are (ULT)

Here the pronoun **you** is singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### O man—anyone who judges (ULT)

Paul here scolds anyone who might think he can act like God and judge others. Alternate translation: “you are just a human being, yet you judge others and say they deserve God’s punishment” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### for in that which you judge another you condemn yourself (ULT)

“but you are only judging yourself because you do the same wicked deeds as they do”

## Romans 2:2

### But we know (ULT)

Here the pronoun **we** may include Christian believers and also Jews who are not Christians. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### the judgment of God is according to truth upon those (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of **the judgment of God** as if it were alive and could “fall” on people. Alternate translation: “God will judge those people truly and fairly” (See: [Personification](#))

### those who practice such things (ULT)

“the people who do those wicked deeds”

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth upon those who practice such things.

## Romans 2:3

### do you think...this (ULT)

“think about what I am going to tell you”

### man (ULT)

Use the general word for a human being “whoever you are”

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> But do you think this, O man who judges those who are practicing such things and you are doing the same things, that you will escape from the judgment of God?

### O man who judges those who are practicing such things and you are doing the same things (ULT)

“you who say someone deserves God’s punishment while you do the same wicked deeds”

### that you will escape from the judgment of God (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this question as a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: “you will certainly not escape God’s judgment!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 2:4

**Or do you scorn the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance (ULT)**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation:

"You should not act like it does not matter that God is good and that he patiently waits a long time before he punishes people, so that his goodness will cause them to repent!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Or do you scorn the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

**Do you think so little of the riches ... patience**

"do you consider the riches of his kindness, and his forbearance, and his patience unimportant"

**not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance (ULT)**

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "although you must know that God shows you he is good so that you might repent!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 2:5

### Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the people that all people are wicked.

### But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart (ULT)

Paul uses a metaphor to compare a person who refuses to obey God to something hard, like a stone. Alternate translation: "It is because you refuse to listen and repent" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up for yourself wrath on the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

### unrepentant heart (ULT)

Paul uses the metonym "heart" to represent the person's mind or inner being. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### hardness...and unrepentant heart (ULT)

This is a doublet that you can combine as "unrepentant heart." (See: [Doublet](#))

### you are storing up for yourself wrath (ULT)

The phrase **storing up** implies a metaphor that usually refers to a person gathering his treasures and putting them in a safe place. Paul says, instead of treasures, that the person is gathering God's punishment. The longer they go without repenting, the more severe the punishment. Alternate translation: "you are making your punishment worse" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### on the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God (ULT)

Both of these phrases refer to the same day. Alternate translation: "when God shows everyone that he is angry and that he judges all people fairly" (See: [Doublet](#))

## Romans 2:6

### will pay back (ULT)

“will give a fair reward or punishment”

### to each according to his deeds (ULT)

“to each person according to what that person has done”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> who will pay back to each according to his deeds:

## Romans 2:7

### who...are seeking (ULT)

This means that they act in a way that will lead to a positive decision from God on judgment day.

### praise, honor, and incorruptibility

They want God to praise and honor them, and they want to never die.

### incorruptibility (ULT)

This refers to physical, not moral, decay.

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> eternal life to those who according to consistent, good actions are seeking glory and honor and incorruptibility;

## Romans 2:8

### Connecting Statement:

Though this section is speaking to the non-religious wicked person, Paul sums it up by stating both non-Jews and Jews are wicked before God.

### from selfish ambition (ULT)

“only concerned with what is good for themselves”

### who are disobeying the truth but obeying unrighteousness (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second intensifies the first. (See: [Parallelism](#))

### wrath and fierce anger (ULT)

The words **wrath** and **fierce anger** mean basically the same thing and emphasize God’s anger. Alternate translation: “God will show his terrible anger” (See: [Doublet](#))

### wrath (ULT)

Here the word **wrath** is a metonym that refers to God’s severe punishment of wicked people. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> but wrath and fierce anger to those who {are} from selfish ambition and who are disobeying the truth but obeying unrighteousness.

## Romans 2:9

### Tribulation and distress (ULT)

The words **Tribulation** and **distress** mean basically the same thing here and emphasize how bad God's punishment will be. Alternate translation: "Awful punishments" (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Tribulation and distress will be on every human soul that practices evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

### will be on every human soul (ULT)

Here, Paul uses the phrase **human soul** as a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "upon every person" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### that practices evil (ULT)

"that continually does evil things"

### and...to the Jew first, and...to the Greek (ULT)

"and God will judge the Jewish people first, and then those who are not Jewish people"

### first (ULT)

This could mean: (1) "first in order of time." (2) "most certainly."

## Romans 2:10

**But praise, honor, and peace will come to everyone**

“But God will give praise, honor, and peace to everyone”

**who practices good (ULT)**

“who continually does what is good”

**and...to the Jew first, and...to the Greek (ULT)**

“and God will reward the Jewish people first, and then those who are not Jewish people”

**first (ULT)**

You should translate this the same way you did in [Romans 2:9](#).

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> But glory and honor and peace will be to everyone who practices good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

## Romans 2:11

### For there is no favoritism with God (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “For God treats all people the same” (See: [Litotes](#))

#### ULT

**11** For there is no favoritism with God.

## Romans 2:12

### For as many as...have sinned (ULT)

“For those who have sinned”

### without the law...will also perish without the law (ULT)

Paul repeats **without the law** to emphasize that it does not matter if people do not know the law of Moses. If they sin, God will judge them. Alternate translation: “without knowing the law of Moses will certainly still die spiritually” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> For as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and as many as have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

### as many as...have sinned (ULT)

“all those who have sinned”

### under the law...will be judged by the law (ULT)

God will judge sinful people according to his law. Alternate translation: “and who do know the law of Moses, will be judged by God according to that law” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### will be judged by the law (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will judge them according to that law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 2:13

### Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to let the reader know that perfect obedience to God's law is required even for those who never had God's law.

### For (ULT)

Verses 14 and 15 interrupt Paul's main argument to give the reader extra information. If you have a way to mark an interruption like this in your language, you can use it here.

### the hearers of the law (ULT)

Here, **the law** refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "those who only hear the law of Moses" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### not...are...righteous before God (ULT)

"are not the ones whom God considers righteous"

### the...of the law...but...doers (ULT)

"but those who obey the law of Moses"

### will be justified (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God will accept" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**13** For the hearers of the law {are} not righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified.

## Romans 2:14

### are a law to themselves (ULT)

The phrase **a law to themselves** is an idiom that means that these people naturally obey God's laws. Alternate translation: "have God's laws already inside them" (See: [Idiom](#))

### who do...not...have...the law...not having the law (ULT)

Here, **the law** refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "they do not actually have the laws that God gave to Moses...although they do not have the law of Moses" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**14** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature the things of the law, they, not having the law, are a law to themselves.

## Romans 2:15

### They show (ULT)

“By naturally obeying the law they show”

### the deeds of the law to be written in their hearts (ULT)

Here, **hearts** is a metonym for the person’s thoughts or inner person. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> They show the deeds of the law to be written in their hearts, the conscience bearing witness to them, the thoughts between themselves both accusing or even defending them

### the deeds of the law to be written in their hearts (ULT)

The phrase **written in their hearts** is a metaphor for knowing something in their mind. Alternate translation: “that they know what the law requires them to do” or “that they know the actions that they should do according to God’s law” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the deeds of the law to be written in their hearts (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “that God has written on their hearts what the law requires them to do” or “that they know the actions that God wants them to do according to his law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### bearing witness to them...the thoughts between themselves both accusing or even defending them (ULT)

Here, **bearing witness** refers to the knowledge they gain from the law that God has written in their hearts. Alternate translation: “telling them if they are disobeying or obeying God’s law” (See: [Idiom](#))

## Romans 2:16

### on the day when God will judge (ULT)

This finishes Paul's thought from [Romans 2:13](#). "which will happen when God judges"

#### ULT

**16** on the day when God will judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, through Christ Jesus.

## Romans 2:17

### Connecting Statement:

Here begins Paul's discussion that the law the Jews possess actually condemns them because they do not obey it.

### if...you name yourself a Jew (ULT)

"since you call yourself a Jew"

### rely upon the law (ULT)

The phrase **rely upon the law** represents believing that they can become righteous by obeying the law. Alternate translation: "rely on the law of Moses" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**17** But if you name yourself a Jew and rely upon the law and boast in God,

## Romans 2:18

### know {his} will (ULT)

“know God’s will”

### being instructed from the law (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “because people have taught you what is right from the law” or “because you have learned from the law” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> and know {his} will and approve of what is excellent, being instructed from the law;

## Romans 2:19

**and you are convinced that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness (ULT)**

Here, **the blind** and **those in darkness** represent people who do not understand the law. Alternate translation: “that because you teach the law, you yourself are like a guide to blind people, and you are like a light to people who are lost in the dark” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>19</sup> and you are convinced that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness,

**a guide...to the blind, a light to those in darkness (ULT)**

The phrases **the blind** and **those in darkness** refer to the same people and emphasize their condition. (See: [Parallelism](#))

## Romans 2:20

### an instructor of the foolish (ULT)

“you correct those who think foolish things”

### a teacher of little children (ULT)

Here Paul compares those who do not know anything about the law to **little children**. Alternate translation: “and you teach those who do not know the law” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth,

### having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth (ULT)

The **knowledge** of **the truth** that is in **the law** comes from God. Alternate translation: “because you are sure you understand the truth that God has given in the law” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 2:21

### you...who teach others, do you not teach yourself (ULT)

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “you teach others, but you do not teach yourself!” or “you teach others, but you do not do what you teach!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> then you, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You, who preach not to steal, do you steal?

### You, who preach not to steal, do you steal (ULT)

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “You tell people not to steal, but you steal!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 2:22

### **You, who says not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery (ULT)**

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “You tell people not to commit adultery, but you commit adultery!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>22</sup> You, who says not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You, who hate idols, do you rob temples?

### **You, who hate idols, do you rob temples (ULT)**

Paul is using a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “You say you hate idols, but you rob temples!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### **do you rob temples (ULT)**

This could mean: (1) they do not send to the Jerusalem temple all the money that is due to God. (2) they steal items from local pagan temples to sell and make a profit.

## Romans 2:23

### **You, who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law (ULT)**

Paul uses a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "It is wicked that you claim to be proud of the law, while at the same time you disobey it and bring shame to God!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>23</sup> You, who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?

## Romans 2:24

### the...name of God...is blasphemed among the Gentiles (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “many Gentiles blaspheme the name of God” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> For “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” just as it has been written.

### name of God (ULT)

The word **name** is a metonym that refers to the entirety of God, not just his name. (See: [Metonymy](#))

## Romans 2:25

### Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to show that God, by his law, condemns even the Jews who have God's law.

### For circumcision indeed benefits (ULT)

"I say all of this because being circumcised does benefit you"

### if you break the law

"if you do not obey the commandments found in the law"

### your circumcision becomes uncircumcision (ULT)

"it is as though you were no longer circumcised"

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> For circumcision indeed benefits if you obey the law, but if you are transgressors of the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

## Romans 2:26

### the uncircumcised one (ULT)

“the person who is not circumcised”

### keeps the requirements of the law (ULT)

“obeys what God commands in the law”

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> If, then, the uncircumcised one keeps the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision?

### will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision (ULT)

Paul asks this question to emphasize that **circumcision** is not what makes one right before God. Alternate translation: “he will be considered as circumcised.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision (ULT)

You can translate this question as a statement in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will consider him as circumcised.” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 2:27

### **And the one who, by nature uncircumcised, fulfills the law, will condemn (ULT)**

You can translate this statement in an active form. Alternate translation: "And the one who obeys the law, even though people have not physically circumcised him, will condemn" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>27</sup> And the one who, by nature uncircumcised, fulfills the law, will condemn you as a transgressor of the law, though having the letter and circumcision!

## Romans 2:28

### outwardly (ULT)

This refers to Jewish rituals, such as circumcision, which people can see.

### merely outward in the flesh

This refers to the physical change to a man's body when someone circumcises him.

### the flesh (ULT)

Here, **the flesh** is a synecdoche for the whole body. Alternate translation: "the body" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**28** For he is not a Jew who {is} one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which {is} outward in the flesh.

## Romans 2:29

### the one who {is} inwardly a Jew, and circumcision of the heart (ULT)

These two phrases have similar meanings. The first phrase, **the one who is inwardly a Jew**, explains the second phrase, **circumcision of the heart**. (See: [Parallelism](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> But the one who {is} inwardly a Jew, and circumcision of the heart in the Spirit, not in the letter; of him the praise {is} not from men but from God.

### inwardly (ULT)

This refers to the values and motivations of the person whom God has transformed.

### of the heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for the inner person. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### in the Spirit, not in the letter (ULT)

Here, **letter** is a synecdoche that refers to written scripture. Alternate translation: “through the work of the Holy Spirit, not because you know the scriptures” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### inwardly...the Spirit (ULT)

The term **the Spirit** could refer to: (1) the Holy Spirit. (2) the spiritual part of the person that God changes.

## Romans 3

### Romans 3 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 verses 4 and 10-18 of this chapter, which are words from the Old Testament.

#### Special concepts in this chapter

Chapter 3 answers the question, “What advantage does being a Jew have over being a Gentile?” (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#) and [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

#### “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”

Because God is holy, anyone with him in heaven must be perfect. Any sin at all will condemn a person. (See: [heaven](#), [sky](#), [heavens](#), [heavenly](#) and [condemn](#), [condemned](#), [condemnation](#))

#### The purpose of the law of Moses

Obeying the law cannot make a person right with God. Obeying God’s law is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: [just](#), [justice](#), [unjust](#), [injustice](#), [justify](#), [justification](#) and [faith](#))

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical Questions

Paul frequently uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the reader see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [guilt](#), [guilty](#))

## Romans 3:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul proclaims the advantage that Jews have because God gave them his law.

### What then {is} the advantage of the Jew, or what {is} the benefit of the circumcision (ULT)

Paul presents ideas that people might have after they hear what he wrote in chapter 2. He does this in order to respond to them in verse 2. Alternate translation: "Some people might say, 'Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?'" or "Some people might say, 'If that is true, then the Jews do not have any advantage, and there is no benefit in being circumcised.'" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### What then {is} the advantage of the Jew, or what {is} the benefit of the circumcision (ULT)

Paul used a rhetorical question to cause the listeners to think about the answer. He will answer clearly in the following verses. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> What then {is} the advantage of the Jew, or what {is} the benefit of the circumcision?

## Romans 3:2

### Great in every way (ULT)

Paul now responds to the concerns brought up in verse 1. Here, **Great in every way!** is an emphatic answer to that question. Alternate translation: “But there is great advantage to being a Jew!” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Great in every way! For first of all, that they were entrusted with the sayings of God.

### first of all (ULT)

This could mean: (1) “first in order of time.” (2) “most certainly.” (3) This could mean “most importantly.”

### they were entrusted with the sayings of God (ULT)

Here, **the sayings of God** refers to God’s words and promises. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God gave his words that contain his promises to the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 3:3

**For what if some were unfaithful? Their unbelief will not abolish the faithfulness of God, will it (ULT)**

Paul uses these questions to make people think. Alternate translation: "Some Jews have not been faithful to God. Should we conclude from this that God will not fulfill his promise?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For what if some were unfaithful? Their unbelief will not abolish the faithfulness of God, will it?

## Romans 3:4

### May it never be (ULT)

This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have an expression in your language that you could use here. "That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!"

### Instead, let God be (ULT)

"We should say this instead, let God be"

### let...be...God...true (ULT)

God will always be true and will keep his promises. Alternate translation: "God always does what he has promised" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### but every man a liar (ULT)

The words **every** and **liar** are exaggerations here to add emphasis that God alone is always true to his promises. Alternate translation: "even if every man were a liar" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### Just as it has been written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Just as the scriptures themselves agree with what I am saying" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### That you might be shown to be righteous in your words, and that you might prevail when you are judged (ULT)

These two phrases have very similar meanings. (See: [Parallelism](#))

### That you might be shown to be righteous in your words, and that you might prevail when you are judged (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone must acknowledge that what you say is true, and you will always win your case when anyone accuses you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> May it never be! Instead, let God be true, but every man a liar. Just as it has been written, "That you might be shown to be righteous in your words, and that you might prevail when you are judged."

## Romans 3:5

**But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what will we say? God {is} not unrighteous for imposing {his} wrath, {is he (ULT)}**

Paul uses these questions to present what some people were arguing and to get his readers to think about whether or not this argument is true. Alternate translation: "Some people say that since our unrighteousness shows God's righteousness, then God is unrighteous when he punishes us." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what will we say? God {is} not unrighteous for imposing {his} wrath, {is he}? (I speak according to men.)

**for imposing {his} wrath (ULT)**

Here, **wrath** is a metonym for punishment. Alternate translation: "to bring his punishment upon us" or "to punish us" (See: [Metonymy](#))

**I speak according to men (ULT)**

"I am saying here what some people say" or "This is what some people say"

## Romans 3:6

### May it never be (ULT)

“We must never say that God is unrighteous”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> May it never be! Otherwise, how will God judge the world?

### Otherwise, how will God judge the world (ULT)

Paul uses this question to show that the arguments against the gospel are not valid, since the Jews believe that God will judge all people. Alternate translation: “We all know that God will in fact judge the world!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### the world (ULT)

The **world** is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: “anyone in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## Romans 3:7

**But if the truth of God through my lie  
abounds to his glory, why am I still judged as  
a sinner (ULT)**

Here Paul imagines someone continuing to reject the Christian gospel. That adversary argues, because his sin shows the righteousness of God, then God should not declare that he is a sinner on judgment day if, for example, he tells lies.  
(See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> But if the truth of God through my lie  
abounds to his glory, why am I still  
judged as a sinner?

## Romans 3:8

**And not, just as we are blasphemed and just as some affirm us to say, “Let us do evil, so that good may come”?**

Here Paul raises a question of his own, to show how ridiculous the argument of his imaginary adversary is. Alternate translation: “I might as well be saying, ‘Let us do evil, so that good may come!’” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> And not—just as we are blasphemed and just as some affirm us to say—“Let us do evil, so that good may come”? Their condemnation is just.

**just as we are blasphemed (ULT)**

“as some lie to tell others that this is what we are saying”

**Their condemnation is just (ULT)**

It will be only fair when God condemns these enemies of Paul, for telling lies about what Paul has been teaching.

## Romans 3:9

### Connecting Statement:

Paul sums up that all are guilty of sin, none are righteous, and no one seeks God.

### What then? Are we excusing ourselves (ULT)

Paul asks these questions to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: “We Jews should not try to imagine we are going to escape God’s judgment, just because we are Jewish!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### Not at all (ULT)

These words are stronger than a simple “no,” but not as strong as “absolutely not!”

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> What then? Are we excusing ourselves? Not at all. For we have already accused both Jews and Greeks, all of them, to be under sin.

## Romans 3:10

### Just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This is as the prophets have written in the Scriptures" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**10** Just as it is written: "There is none righteous, not even one."

## Romans 3:11

### There is none who understands (ULT)

There is no one who understands what is right. Alternate translation: “No one really understands what is right” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** There is none who understands.

There is none who seeks God.

### There is none who seeks God (ULT)

Here the phrase **seeks God** means to have a relationship with God. Alternate translation: “No one sincerely tries to have a right relationship with God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 3:12

### They all have turned away (ULT)

This is an idiom that means the people do not even want to think about God. They want to avoid him. Alternate translation: “They have all rejected God” (See: [Idiom](#))

### They together have become useless (ULT)

Since no one does what is good, they are useless to God. Alternate translation: “Everyone has become useless to God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> They all have turned away. They together have become useless. There is none doing good—there is not even one.”

## Romans 3:13

### Their...Their (ULT)

The words **Their** refer to the “Jews and Greeks” of [Romans 3:9](#).

### Their throat (ULT)

Here, **throat** is a metonym for everything that people say that is unrighteous and disgusting. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### is} an open grave (ULT)

Here, **open grave** is a metaphor that refers to the stench of the evil words of the people. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Their tongues have deceived (ULT)

Here, **tongues** is a metonym for the false words that people speak. Alternate translation: “People have spoken lies” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### The poison of asps {is} under their lips (ULT)

Here, **poison of asps** is a metaphor that is used to represent the great harm of the evil words that the people speak. Alternate translation: “Their evil words injure people just like the poison of a venomous snake” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### The poison of asps {is} under their lips (ULT)

The word **lips** refers to the words of the people. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**13** “Their throat {is} an open grave. Their tongues have deceived. The poison of asps {is} under their lips.”

## Romans 3:14

### Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness (ULT)

Here, **mouths** is a metonym that represents the evil words of the people. Alternate translation: "They are full of cursing and bitterness" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."

### Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness (ULT)

Paul exaggerates about the amount of **cursing and bitterness** in these people to emphasize how evil they were. Alternate translation: "They often speak curses and cruel words" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness (ULT)

The word **full** exaggerates how often people speak bitterly and curse. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

## Romans 3:15

### Their feet {are} swift to pour out blood (ULT)

Here, **feet** is a synecdoche that represents the people themselves. Alternate translation: "They are in a hurry to shed blood" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

**15** "Their feet {are} swift to pour out blood.

### Their feet {are} swift to pour out blood (ULT)

The word **blood** is a metaphor that refers to killing people. Alternate translation: "They are in a hurry to harm and murder people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Their feet (ULT)

**Their** refers to the Jews and Greeks in [Romans 3:9](#).

## Romans 3:16

### their paths (ULT)

Here, **their** refers to the Jews and Greeks in [Romans 3:9](#).

### Destruction and suffering {are} in their paths (ULT)

**Destruction** and **suffering** are metonyms that represent the harm that these people cause others to suffer. Alternate translation: "They try to destroy others and cause them to suffer" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> Destruction and suffering {are} in their paths.

## Romans 3:17

### they have...known (ULT)

These words refer to the Jews and Greeks in [Romans 3:9](#).

### a way of peace (ULT)

“how to live at peace with others.” A **way** is a road or path.

#### ULT

**17** And they have not known a way of peace.”

**Romans 3:18****their (ULT)**

Here, **their** refers to the Jews and Greeks in [Romans 3:9](#).

**There is no fear of God before their eyes (ULT)**

Here, **fear** is a metonym that represents respect for God and willingness to honor him. Alternate translation: "Everyone refuses to give God the respect he deserves" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

**ULT**

**18** "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

## Romans 3:19

### whatever the law says...to those...it speaks (ULT)

Paul speaks of **the law** here as if it were alive and had its own voice. Alternate translation: “everything that the law says people should do is for those” or “all the commands that Moses wrote in the law are for those” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those under the law, so that every mouth may be shut, and the whole world may become accountable to God.

### to those under the law (ULT)

“those who must obey the law”

### so that every mouth may be shut (ULT)

Here, **mouth** is a synecdoche that means the words people speak. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### so that every mouth may be shut (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “so that no people will be able to say anything valid to defend themselves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the whole world may become accountable to God (ULT)

Here, **world** is a synecdoche that represents all the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: “that God can declare everyone in the world guilty” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## Romans 3:20

### flesh (ULT)

Here, **flesh** refers to all human beings.

### for (ULT)

“Therefore” or “This is because”

### through...of the law...is} the knowledge of sin (ULT)

“when someone knows God’s law, he realizes that he has sinned”

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> {This is} because no flesh will be justified by the works of the law in his sight; for through the law {is} the knowledge of sin.

## Romans 3:21

### Connecting Statement:

**But** here shows Paul has completed his introduction and is now beginning to make his main point.

### now (ULT)

The word **now** refers to the time since Jesus came to the earth.

### ULT

**21** But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known. It was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets;

### apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has made known a way to be right with him without obeying the law" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### It was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (ULT)

The words **the Law and the Prophets** refer to the parts of scripture that Moses and the prophets wrote in the Jewish scriptures. Paul describes them here as if they were people testifying in court. (See: [Personification](#))

### It was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "What Moses and the prophets wrote confirms this" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 3:22

### the righteousness...of God {is} through faith in Jesus Christ (ULT)

Here, **righteousness** means being right with God. Alternate translation: “being right with God comes about through trusting Jesus Christ” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> but the righteousness of God {is} through faith in Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction.

### for there is no distinction (ULT)

Paul implies that God accepts all people in the same way. Alternate translation: “because there is no difference at all between the Jews and the Gentiles” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 3:23

### fall short of the glory of God (ULT)

Here the **glory of God** is a metonym that refers to the image of God and his nature. Alternate translation: "have failed to be like God"  
(See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

## Romans 3:24

### being freely justified by his grace through the redemption that {is} in Christ Jesus (ULT)

Here, **justified** refers to being made right with God. Alternate translation: “they have been made right with God as a free gift, because Christ Jesus redeemed them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> being freely justified by his grace through the redemption that {is} in Christ Jesus;

### being freely justified by his grace through the redemption that {is} in Christ Jesus (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God makes them right with himself as a free gift, because Christ Jesus sets them free” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### being freely justified (ULT)

This means that they are justified without having to earn or merit being justified. God freely justifies them. Alternate translation: “they are made right with God without earning it”

## Romans 3:25

### in his blood (ULT)

Here, **his blood** is a metonym for the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for sins. Alternate translation: “in his death as a sacrifice for sins” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### overlooking (ULT)

This could mean: (1) God ignores their sin. (2) God forgives their sin.

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> whom God intended as a propitiation through faith in his blood for a demonstration of his justice, because of the overlooking of the sins that happened previously

## Romans 3:26

**in...for the demonstration of his  
righteousness...this present time (ULT)**

“he did this to show how God makes people right with himself”

**so that he could be just, and the justifier of  
the one who {is} of faith in Jesus (ULT)**

“in order to show by this that he is both just and the one who declares everyone righteous who has faith in Jesus”

### ULT

<sup>26</sup> in the forbearance of God, for the demonstration of his righteousness at this present time, so that he could be just, and the justifier of the one who {is} of faith in Jesus.

## Romans 3:27

### Where then {is} boasting (ULT)

Paul asks this question to show that there is no reason for people to boast about obeying the law. Alternate translation: “So there is no way that we can boast that God favors us because we obeyed those laws.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**27** Where then {is} boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through the law of faith.

### It is excluded (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “We have no reason to boast at all” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Through what kind of law? Of works (ULT)

Paul asks two rhetorical questions to emphasize that it is not the **law** that keeps us from boasting. You can translate this by combining the two questions into one. Alternate translation: “Should we exclude it because of our good works?” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### No, but through the law of faith (ULT)

You can translate this by including the words that Paul implies. Alternate translation: “No, rather, we should exclude it because of faith” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

## Romans 3:28

### a man (ULT)

Here, **a man** refers to any person. (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

### a man to be justified by faith (ULT)

You can translate the abstract noun **faith** with the verb “believe.” Alternate translation: “a person is justified when they believe in Christ” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### a man to be justified by faith (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “God justifies any person who believes in Christ” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### apart from works of the law (ULT)

“even if he has done no works of the law”

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> For we reckon a man to be justified by faith apart from works of the law.

## Romans 3:29

### Or {is} God of Jews only (ULT)

Paul asks this question for emphasis. Alternate translation: “You who are Jews certainly should not think that you are the only ones whom God will accept!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Or {is} God of Jews only? {Is he} not also of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also.

### Is he} not also of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also (ULT)

Paul asks this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: “He will also accept non-Jews, that is, Gentiles” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 3:30

### he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith (ULT)

Here, **the circumcision** is a metonym that refers to Jews and **the uncircumcision** is a metonym that refers to non-Jews. Alternate translation: "God will make both Jews and non-Jews right with himself through their faith in Christ" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> If, indeed, God {is} one, he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

## Romans 3:31

### Do we then nullify the law through faith (ULT)

Paul asks a question that one of his readers might have. Alternate translation: "Someone might say that we can ignore the law because we have faith." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! Instead, we uphold the law.

### May it never be (ULT)

This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar express in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "This is certainly not true" or "Certainly not" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### the law...we uphold (ULT)

"we obey the law"

### Do we...nullify (ULT)

The pronoun **we** refers to Paul, other believers, and the readers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

## Romans 4

### Romans 4 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 verses 7-8 of this chapter, which are words from the Old Testament.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### The purpose of the law of Moses

Paul builds upon material from chapter 3. He explains how Abraham, the father of Israel, was justified. Even Abraham could not be justified by what he did. Obeying the law of Moses does not make a person right with God. Obeying God's commands is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: [just](#), [justice](#), [unjust](#), [injustice](#), [justify](#), [justification](#) and [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#) and [faith](#))

#### Circumcision

Circumcision was important to the Israelites. It identified a person as a descendant of Abraham. It was also a sign of the covenant between Abraham and Yahweh. However, no person was justified only by being circumcised. (See: [circumcise](#), [circumcised](#), [circumcision](#), [uncircumcised](#), [uncircumcision](#) and [covenant](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the reader see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [guilt](#), [guilty](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

## Romans 4:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul confirms that even in the past believers were made right with God by faith and not by the law.

### What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has discovered (ULT)

Paul uses the question to catch the attention of the reader and to start talking about something new. Alternate translation: "This is what Abraham our physical ancestor found" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has discovered?

## Romans 4:2

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a reason to boast, but not before God.

## Romans 4:3

### For what does the scripture say (ULT)

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### For what does the scripture say (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Scriptures as if they were alive and could talk. Alternate translation: “For we can read in the scripture” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say? “But Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”

### it was counted to him as righteousness (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God considered Abraham as a righteous person” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 4:4

### the wage is not counted as a gift (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “no one counts what the employer pays him as a gift from the employer”  
(See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Now to the one who works, the wage is not counted as a gift, but as an obligation.

### but as an obligation (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “but as what his employer owes him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 4:5

### in the one who justifies (ULT)

“in God, who justifies”

### his faith is counted as righteousness (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God considers that person’s faith as righteousness” or “God considers that person righteous because of his faith” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> But to the one who does not work, but believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.

## Romans 4:6

**Even as David also speaks of the blessing of the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works (ULT)**

“David also wrote about how God blesses the man whom God makes righteous without works”

### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Even as David also speaks of the blessing of the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

**Romans 4:7**

**those of whom {their} lawless deeds are forgiven...of whom {their} sins are covered (ULT)**

The same concept is stated in two different ways. (See: [Parallelism](#))

**ULT**

<sup>7</sup> "Blessed {are} those of whom {their} lawless deeds are forgiven, and of whom {their} sins are covered.

**those of whom {their} lawless deeds are forgiven...of whom {their} sins are covered (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord has forgiven those who have broken the law ... whose sins the Lord has covered" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 4:8

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Blessed {is} the man of whom the Lord will certainly not count sin.”

## Romans 4:9

### Then {is} this blessedness to the circumcision, or also to the uncircumcision (ULT)

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: “Does God bless only those who are circumcised, or also those who are not circumcised?” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Then {is} this blessedness to the circumcision, or also to the uncircumcision? For we say, “Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness.”

### the circumcision (ULT)

Here, **the circumcision** is a metonym that refers to the Jewish people. Alternate translation: “the Jews” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the uncircumcision (ULT)

Here, **the uncircumcision** is a metonym that refers to the people who are not Jews. Alternate translation: “the Gentiles” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God considered the faith of Abraham as righteousness” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 4:10

### How then was it counted? Being in circumcision, or in uncircumcision (ULT)

Paul asks these questions to add emphasis to his remarks. Alternate translation: "When did God consider Abraham to be righteous? Was it before his circumcision, or after it?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> How then was it counted? Being in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? {It was} not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

### It was not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision

"It happened before he was circumcised, not after he was circumcised"

## Romans 4:11

**as a seal of the righteousness of the faith that {was} in {his} uncircumcision (ULT)**

Here, **righteousness of the faith** means that God considered him to be righteous. Alternate translation: “a visible sign that God considered him righteous because he had believed in God before he was circumcised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**through uncircumcision (ULT)**

“even if they are not circumcised”

**so as to be counted for them as righteousness (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “for God will consider them righteous” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the faith that {was} in {his} uncircumcision, so that he would be the father of all those who believe through uncircumcision, so as to be counted for them as righteousness;

## Romans 4:12

### and the father of circumcision (ULT)

Here, **circumcision** refers to those who are true believers in God, both Jews and Gentiles.

### who also walk in the footsteps of the uncircumcised faith of our father Abraham (ULT)

Here, **walk in the footsteps** is an idiom that means to follow someone's example. Alternate translation: "who follow our father Abraham's example of faith even before he was circumcised" or "who have faith as our father Abraham did while he was still uncircumcised" (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> and the father of circumcision to those who {are} not only from the circumcision, but who also walk in the footsteps of the uncircumcised faith of our father Abraham.

## Romans 4:13

### but through the righteousness of faith (ULT)

The words “the promise came” are understood from the first phrase. You can translate this by adding these implied words. Alternate translation: “but the promise came through faith, which God considers as righteousness” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

**13** For the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he would be heir of the world {was} not through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

## Romans 4:14

### are} heirs (ULT)

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**14** For if those from the law {are} heirs, faith has been made empty, and the promise has been nullified.

### if...those from the law {are} heirs (ULT)

Here, **from the law** refers to obeying the law. Alternate translation: “if those who obey the law are the ones who will inherit the earth” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### faith is made empty, and the promise is void

“faith has no value, and the promise is meaningless”

## Romans 4:15

### neither {is there} transgression (ULT)

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun **trespass**. Alternate translation: "no one can break the law" or "it is impossible to disobey the law" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

#### ULT

**15** For the law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither {is there} transgression.

## Romans 4:16

### it is} by faith (ULT)

The word **it** refers to receiving what God had promised. Alternate translation: “it is by faith that we receive the promise” or “we receive the promise by faith”

### For this reason {it is} by faith, in order that according to grace, the promise might be certain (ULT)

“So the promise was given by faith and received through grace, so that it could be assured”

### it is} by...the...the law (ULT)

This refers to the Jewish people, who were obligated to obey **the law** of Moses.

### it is} by faith...the...of Abraham (ULT)

This refers to those who have faith just as Abraham did before he was circumcised. Alternate translation: “those who believe as Abraham did”

### the father of us all (ULT)

Here the word **us** refers to Paul and includes all Jewish and non-Jewish believers in Christ. Abraham is the physical ancestor of the Jewish people, but he is also the spiritual father of those who have faith. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

#### ULT

**16** For this reason {it is} by faith, in order that according to grace, the promise might be certain to all the seed—not only to those from the law, but also to those from the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all,

## Romans 4:17

### just as it is written (ULT)

Where it is written can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “as it has been written in the scriptures” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “as someone has written in the scriptures” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### I have appointed you (ULT)

Here the word **you** is singular and refers to Abraham. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### in the presence of God whom he trusted, who gives life to the dead (ULT)

Here, **whom he trusted** refers to God. Alternate translation: “Abraham was in the presence of God whom he trusted, who gives life to those who have died” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### calls the things that do not exist into existence

“created everything from nothing”

#### ULT

**17** just as it is written, “I have appointed you the father of many nations,” in the presence of God whom he trusted, who gives life to the dead and calls the things not existing into existence;

## Romans 4:18

### who against hope believed in hope (ULT)

This idiom means that Abraham trusted God even though it did not seem possible that he could have a son. Alternate translation: “and even though it seemed impossible for him to have descendants, he believe God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**18** who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to what he had been told, “So will your seed be.”

### according to what he had been told (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “just as God said to Abraham” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### So will your seed be (ULT)

The full promise God gave to Abraham can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “You will have more descendants than you can count” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 4:19

### And not having become weak in the faith (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “And he remained strong in his faith, although” (See: [Litotes](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> And not having become weak in the faith, he considered his own body as already having died (being about a hundred years old)—and the deadness of the womb of Sarah.

**Romans 4:20****he did not waver in unbelief, but (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: “he kept on acting in faith, and” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

**was strengthened in faith (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “became stronger in his faith” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**ULT**

<sup>20</sup> But toward the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, having given glory to God,

## Romans 4:21

### and fully convinced (ULT)

“and Abraham was completely sure”

### and...he is...able to do (ULT)

“God was able to do”

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> and fully convinced that what he had promised, he is also able to do.

## Romans 4:22

### Therefore, this was also counted to him as righteousness (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation:

“Therefore God counted Abraham’s belief as righteousness” or

“Therefore God considered Abraham righteous because Abraham believed him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Therefore, this was also counted to him as righteousness.

## Romans 4:23

### Now it was...written (ULT)

**Now** is used here to connect Abraham's being made right by faith to present-day believer's being made right by faith in Christ's death and resurrection.

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Now it was not written only for his sake, that it was counted to him,

### only for his sake (ULT)

"for Abraham only"

### that it was counted to him (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that God counted righteousness to him" or "that God considered him righteous" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 4:24

### for our sake (ULT)

The word **our** refers to Paul and includes all believers in Christ. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### to whom is about to be counted, to those who believe (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God will consider us righteous also if we believe" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead (ULT)

The phrase **raised ... from the dead** is an idiom for "caused to live again." Alternate translation: "the one who caused Jesus our Lord to live again" (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> but also for our sake, to whom is about to be counted, to those who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

## Romans 4:25

### who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “whom God gave over to enemies for our trespasses and whom God brought back to life so he could make us right with him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

## Romans 5

### Romans 5 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Many scholars view verses 12-17 as some of the most important, but difficult, verses in Scripture to understand. Some of their richness and meaning has likely been lost while being translated from how the original Greek was constructed.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Results of justification

How Paul explains the results of our being justified is an important part of this chapter. These results include having peace with God, having access to God, being confident about our future, being able to rejoice when suffering, being eternally saved, and being reconciled with God. (See: [just](#), [justice](#), [unjust](#), [injustice](#), [justify](#), [justification](#))

#### “All sinned”

Scholars are divided over what Paul meant in verse 12: “And death spread to all people, because all sinned.” Some believe that all of mankind was present in the “seed of Adam.” So, as Adam is the father of all mankind, all of mankind was present when Adam sinned. Others believe that Adam served as a representative head for mankind. So when he sinned, all of mankind “fell” as a result. Whether people today played an active or passive role in Adam’s original sin is one way these views differ. Other passages will help one decide. (See: [seed](#), [semen](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

#### The second Adam

Adam was the first man and the first “son” of God. He was created by God. He brought sin and death into the world by eating the forbidden fruit. Paul describes Jesus as the “second Adam” in this chapter and the true son of God. He brings life and overcame sin and death by dying on the cross. (See: [Son of God](#), [the Son](#) and [die](#), [dead](#), [deadly](#), [death](#))

## Romans 5:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to tell many different things that happen when God makes believers right with him.

### Therefore, having been justified (ULT)

“Because we are justified”

### let us have...our (ULT)

All occurrences of **we** and **our** refer to all believers and should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

### through our Lord Jesus Christ (ULT)

“because of what our Lord Jesus Christ did”

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, let us have peace <sup>[1]</sup> with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

## Romans 5:2

### Through him we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand

Here, **by faith** refers to our trust in Jesus, which allows us to **stand** before God. Alternate translation: “because we trust in Jesus, God allows us to come into his presence”

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> through whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

## Romans 5:3

### And not only this (ULT)

The word **this** refers to the ideas described in [Romans 5:1-2](#).

### we also boast (ULT)

Here, **we** refers to all believers and should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> And not only this, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

## Romans 5:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope.

## Romans 5:5

### our...to us (ULT)

The words **our** and **us** refer to all believers and should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### that...hope does not disappoint (ULT)

Paul uses personification here as he speaks of **hope** as if it were alive. Alternate translation: “we are very confident that we will receive the things that we wait for” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> And that hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

### because the love of God has been poured into our hearts (ULT)

Here, **hearts** represents a person's thoughts, feelings, or inner person. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### because the love of God has been poured into our hearts (ULT)

The phrase **the love of God has been poured into our hearts** is a metaphor for God showing love to his people. Alternate translation: “because he has loved us greatly” or “because God has shown us how much he loves us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### because the love of God has been poured into our hearts (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “because he has loved us greatly” or “because God has shown us how much he loves us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 5:6

### we (ULT)

The pronoun **we** here refers to all believers and so should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> For we still being weak, yet at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

## Romans 5:7

### **For someone will hardly die on behalf of a righteous man (ULT)**

“For it is hard to find someone who is willing to die, even for a righteous man”

### **For someone...on behalf of...Perhaps...might even dare to die...a good person (ULT)**

“But you might find someone who is willing to die for such a good person”

#### **ULT**

<sup>7</sup> For someone will hardly die on behalf of a righteous man. Perhaps, though, someone might even dare to die on behalf of a good person.

## Romans 5:8

### proves (ULT)

You can translate this verb in past tense using “demonstrated” or “showed.”

### we...us (ULT)

The pronouns **us** and **we** refer to all believers and should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But God proves his own love toward us, in that, we still being sinners, Christ died for us.

## Romans 5:9

### Much more then, now that we have been justified by his blood (ULT)

Here, **justified** means that God puts us in a right relationship with himself. Alternate translation: "How much more then, now that we have been made right with God because of the death of Jesus on the cross" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Much more then, now that we have been justified by his blood, we will be saved through him from the wrath.

### Much more then, now that we have been justified by his blood (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "How much more will God do for us now that he has made us right with himself because of the death of Jesus on the cross" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### his blood (ULT)

Here, **his blood** is a metonym for the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### we will be saved (ULT)

Here, **saved** means that through Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross, God has forgiven us and rescued us from being punished in hell for our sin.

### the wrath (ULT)

Here, **wrath** is a metonym that refers to God's punishment of those who have sinned against him. Alternate translation: "God's punishment" (See: [Metonymy](#))

## Romans 5:10

### we have been reconciled...will we be saved (ULT)

Both occurrences of **we** refer to all believers and should be inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> For if, being enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

### his Son ... his life

"of God's Son, much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by the life of God's Son"

### we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed us to have a peaceful relationship with him because his son died for us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### of his Son (ULT)

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

### having been reconciled (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "now that God has made us his friends again" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 5:11

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**11** Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we now have received this reconciliation.

## Romans 5:12

### Connecting Statement:

Paul explains why death happened even before God gave the law to Moses.

**through one man sin entered into the world,  
and through sin, death (ULT)**

Paul describes **sin** as a dangerous thing that came into the world through the actions of **one man**, Adam. This sin then became an opening through which death, pictured here as another dangerous thing, also came into the world. (See: [Personification](#))

### ULT

**12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death, so also death spread to all people, concerning which all sinned.

## Romans 5:13

### For until the law, sin was in the world (ULT)

This means that the people sinned before God gave **the law**.  
Alternate translation: "People in the world sinned before God gave his law to Moses" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin was not charged, being no law.

### but sin was not charged, being no law (ULT)

This means that God did not charge the people with sinning before he gave the law. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "but God did not record sin against the law before he gave the law" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 5:14

### Nevertheless...death (ULT)

“Even though what I have just said is true, death” or “There was no written law from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, but death” ([Romans 5:13](#)).

### death ruled from Adam until Moses (ULT)

Paul is speaking of **death** as if it were a king who **ruled**. Alternate translation: “people continued to die from the time of Adam until the time of Moses as a consequence of their sin” (See: [Personification](#))

### even over those who did not sin like Adam’s disobedience

“even people whose sins were different from Adam’s continue to die”

### who is a pattern of the one who is coming (ULT)

Adam was a pattern of Christ, who appeared much later. He had much in common with him.

#### ULT

**14** Nevertheless, death ruled from Adam until Moses, even over those who have not sinned like the transgression of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who is coming.

## Romans 5:15

### For if by the trespass of one the many died (ULT)

Here, **one** refers to Adam. Alternate translation: “For if by the sin of Adam alone, many died” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many (ULT)

Here, **grace** refers to God’s free gift that he made available to everyone through Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: “even more through the man Jesus Christ, who died for us all, did God kindly offer us this gift of everlasting life, although we do not deserve it” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> But not like the trespass, so also {is} the gift. For if by the trespass of one the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many!

## Romans 5:16

### And the gift {is} not as through the one having sinned (ULT)

Here, **the gift** refers to God's freely erasing the record of our sins. Alternate translation: "And the gift is not like the result of Adam's sin" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> And the gift {is} not as through the one having sinned. For indeed, the judgment followed one unto condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses unto justification.

### For indeed, the judgment followed one unto condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses unto justification (ULT)

Here Paul gives two reasons why "the gift is not like the result of Adam's sin." The "judgment of condemnation" implies that we all deserve God's punishment for our sins. Alternate translation: "Because on the one hand, God declared that all people deserve to be punished because of the sin of one man, but on the other hand" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the...gift followed many trespasses unto justification (ULT)

This refers to how God makes us right with him even when we do not deserve it. Alternate translation: "God's kind gift to put us right with himself despite our many sins" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### followed many trespasses (ULT)

"after the sins of many"

## Romans 5:17

### by the trespass of the one (ULT)

This refers to the sin of Adam.

### death ruled (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of **death** as a king who **ruled**. The “rule” of death causes everyone to die. Alternate translation: “everyone died” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

**17** For if, by the trespass of the one, death ruled through the one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.

## Romans 5:18

### as through one trespass (ULT)

“as through the one sin committed by Adam”

### to all men unto condemnation (ULT)

Here, **condemnation** refers to God’s punishment. Alternate translation: “all people deserve God’s punishment for sin” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### through one...righteous act (ULT)

the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

### to all men unto justification of life (ULT)

Here, **justification** refers to God’s ability to make people right with him. Alternate translation: “God offered to make all people right with him so they would live” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**18** So then, as through one trespass to all men unto condemnation, so also through one righteous act to all men unto justification of life.

## Romans 5:19

### the disobedience of the one man (ULT)

the disobedience of Adam

### the many were made sinners (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “many people sinned” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the...of the one...obedience (ULT)

the obedience of Jesus

### will the many be made righteous (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will make many people right with him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one will the many be made righteous.

## Romans 5:20

### the law...came in (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of **the law** as if it were a person entering a room.  
Alternate translation: "God gave his law to Moses" (See: [Personification](#))

### sin abounded (ULT)

"sin increased"

### grace abounded even more (ULT)

Here, **grace** refers to God's undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: "God continued to act even more kindly toward them, in a way that they did not deserve" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**20** Now the law came in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin abounded, grace abounded even more,

## Romans 5:21

### just as sin ruled in death (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of **sin** as if it were a king that **ruled**. Alternate translation: “as sin resulted in death” (See: [Personification](#))

### so also grace might rule through righteousness unto everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord (ULT)

Paul speaks of **grace** here as if it were a king that ruled. Alternate translation: “grace gave people everlasting life through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord” (See: [Personification](#))

### so also grace might rule through righteousness (ULT)

Paul speaks of **grace** here as if it were a king that ruled. Alternate translation: “so God might give his free gift to people in righteousness” (See: [Personification](#))

### so also grace might rule through righteousness (ULT)

The word **righteousness** refers to God’s ability to make people right with him. Alternate translation: “so God might give his free gift to people to make them right with him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### our Lord (ULT)

With the pronoun **our**, Paul includes himself, his readers, and all believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> so that just as sin ruled in death, so also grace might rule through righteousness unto everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Romans 6

### Romans 6 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Paul begins this chapter by answering how someone might hypothetically object to what he taught in Chapter 5. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Against the Law

In this chapter, Paul refutes the teaching that Christians can live however they want after they are saved. Scholars call this “antinomianism” or being “against the law.” To motivate godly living, Paul recalls the great price Jesus paid for a Christian to be saved. (See: [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#) and [godly](#), [godliness](#), [ungodly](#), [godless](#), [ungodliness](#), [godlessness](#))

#### Servants of sin

Before believing in Jesus, sin enslaves people. God frees Christians from serving sin. They are able to choose to serve Christ in their lives. Paul explains that when Christians choose to sin, they willingly choose to sin. (See: [faith](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

#### Fruit

This chapter uses the imagery of fruit. The image of fruit usually refers to a person’s faith producing good works in their life. (See: [fruit](#), [fruitful](#), [unfruitful](#) and [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the reader see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [guilt](#), [guilty](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Death

Paul uses “death” many different ways in this chapter: physical death, spiritual death, sin reigning in the heart of man, and to end something. He contrasts sin and death with the new life provided by Christ and the new way Christians are supposed to live after they are saved. (See: [die](#), [dead](#), [deadly](#), [death](#))

## Romans 6:1

### Connecting Statement:

Under grace, Paul tells those who believe in Jesus to live a new life as though dead to sin and alive to God.

### What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound (ULT)

Paul asks these rhetorical questions to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: “So, what should we say about all of this? We certainly should not keep on sinning so that God will give us more and more grace!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### will we say (ULT)

The pronoun **we** refers to Paul, his readers, and other people. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound?

## Romans 6:2

### We who died to sin, how will we still live in it (ULT)

Paul uses this rhetorical question to add emphasis. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "We who died to sin should certainly not keep on sinning!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> May it never be! We who died to sin, how will we still live in it?

### We who died to sin, how will we still live in it (ULT)

Here, **died to sin** means that those who follow Jesus are now like dead people who cannot be affected by sin. Alternate translation: "We are now like dead people on whom sin has no effect! So we certainly should not keep on sinning!" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 6:3

**Or are you ignorant that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death (ULT)**

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation:

“Remember, when someone baptized us to show that we have a

relationship with Christ, this also shows that we died with Christ on the cross!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Or are you ignorant that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

## Romans 6:4

### We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of a believer's **baptism** in water as if it were a **death** and burial. Alternate translation: "When someone baptized us, it is just like that person buried us with Christ in the tomb" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

### just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life (ULT)

This compares a believer's new spiritual life to Jesus coming back to life physically. The believer's new spiritual life enables that person to obey God. Alternate translation: "just as Jesus was brought back to life after he died, we might have new spiritual life and obey God" (See: [Simile](#))

### just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (ULT)

To be **raised from the dead** is an idiom for causing a person to live again. Alternate translation: "just as Jesus was raised back to life after he died" (See: [Idiom](#))

### just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as the Father brought Jesus back to life after he died" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### from the dead (ULT)

This means he was brought back from among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

## Romans 6:5

**we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also certainly be united with {his} resurrection (ULT)**

Paul compares our union with Christ to death. Those who are joined with Christ in death will share in his resurrection. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also certainly be united with {his} resurrection;

**we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also certainly be united with {his} resurrection (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “died with him in the likeness of his death, we will also certainly be united with his resurrection” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 6:6

### our old man was crucified with him (ULT)

The **old man** is a metaphor that refers to the person before he believes in Jesus. Paul describes our old sinful person as dying on the cross with Jesus when we believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: “our sinful person was crucified with Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

### our old man was crucified with him (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “our sinful person died on the cross with Jesus” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the body of sin (ULT)

This is a metonym that refers to the whole sinful person. Alternate translation: “our sinful nature” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### might be destroyed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “might die” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### we might no longer be enslaved to sin (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “sin should no longer enslave us” or “we should no longer be slaves to sin” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### we might no longer be enslaved to sin (ULT)

Being **enslaved to sin** is a metaphor meaning having such a strong desire to sin that one is unable to stop himself from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: “we should no longer be controlled by sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 6:7

### For the one having died is declared righteous from sin (ULT)

Here, **righteous** refers to God's ability to make people right with him. Alternate translation: "Because if a person has died to sin, that person is considered to be right with God" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> For the one having died is declared righteous from sin.

### For the one having died is declared righteous from sin (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "When a person has died to sin, God declares a person right with him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 6:8

### we have died with Christ (ULT)

Here, **died** refers to the fact that believers are no longer controlled by sin. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live together with him,

## Romans 6:9

### knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead (ULT)

Here to be **raised** is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: “for we know that Christ, who has been brought back to life after he died” (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, no longer dies; death no longer has authority over him.

### knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “We know since God brought Christ back to life after he died” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### from the dead (ULT)

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all **dead** people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them is to become alive again.

### death no longer has authority over him (ULT)

Here, **death** is described as a king or ruler that has power over people. Alternate translation: “he can never die again” (See: [Personification](#))

## Romans 6:10

### For in that he died, he died to sin once for all (ULT)

The phrase **once for all** means to finish something completely. You can make this full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "For when he died he broke the power of sin completely" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> For in that he died, he died to sin once for all. But in that he lives, he lives for God.

## Romans 6:11

### In the same way, you also must consider (ULT)

“For this reason, consider”

### must consider yourselves to be (ULT)

“think of yourselves as being” or “see yourselves as being”

### dead to sin (ULT)

Just as one cannot force a corpse to do anything, **sin** has no power to force believers to dishonor God. Alternate translation: “as if you were dead to the power of sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### dead to sin, but alive to God (ULT)

“dead to the power of sin, but living to honor God”

### alive...to God in Christ Jesus (ULT)

“living to honor God through the power Christ Jesus gives you”

#### ULT

**11** In the same way, you also must consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

## Romans 6:12

### Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds us that grace rules over us, not the law; we are not sin's slaves, but God's slaves.

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body, to obey its lusts.

### not...do...let sin rule in your mortal body (ULT)

Paul speaks of people sinning as if sin was their master or king that controlled them. Alternate translation: "do not let sinful desires control you" (See: [Personification](#))

### in your mortal body (ULT)

This phrase refers to the physical part of a person, which will die. Alternate translation: "you" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### to obey its lusts (ULT)

Paul speaks of a person having evil desires as if it sin were a master that had evil desires. (See: [Personification](#))

## Romans 6:13

### And do not present your members as tools of unrighteousness unto sin (ULT)

The picture is of the sinner offering the **members** of his body to his master or king. One's **members** are a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Do not offer yourselves to sin so that you do what is not right" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> And do not present your members as tools of unrighteousness unto sin. But present yourselves to God, as living from death, and your members to God as tools of righteousness.

### But present yourselves to God, as living from death (ULT)

Here, **as living** refers to the believer's new spiritual life. Alternate translation: "But offer yourselves to God, because he has given you new spiritual life" or "But offer yourselves to God, as those who had died and are now alive" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and your members to God as tools of righteousness (ULT)

Here, **members** is a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "let God use you for what is pleasing to him" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## Romans 6:14

### sin...do not allow...to rule over you (ULT)

Paul speaks of **sin** here as if it were a king who rules over people. Alternate translation: “do not let sinful desires control what you do” or “do not allow yourselves to do the sinful things you want to do” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

**14** So do not allow sin to rule over you.  
For you are not under law, but under grace.

### For you are not under law (ULT)

To be **under law** means to be subject to its limitations and weaknesses. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “For you are no longer bound to the law of Moses, which could not give you the power to stop sinning” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### but under grace (ULT)

To be **under grace** means that God’s free gift provides the power to keep from sinning. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “but you are bound to God’s grace, which does give you the power to stop sinning” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 6:15

### What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace (ULT)

Paul is using two questions to emphasize that living under grace is not a reason to sin. Alternate translation: “However, just because we are bound to grace instead of the law of Moses certainly does not mean we are allowed to sin” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace?  
May it never be!

### May it never be (ULT)

“We would never want that to happen!” or “May God help me not to do that!” This expression shows an extremely strong desire that this does not take place. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated it in [Romans 3:31](#).

## Romans 6:16

**Do you not know that the one to whom you present yourselves as slaves is the one to which you are obedient, the one you must obey?**

Paul uses a question to scold anyone who may think God's grace is a reason to keep sinning. You can translate this as a strong statement.

Alternate translation: "You should know that you are slaves to the master you choose to obey—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves to obey {as} slaves, you are slaves to whom you obey—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

### **whether of sin...or of obedience (ULT)**

Here, Paul speaks of **sin** and **obedience** as if they were masters that a slave would obey. Alternate translation: "whether you are like slaves to sin ... or like slaves to obedience" or "You are either a slave to sin ... or you are a slave to obedience" (See: [Personification](#))

### **to...death...to...righteousness (ULT)**

"which results in death ... which results in righteousness"

## Romans 6:17

### But thanks be to God (ULT)

“But I thank God!”

### For you were slaves of sin (ULT)

To be **slaves of sin** is a metaphor for having such a strong desire to sin that one is unable to stop himself from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: “For you were like slaves of sin” or “For you were controlled by sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### but you have obeyed from the heart (ULT)

Here the word **heart** refers to having sincere or honest motives for doing something. Alternate translation: “but you truly obeyed” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the pattern of teaching unto which you were given (ULT)

Here, **pattern** refers to the way of living that leads to righteousness. The believers change their old way of living to match this new way of living that Christian leaders teach to them. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the teaching that Christian leaders gave you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**17** But thanks be to God! For you were slaves of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching unto which you were given.

## Romans 6:18

### Now having been freed from sin (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now that Christ has freed you from sin" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**18** Now having been freed from sin, you have been enslaved to righteousness.

### Now having been freed from sin (ULT)

Here, **freed from sin** is a metaphor for no longer having a strong desire to sin and being able to stop oneself from sinning. Alternate translation: "Since your strong desire to sin has been taken away" or "Now that you have been made free from sin's control over you"

### you have been enslaved to righteousness (ULT)

Being **enslaved to righteousness** is a metaphor meaning having a strong desire to do what is right. It is as if righteousness controls the person. Alternate translation: "you have been made like slaves of righteousness" or "you are now controlled by righteousness" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### you have been enslaved to righteousness (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has made you slaves of righteousness" or "Christ has changed you so that now you are controlled by righteousness"

## Romans 6:19

### I speak as a man (ULT)

Paul may have expected his readers to wonder why he was speaking of slavery and freedom. Here he is saying that he is using these ideas from their everyday experience to help them understand that people are controlled either by sin or by righteousness. Alternate translation: "I am speaking about this in human terms" or "I am using examples from everyday life"

#### ULT

**19** I speak as a man because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and to more and more lawlessness, in the same way, now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

### because of the weakness of your flesh (ULT)

Often Paul uses the word **flesh** as the opposite of "spirit." Alternate translation: "because you do not fully understand spiritual things" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and to more and more lawlessness (ULT)

Here, **members** refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offered yourselves as slaves to everything that is evil and not pleasing to God" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification (ULT)

Here, **members** refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offer yourselves as slaves to what is right before God so that he might set you apart and give you the power to serve him" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

## Romans 6:20

### you were free from righteousness (ULT)

Here, **free from righteousness** is a metaphor for not having to do what is righteous. Alternate translation: "it was as though you were free from righteousness" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness.

### you were free from righteousness (ULT)

The people were living as though they thought that they did not have to do what was right. Alternate translation: "you behaved as though you did not have to do what was right" (See: [Irony](#))

## Romans 6:21

### So what fruit then did you have from that of which you are now ashamed (ULT)

Here, **fruit** here is a metaphor for “result” or “outcome.” Paul is using a question to emphasize that sinning results in nothing good. Alternate translation: “So nothing good came from those things that now cause you shame” or “So you gained nothing by doing those things that now cause you shame” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> So what fruit then did you have from that of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things {is} death.

## Romans 6:22

### But now, having been freed from sin and having been enslaved to God (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “But now that you have become free from sin and have become God’s slaves” or “But now that God has freed you from sin and made you his slaves” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> But now, having been freed from sin and having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the result {is} eternal life.

### But now, having been freed from sin (ULT)

Being **freed from sin** is a metaphor for being able not to sin. Alternate translation: “But now that God has made you able not to sin” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### and having been enslaved to God (ULT)

Being **enslaved to God** is a metaphor for being able to serve and obey God. Alternate translation: “but now that God has made you able to serve him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### you have your fruit unto sanctification (ULT)

Here, **fruit** is a metaphor for “result” or “benefit.” Alternate translation: “the benefit is your sanctification” or “the benefit is that you live in a holy way” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### and...the result {is} eternal life (ULT)

“and the result of all of this is that you will live forever with God”

## Romans 6:23

### For the wages of sin {is} death (ULT)

The word **wages** refers to a payment given to someone for their work. Alternate translation: “For if you serve sin, you will receive spiritual death as payment” or “For if you continue sinning, God will punish you with spiritual death”

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin {is} death, but the gift of God {is} eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### but the gift of God {is} eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (ULT)

“but God gives eternal life to those who belong to Christ Jesus our Lord”

## Romans 7

### Romans 7 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

##### “Or do you not know”

Paul uses this phrase to discuss a new topic, while connecting what follows with the previous teaching.

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### “We have been released from the law”

Paul explains that the law of Moses is no longer in effect. While this is true, the timeless principles behind the law reflect the character of God. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

##### Marriage

Scripture commonly uses marriage as a metaphor. Here Paul uses it to describe how the church relates to the law of Moses and now to Christ. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### Flesh

This is a complex issue. “Flesh” is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive (“in the flesh”), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: [flesh](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

## Romans 7:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how the law controls those who want to live under the law.

**Or do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to ones knowing the law), that the law rules over the man for as long as he lives (ULT)**

Paul asks this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: “So you certainly know that people have to obey laws only while they are alive” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Or do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to ones knowing the law), that the law rules over the man for as long as he lives?

## Romans 7:2

### Connecting Statement:

This verse begins a description of what Paul means by “the law controls a person for as long as he lives” ([Romans 7:1](#)).

### the...married woman has been bound by law to the living husband (ULT)

Here, **bound by law to her living husband** is a metaphor for a woman being united to her husband according to the law of marriage. Alternate translation: “according to the law, the married woman is united to the husband” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the...married woman (ULT)

This refers to any **woman** who is **married**.

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> For the married woman has been bound by law to the living husband, but if the husband dies, she has been released from the law of the husband.

## Romans 7:3

### Connecting Statement:

This verse ends a description of what Paul means by “the law controls a person for as long as he lives” ([Romans 7:1](#)).

### she will be called an adulteress (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will consider her an adulteress” or “people will call her an adulteress” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> So then, the husband being alive, if she is joined to another man, she will be called an adulteress. But if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so she is not an adulteress, having been joined to another man.

### the...she is free from...law (ULT)

Here being **free from the law** means not having to obey the law. In this case, the woman does not have to obey the law that says that a married woman cannot marry another man. Alternate translation: “she does not have to obey that law”

## Romans 7:4

### Therefore, my brothers (ULT)

This relates back to [Romans 7:1](#).

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, my brothers, you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ, for you to be joined to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, in order that we might produce fruit for God.

### you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “you also died to the law when through Christ you died on the cross” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to the one who was raised from the dead (ULT)

Here, **raised from the dead** is an idiom for “caused to live again.” Alternate translation: “to him who was caused to live again” (See: [Idiom](#))

### to the one who was raised from the dead (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “to him whom God raised from the dead” or “to him whom God caused to live again” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### we might produce fruit for God (ULT)

Here, **fruit** is a metaphor for actions that please God. Alternate translation: “we might be able to do things pleasing to God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 7:5

### to bear fruit to death (ULT)

Here, **fruit** is a metaphor for a “result of one’s actions” or “outcome of one’s actions.” Alternate translation: “which resulted in spiritual-death” or “the outcome of which was our own spiritual death” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions that were through the law were working in our members to bear fruit to death.

## Romans 7:6

### Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds us that God does not make us holy by the law.

### **we have been released from the law (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has released us from the law" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **we have been released (ULT)**

The pronoun **we** refers to Paul and the believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### **to that by which we were being held (ULT)**

This refers to the law. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to the law which held us" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **of the letter (ULT)**

Here, **the letter** refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "of the law of Moses" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But now we have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were being held, so that we might serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

## Romans 7:7

### What will we say then (ULT)

Paul uses this phrase to introduce a new topic. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### May it never be (ULT)

“Of course that is not true!” This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in [Romans 9:14](#).

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> What will we say then? {Is} the law sin? May it never be! However, I would not have known sin, if not through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law said, “Do not covet.”

### I would not have known sin, if not through the law (ULT)

Paul is speaking of **sin** as if it were a person who can act. (See: [Personification](#))

## Romans 7:8

**But sin, having taken opportunity through the commandment, brought about every lust in me (ULT)**

Paul continues comparing sin to a person who can act. (See: [Personification](#))

### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But sin, having taken opportunity through the commandment, brought about every lust in me. For without law, sin {is} dead.

**without...sin...law...is} dead (ULT)**

“if there were no law, there would be no breaking of the law, so there would be no sin”

## Romans 7:9

### sin came to life again (ULT)

This could mean: (1) Paul realized that he was sinning. (2) Paul strongly desired to sin. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Now at one time I was alive without law, but the commandment having come, sin came to life again,

## Romans 7:10

### the commandment that was to be life, it was found to be death for me (ULT)

Paul speaks of God's **commandment** as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: "God gave me the commandment so I would live, but it killed me instead" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> but I died. And the commandment that was to be life, it was found to be death for me.

## Romans 7:11

**For sin, having taken the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it, killed me (ULT)**

As in [Romans 7:7-8](#), Paul is describing **sin** as a person who can do three things: take the opportunity, deceive, and kill. Alternate translation: “Because I wanted to sin, I deceived myself into thinking that I could sin and obey the commandment at the same time, but God punished me for disobeying the commandment by separating me from him” (See: [Personification](#))

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> For sin, having taken the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it, killed me.

**sin...sin (ULT)**

“my desire to sin”

**killed me (ULT)**

Paul speaks of sin as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: “it separated me from God” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 7:12

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> So then, the law {is} holy, and the commandment {is} holy and righteous and good.

## Romans 7:13

### Connecting Statement:

Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between sin in his inner man and his mind with the law of God—between sin and good.

### So (ULT)

Paul is introducing a new topic.

### what {is...did...good become death to me (ULT)

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### what {is...good (ULT)

This refers to God's law.

### did...become death to me (ULT)

"did ... cause me to die"

### May it never be (ULT)

This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "Of course that is not true!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### sin...bringing about death in me (ULT)

Paul is viewing **sin** as though it were a person who could act. (See: [Personification](#))

### bringing about death in me (ULT)

"separated me from God"

### through...the commandment (ULT)

"because I disobeyed the commandment"

### ULT

**13** So did what {is} good become death to me? May it never be! But sin, in order that it might be shown {to be} sin through what {is} good, bringing about death in me, so that through the commandment, sin might become sinful beyond measure.

## Romans 7:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual,  
but I am fleshly, having been sold into  
slavery under sin.

## Romans 7:15

### Connecting Statement:

Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between his flesh and the law of God—between sin and good.

### For what I do, I do not understand (ULT)

“I am not sure why I do some of the things that I do”

### For what I do (ULT)

“Because what I do”

### not...what I want, this I do...do (ULT)

The words **I do not do** are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does not do what he wants to do as often as he would like or that he does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: “I do not always do what I want to do” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### what I hate, this I do (ULT)

The words **I do**, which implies that he always does what he hates to do, are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: “the things that I know are not good are the things that I sometimes do” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**15** For what I do, I do not understand.  
For what I want, this I do not do. But  
what I hate, this I do.

## Romans 7:16

### But if what I do not want, this I do (ULT)

“However, if I do what I do not want to do”

### I agree with the law that {it is} good (ULT)

“I know God’s law is good”

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> But if what I do not want, this I do, I agree with the law that {it is} good.

## Romans 7:17

### the sin living in me (ULT)

Paul describes **sin** as a living being that has the power to influence him. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

**17** But now no longer I do it, but the sin living in me.

## Romans 7:18

### my flesh (ULT)

Here, **flesh** is a metonym for the sinful nature. Alternate translation: “my sinful nature” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**18** For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, lives nothing good. For the desire is present in me, but not the ability to do the good.

## Romans 7:19

### good (ULT)

“the good deeds” or “the good actions”

### evil (ULT)

“the evil deeds” or “the evil actions”

### ULT

**19** For I do not do the good I want; but the evil I do not want, this I do.

## Romans 7:20

### but the sin living in me (ULT)

Paul speaks of **sin** as if it were alive and living inside him. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

**20** Now if what I do not want, this I do,  
{it is} no longer I who do it, but the sin  
living in me.

## Romans 7:21

### but that evil is present in me (ULT)

Paul speaks of **evil** here as if it were alive and living inside him. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

**21** I find, then, this law: the wanting to do good {is} in me, but that evil is present in me.

## Romans 7:22

### the inner man (ULT)

This refers to the newly-revived spirit of a person who trusts in Christ. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> For I rejoice in the law of God with the inner man.

## Romans 7:23

**But I see a different principle in my body parts. It fights against that new principle in my mind. It takes me captive**

“But I am able only to do what my old nature tells me to do, not to live the new way the Spirit shows me”

**my...the law of...mind (ULT)**

This refers to the new spiritually-alive nature.

**a different law in my members (ULT)**

This refers to the old nature, the way people are when they are born.

**the principle of sin that is in my body parts**

“my sinful nature”

### ULT

<sup>23</sup> But I see a different law in my members fighting against the law of my mind and taking me captive by the law of the sin that exists in my members.

## Romans 7:24

### Who will deliver me from this body of death (ULT)

Paul uses this question to express great emotion. If your language has a way of showing great emotion through an exclamation or a question, use it here. Alternate translation: "I want someone to set me free from the control of what my body desires!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> I am a miserable man! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

### will deliver me (ULT)

"will rescue me"

### this body of death (ULT)

This is a metaphor that means a **body** that will experience physical **death**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 7:25

### Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (ULT)

This is the answer to the question in 7:24.

**So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. However, with the flesh I serve the principle of sin**

The mind and flesh are used here to show how they compare to serve either the **law of God** or the principle of **sin**. With the mind or intellect one can choose to please and obey God and with the flesh or physical nature to serve sin. Alternate translation: "My mind chooses to please God, but my flesh chooses to obey sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with the mind, but with the flesh, the law of sin.

## Romans 8

### Romans 8 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

The first verse of this chapter is a transitional sentence. Paul concludes his teaching of Chapter 7 and leads into the words of Chapter 8.

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 verse 36. Paul quotes these words from the Old Testament.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Indwelling of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is said to live inside a person or inside their heart. If the Spirit is present, this signifies that a person is saved. (See: [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

#### “These are sons of God”

Jesus is the Son of God in a unique way. God also adopts Christians to be his children. (See: [Son of God](#), [the Son](#) and [adoption](#), [adopt](#), [adopted](#))

#### Predestination

Many scholars believe Paul in this chapter teaches on a subject known as “predestination.” This is related to the biblical concept of “predestine.” Some take this to indicate that God has, from before the foundation of the world, chosen some to be eternally saved. Christians have different views on what the Bible teaches on this subject. So translators need to take extra care when translating this chapter, especially with regards to elements of causation. (See: [predestine](#), [predestined](#) and [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Metaphor

Paul poetically presents his teaching in verses 38 and 39 in the form of an extended metaphor. He explains that nothing can separate a person from the love of God in Jesus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### No condemnation

This phrase must be translated carefully to avoid doctrinal confusion. People are still guilty of their sin. God disapproves of acting sinfully, even after believing in Jesus. God still punishes the sins of believers, but Jesus has paid the punishment for their sin. This is what Paul expresses here. The word “condemn” has several possible meanings. Here Paul emphasizes that people who believe in Jesus are no longer punished eternally for their sin by being “condemned to hell.” (See: [guilt](#), [guilty](#) and [faith](#) and [condemn](#), [condemned](#), [condemnation](#))

## Flesh

This is a complex issue. “Flesh” is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive (“in the flesh”), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: [flesh](#))

## Romans 8:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul gives the answer to the struggle he has with sin and good.

### **There is} therefore now no condemnation for those who {are} in Christ Jesus (ULT)**

Here, **condemnation** refers to punishing people. Alternate translation: “God will not condemn and punish those who are joined to Christ Jesus” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **therefore (ULT)**

“for that reason” or “because what I have just told you is true”

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> {There is} therefore now no condemnation for those who {are} in Christ Jesus.

## Romans 8:2

### the...law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (ULT)

Here, **the Spirit of life** refers to God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "the working of the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

### has set you free from the law of sin and death (ULT)

Being **set free** from **the law of sin and death** is a metaphor for not being controlled by the law of sin and death. Alternate translation: "has caused the law of sin and death to no longer control you" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the law of sin and death

This could mean: (1) the **law** of Moses, which provokes people to sin, and their sin causes them to die. Alternate translation: "the law which causes sin and death" (2) Paul is stating the principle that people **sin** and die.

## Romans 8:3

### For what the law was unable to do, being weak through the flesh, God did (ULT)

Here the **law** is described as a person who could not break the power of sin. Alternate translation: “For the law did not have the power to stop us from sinning, because the power of sin within us was too strong. But God did stop us from sinning” (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For what the law was unable to do, being weak through the flesh, God did, having sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

### through the flesh (ULT)

“because of people’s sinful nature”

### He ... sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh ... an offering for sin ... he condemned sin

The **Son** of God forever satisfied God’s holy anger against our sin by giving his own body and human life as the eternal sacrifice for sin.

### Son (ULT)

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

### being weak...the likeness of sinful flesh (ULT)

“who looked like any other sinful human being”

### sinful...and for (ULT)

“so that he could die as a sacrifice for our sins”

### being weak...he condemned sin...the flesh (ULT)

“God broke the power of sin through the body of his Son”

## Romans 8:4

### the righteous deeds of the law might be fulfilled in us (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “we might fulfill what the law requires” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> so that the righteous deeds of the law might be fulfilled in us, those walking not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

### those walking not according to the flesh (ULT)

Here, **walking** on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Alternate translation: “we who do not obey our sinful desires” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### those walking not according to the flesh (ULT)

Here, **flesh** is an idiom for sinful human nature. (See: [Idiom](#))

### according to...but...the Spirit (ULT)

“but who obey the Holy Spirit”

## Romans 8:5

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> For those existing according to the flesh pay attention to the things of the flesh, but those according to the Spirit, to the things of the Spirit.

## Romans 8:6

### Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to contrast the flesh with the Spirit we now have.

**the...mind of the flesh...but the mind of the Spirit (ULT)**

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> For the mind of the flesh {is} death, but the mind of the Spirit {is} life and peace.

Here Paul speaks of both the **mind of the flesh** and the **mind of the Spirit** as if they were living persons. Alternate translation: “the way sinful people think ... the way people who listen to the Holy Spirit think” (See: [Personification](#))

## Romans 8:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> {This is} because the mind of the flesh {is} hostile toward God, for it has not been subjected to the law of God, for it is not able to do so.

## Romans 8:8

### those...existing in the flesh (ULT)

This refers to people who do what their sinful nature tells them to do.

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But those existing in the flesh are not able to please God.

## Romans 8:9

### in the flesh (ULT)

“acting according to your sinful natures.” See how **the flesh** was translated in [Romans 8:5](#).

### in...the Spirit (ULT)

“acting according to the Holy Spirit”

### the Spirit...the Spirit of God...the Spirit...of Christ (ULT)

These all refer to the Holy **Spirit**.

### if indeed (ULT)

This phrase does not mean Paul doubts that some of them have God’s Spirit. Paul wants them to realize that they all have God’s Spirit. Alternate translation: “since” or “because”

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. But if someone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of him.

## Romans 8:10

### if...Christ {is} in you (ULT)

How **Christ** lives in a person could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If Christ lives in you through the Holy Spirit" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> But if Christ {is} in you, the body {is} dead because of sin, but the spirit {is} alive because of righteousness.

### the body {is} dead because of sin (ULT)

This could mean: (1) a person is spiritually **dead** to the power of sin. (2) the physical **body** will still die because of sin. (See: [Idiom](#))

### but the spirit {is} alive because of righteousness (ULT)

This could mean: (1) a person is spiritually **alive** because God has given him power to do what is right. (2) God will bring the person back to life after he dies because God is righteous and gives believers eternal life. (See: [Idiom](#))

## Romans 8:11

### If indeed the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you (ULT)

Paul assumes that the Holy Spirit lives in his readers. Alternate translation: "Since the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you"

### of the one who raised (ULT)

"of God, who raised"

### who raised Jesus (ULT)

Here "to raise" is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "who caused Jesus to live again" (See: [Idiom](#))

### to your mortal bodies (ULT)

"your physical bodies" or "your bodies, which will die someday"

#### ULT

<sup>11</sup> If indeed the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

## Romans 8:12

### So then (ULT)

“Because what I have just told you is true”

### brothers (ULT)

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### we are debtors (ULT)

Paul is speaking of obedience as if it were paying back a debt. Alternate translation: “we need to obey” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### not to the flesh to live according to the flesh (ULT)

You can include the implied word “debtors.” Alternate translation: “but we are not debtors to the flesh, and we do not have to obey our sinful desires” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers, we are debtors—not to the flesh to live according to the flesh.

## Romans 8:13

### For if you live according to the flesh (ULT)

“Because if you live only to please your sinful desires”

### you are about to die (ULT)

“you will certainly be separated from God”

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you are about to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

### but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body (ULT)

Paul speaks of not doing sinful **deeds** as putting them to death. Alternate translation: “but if by the power of the Holy Spirit you stop obeying your sinful desires” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 8:14

### For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For all the people whom the Spirit of God leads" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

### of God...sons (ULT)

Here, **sons of God** refers to all believers in Jesus.

## Romans 8:15

### by which we cry (ULT)

“who causes us to cry out”

### Abba, Father (ULT)

**Abba** is the word for **Father** in the Aramaic language. (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

#### ULT

**15** For you did not receive again a spirit of slavery unto fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, “Abba, Father!”

## Romans 8:16

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

## Romans 8:17

### heirs of God (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: “we also will one day receive what God has promised us” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### joint heirs...with Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. God will give to us what he gives to Christ. Alternate translation: “we will also receive what God has promised us and Christ together” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### so that we may also be glorified with him (ULT)

God will honor Christian believers when he honors Christ. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “that God may glorify us along with him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**17** Now if children, then also heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

## Romans 8:18

### Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds us as believers that our bodies will be changed at the redemption of our bodies in this section which ends in [Romans 8:25](#).

### For (ULT)

This emphasizes **I consider**. Here, it does not mean “because.”

### **I consider...that the sufferings of this present time {are} not worthy {to be compared} with (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “I cannot compare the sufferings of this present time with” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **that is about...to be revealed (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “that God will reveal” or “that God will make known” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time {are} not worthy {to be compared} with the glory that is about to be revealed to us.

## Romans 8:19

### the...eager expectation of the creation...the... waits for (ULT)

Paul describes everything that God created as a person who eagerly waits for something. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> For the eager expectation of the creation waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

### the revealing of the sons of God (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “for the time when God will reveal his sons” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### of the sons of God (ULT)

Here refers to all believers in Jesus.

## Romans 8:20

### For the creation was subjected to futility (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God caused what he had created to be unable to achieve what he intended" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of the one who subjected it, in hope

### not willingly, but because of the one who subjected it (ULT)

Here Paul describes "creation" as a person who can desire. Alternate translation: "not because this is what the created things wanted, but because it is what God wanted" (See: [Personification](#))

## Romans 8:21

### the creation itself will be delivered (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save creation" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### from bondage to decay (ULT)

Here being in **slavery to decay** is a metaphor for being certain to decay. Alternate translation: "from being destined to decay" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (ULT)

Here, **freedom** is in contrast with slavery to decay. It is a metaphor meaning that the creation will not decay. Alternate translation: "that it will become gloriously free from decay like the children of God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> that also the creation itself will be delivered from bondage to decay into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

## Romans 8:22

### For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together until now (ULT)

The creation is compared to a woman who **groans** while giving birth to a baby. Alternate translation: “For we know that everything that God created wants to be free and groans for it like a woman giving birth” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together until now.

## Romans 8:23

### waiting for our adoption (ULT)

Here, **our adoption** refers to when we will become full members of God's family, as adopted sons. Alternate translation: "waiting for when we are fully members of God's family" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the redemption of our body (ULT)

Here, the word **redemption** means when God saves us. Alternate translation: "when he saves our bodies from decay and death" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**23** Not only that, but also we, having the firstfruits of the Spirit—even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our body.

## Romans 8:24

### For in hope we were saved (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God saved us because we hoped in him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Now hope being seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees (ULT)

Paul uses a question to help his audience understand what **hope** is. Alternate translation: "But if we are confidently waiting, that means we do not yet have what we want. No one can confidently wait if he already has what he wants" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> For in hope we were saved. Now hope being seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?

## Romans 8:25

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

## Romans 8:26

### Connecting Statement:

Though Paul has been emphasizing that there is a struggle in believers between the flesh and the Spirit, he affirms that the Spirit is aiding us.

### with inexpressible groans (ULT)

“with groanings that we cannot express in words”

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> Now in the same way, the Spirit also helps in our weakness. For we do not know what we should pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groans.

## Romans 8:27

### the one...who searches the hearts (ULT)

Here, **the one** refers to God.

### the one...who searches the hearts (ULT)

Here, **hearts** is a metonym for a person's thoughts and emotions.

Alternate translation: "God, who searches all our thoughts and feelings" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the one...who searches the hearts (ULT)

The phrase **searches the hearts** is a metaphor for examining thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "God, who knows all our thoughts and feelings" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> But the one who searches the hearts knows what {is} the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes on behalf of the saints according to the will of God.

## Romans 8:28

### Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers that nothing can separate them from God's love.

### for those...who are called (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for those whom God chose" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**28** For we know that for those who love God, God works all things together for good, <sup>[1]</sup> for those who are called according to {his} purpose.

## Romans 8:29

### those whom he foreknew (ULT)

“those whom he knew before he even created them”

### he also predestined (ULT)

“he also made it their destiny” or “he also planned in advance for them”

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> Because those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

### to be conformed to the image of his Son (ULT)

God planned from before the beginning of creation to grow those who believe in Jesus, the **Son** of God, into persons who are like Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “that he would change them to be like his Son” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### of his Son (ULT)

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

### that he might be the firstborn (ULT)

“so that his Son would be the firstborn”

### among many brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to all believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: “among many brothers and sisters who belong to the family of God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 8:30

### those whom...he predestined (ULT)

“those whom God made plans for in advance”

### these he also justified (ULT)

Here, **justified** is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: “these he also put right with himself” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### these he also glorified (ULT)

The word **glorified** is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: “these he will also glorify” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Now those whom he predestined, these he also called. And those whom he called, these he also justified. And those whom he justified, these he also glorified.

## Romans 8:31

### What then will we say about these things? If God {is} for us, who {is} against us (ULT)

Paul uses questions to emphasize the main point of what he said previously. Alternate translation: "This is what we should know from all of this: since God is helping us, no one can defeat us!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> What then will we say about these things? If God {is} for us, who {is} against us?

## Romans 8:32

### He who did not spare his own Son (ULT)

God the Father sent the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the cross as the holy, infinite sacrifice necessary to satisfy God's infinite, holy nature against the sin of humanity. Here, **Son** is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. (See: [Translating Son and Father](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but delivered him up on behalf of us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things?

### but...delivered him up (ULT)

"but put him under the control of his enemies"

### how will he not also with him freely give us all things (ULT)

Paul is using a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "he will certainly and freely give us all things!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### how will he not also with him freely give us all things (ULT)

"he will certainly also kindly give us all things"

## Romans 8:33

**Who will bring an accusation against the chosen ones of God? God {is} the one who justifies (ULT)**

Paul uses a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "No one can accuse us before God because he is the one who makes us right with him!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Who will bring an accusation against the chosen ones of God? God {is} the one who justifies.

## Romans 8:34

### Who {is} the one who condemns (ULT)

Paul uses a question for emphasis. He does not expect an answer. Alternate translation: “No one will condemn us!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### he also is at the right hand of God (ULT)

To be **at the right hand of God** is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: “who is at the place of honor beside God” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> Who {is} the one who condemns?  
Christ Jesus {is} the one who died—but more than that, having been raised, he also is at the right hand of God—he also intercedes for us.

## Romans 8:35

### Who will separate us from the love of Christ (ULT)

Paul uses this question to teach that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: “No one will ever separate us from the love of Christ!” or “Nothing will ever separate us from the love of Christ!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

### Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword (ULT)

The words “shall separate us from the love of Christ” are understood from the previous question. Alternate translation: “Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword separate us from the love of Christ?” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that even these things cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: “Even tribulation, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, and sword cannot separate us from the love of Christ!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword (ULT)

The abstract nouns can be expressed with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: “Even if people cause us trouble, hurt us, take away our clothes and food, or kill us, they cannot separate us from the love of Christ.” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### or sword (ULT)

Here, **sword** is a metonym that represents being killed violently. Alternate translation: “or being killed” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Tribulation, or distress (ULT)

These words both mean the same thing. (See: [Doublet](#))

## Romans 8:36

### For your benefit

Here, **your** is singular and refers to God. Alternate translation: “For you” (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> Just as it is written, “For your benefit we are killed all day long. We were considered as sheep for the slaughter.”

### we are killed all day long (ULT)

Here, **we** refers to the one who wrote this part of Scripture, but not his audience, who was God. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

### we are killed all day long (ULT)

The phrase **all day long** is an exaggeration to emphasize how much danger they are in. Paul uses this part of Scripture to show that all who belong to God should expect difficult times. Alternate translation: “we are continually killed” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

### we are killed all day long (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “our enemies continually seek to kill us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### We were considered as sheep for the slaughter (ULT)

Here Paul compares to livestock those whom people kill because they are loyal to God. Alternate translation: “Our lives are considered of no more value to them than the sheep they kill” (See: [Simile](#))

### We were considered as sheep for the slaughter (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Our lives have no more value to them than the sheep they kill” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 8:37

### we are more than conquerors (ULT)

“we have complete victory”

### through the one who loved us (ULT)

You can make explicit the kind of love that Jesus showed. Alternate translation: “because of Jesus, who loved us so much he was willing to die for us” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>37</sup> But in all these things we are more than conquerors through the one who loved us.

## Romans 8:38

### I have been convinced (ULT)

"I am confident"

### governments (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) demons. (2) human kings and rulers.

### neither...powers (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) spiritual beings with power. (2) human beings with power.

#### ULT

<sup>38</sup> For I have been convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor governments, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

## Romans 8:39

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which {is} in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Romans 9

### Romans 9 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul changes what he is teaching about. In Chapters 9-11, he focuses on the nation of Israel.

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 verses 25-29 and 33 of this chapter. Paul quotes all of these words from the Old Testament.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Flesh

Paul uses the word “flesh” in this chapter only to refer to Israelites, people physically descending from Abraham through Jacob, who God named Israel. (See: [flesh](#))

In other chapters, Paul uses the word “brother” to mean fellow Christians. However, in this chapter, he uses “my brothers” to mean his kinsmen the Israelites.

Paul refers to those who believe in Jesus as “children of God” and “children of the promise.”

#### Predestination

Many scholars believe Paul in this chapter teaches extensively on a subject known as “predestination.” This is related to the biblical concept of “predestine.” Some take this to indicate that God has, from before the foundation of the world, chosen some people to eternally save. Christians have different views on what the Bible teaches on this subject. So translators need to take extra care when translating this chapter. (See: [predestine](#), [predestined](#) and [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Stone of stumbling

Paul explains that while some Gentiles accepted Jesus as their savior by believing in him, most Jews were trying to earn their salvation and so rejected Jesus. Paul, quoting the Old Testament, describes Jesus as a stone that the Jews stumble over when walking. This “stone of stumbling” causes them to “fall.” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### “It is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel”

Paul uses the word “Israel” in this verse with two different meanings. The first “Israel” means the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob. The second “Israel” means those who are God’s people through faith. The UST reflects this.

## Romans 9:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul tells of his personal desire that the people of the nation of Israel will be saved. Then he emphasizes the different ways in which God has prepared them to believe.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie—  
my conscience bearing witness with me  
in the Holy Spirit—

### I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie (ULT)

These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them to emphasize that he is telling the truth.  
(See: [Doublet](#))

### in...my conscience bearing witness with me...the Holy Spirit (ULT)

“the Holy Spirit controls my conscience and confirms what I say”

## Romans 9:2

### that for me there is great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart (ULT)

Here, **unceasing pain in my heart** is an idiom that Paul uses to share his emotional distress. Alternate translation: "I tell you that I grieve very greatly and deeply" (See: [Idiom](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> that for me there is great sorrow and  
unceasing pain in my heart.

### sorrow...great...and unceasing pain (ULT)

These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how great his emotions are. (See: [Doublet](#))

## Romans 9:3

### For I could wish that I myself would be cursed, set apart from Christ (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “I personally would be willing to let God curse me and, keep me apart from Christ forever” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself would be cursed, set apart from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race according to the flesh;

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

## Romans 9:4

### who are Israelites (ULT)

“who, like me, are Israelites”

### of whom {are} the adoption (ULT)

Here Paul uses the metaphor of **adoption** to indicate that the Israelites are like God’s children. Alternate translation: “who have God as their father” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> who are Israelites, of whom {are} the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service, and the promises;

## Romans 9:5

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> of whom {are} the ancestors from whom also Christ {is} with respect to the flesh—he who {is} God over all, blessed to eternity. Amen.

## Romans 9:6

### Connecting Statement:

Paul emphasizes that those who are born in the family of Israel can really only be a true part of Israel through faith.

### But it is not as though the promises of God have failed

“But God has not failed to keep his promises” or “But God has kept his promises”

### For it is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel

God did not make his promises to all the physical descendants of **Israel** (or Jacob), but to his spiritual descendants, that is, those who trust in Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But {it is} not as though the word of God has failed. For not all these who {are} from Israel {are} Israel.

## Romans 9:7

### Neither that all the children are the descendants of Abraham (ULT)

“Nor are they all children of God just because they are Abraham’s descendants”

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Neither that all the children are the descendants of Abraham. But, “In Isaac your descendants will be called.”

## Romans 9:8

### the children of the flesh (ULT)

Here, **children of the flesh** is a metonym that refers to the physical descendants of Abraham. Alternate translation: “all of Abraham’s descendants” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### not...these {are...the children of God (ULT)

The phrase **children of God** is a metaphor that refers to people who are spiritual descendants, those who have faith in Jesus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the children...the...of...promise (ULT)

The phrase **children of the promise** refers to people who will inherit the promises that God gave to Abraham.

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> That is, the children of the flesh, these {are} not the children of God. But the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

## Romans 9:9

### of promise...this {is} the word (ULT)

“these are the words God used when he made the promise”

### a son will be given to Sarah (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form to express that God will give a son to Sarah. Alternate translation: “I will give Sarah a son” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For this {is} the word of promise: “At this time I will come, and a son will be given to Sarah.”

## Romans 9:10

### our father (ULT)

Paul refers to Isaac as **our father** because Isaac was the ancestor of Paul and of the Jewish believers in Rome. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### conceived (ULT)

“had become pregnant”

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Not only this, but Rebekah also conceived by one man, our father Isaac

—

## Romans 9:11

**for not yet having been born, not yet having  
done anything good or bad (ULT)**

“before the children were born and before they had done anything,  
whether good or bad”

**so that the purpose of God according to {his}  
choice might endure (ULT)**

“so that what God wants to happen according to His choice will happen”

**for not yet having been born (ULT)**

“before the children were born”

**not yet having done anything good or bad (ULT)**

“not because of anything they had done”

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> for not yet having been born, not yet  
having done anything good or bad, so  
that the purpose of God according to  
{his} choice might endure,

## Romans 9:12

### Connecting Statement:

It may be necessary in your language to place this verse between verse 10 and verse 11: “our father Isaac, it was said to her, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Now the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad, but so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand—not because of actions, but because of him who calls. It is just”

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> not because of actions, but because of the one who calls—it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger.”

### because of the one (ULT)

because of God

### it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger.”

“God said to Rebecca, ‘The older son will serve the younger son’”

## Romans 9:13

### Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated (ULT)

The word **hated** is an exaggeration. God **loved Jacob** much more than he loved **Esau**. He did not literally hate Esau. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**13** {It is} just as had been written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

## Romans 9:14

### What then will we say (ULT)

Paul is using the question to get the attention of his readers. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### There is} no...is there...May it never be (ULT)

“That is not possible!” or “Certainly not!” This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here.

#### ULT

**14** What then will we say? {There is} no unrighteousness with God{, is there}?  
May it never be!

## Romans 9:15

### For he says to Moses (ULT)

Paul speaks about God's talking with **Moses** as if it is being done in the present time. Alternate translation: "For God said to Moses"  
(See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**15** For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

## Romans 9:16

**it is not because of him who wills, nor because of him who runs**

“it is not because of what people want or because they try hard”

**nor of the one who runs (ULT)**

Paul speaks of a person who does good things in order to gain God’s favor as if that person were running a race.  
(See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>16</sup> So then, {it is} not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs, but of God, who shows mercy.

## Romans 9:17

### For the scripture says (ULT)

Here the **scripture** is personified as if God were talking to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "For the scripture records that God said" (See: [Personification](#))

### I raised you up...I might demonstrate...my (ULT)

Here the pronouns **I** and **my** refer to God as the speaker.

### you (ULT)

Here, **you** is singular and refers to Pharaoh. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### I raised you up (ULT)

Here, **raised** is an idiom for causing something to be what it is. Alternate translation: "I made you the powerful man that you are" (See: [Idiom](#))

### so that my name might be proclaimed (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that people might proclaim my name" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### my name (ULT)

Here, **name** is a metonym that could refer to: (1) God in all of his being. Alternate translation: "who I am" (2) God's reputation. Alternate translation: "how great I am" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### in all the earth (ULT)

"wherever there are people" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**17** For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, so that I might demonstrate my power in you, and so that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."

## Romans 9:18

**on whom he wishes, but...he makes stubborn  
(ULT)**

God makes stubborn whoever he wishes to make stubborn.

### ULT

<sup>18</sup> So then, he has mercy on whom he wishes, but whom he wishes, he makes stubborn.

## Romans 9:19

### You will say then to me (ULT)

Paul is talking to the critics of his teaching as though he were only talking to one person. You may need to use the plural here. (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

**19** You will say then to me, “Why then does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will?”

### Why then does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will (ULT)

These rhetorical questions are complaints against God. You can translate them as strong statements. Alternate translation: “He should not find fault with us. No one has ever been able to withstand his will.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### does he...find fault...his (ULT)

The words **he** and **his** here refer to God.

### will...who has ever withstood his...will (ULT)

“who has ever stopped him from doing what he wanted to do”

## Romans 9:20

**The thing molded will not say to the one who molded it, “Why did you make me this way?” will it (ULT)**

Paul uses the potter’s right to make any kind of container he wants from the clay as a metaphor for the creator’s right to do whatever he wants with his creation. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>20</sup> O man, on the contrary, who are you who answers against God? The thing molded will not say to the one who molded it, “Why did you make me this way?” will it?

**The thing molded will not say to the one who molded it, “Why did you make me this way?” will it (ULT)**

Paul asks questions to emphasize his point. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “What a person has molded should never say to the one who molds it, ‘Why did you make me this way?!’” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

**Why did you make me this way (ULT)**

This question is a rebuke and can be translated as a strong statement. Alternate translation: “You should not have made me this way!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 9:21

### Does the potter not have the right ... for daily use?

This rhetorical question is a rebuke. Alternate translation: "The potter certainly has the right over the clay to make from the same lump a container for special occasions, but another for daily use." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Or does the potter not have authority over the clay to make from the same lump a container for honor, but another for dishonor?

## Romans 9:22

### containers of wrath (ULT)

Paul speaks of people as if they were **containers**. Alternate translation: "people who deserve wrath" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> But what if God, willing to show {his} wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience containers of wrath prepared for destruction;

## Romans 9:23

### he might make known...his (ULT)

The pronouns **he** and **his** here refer to God.

### containers of mercy (ULT)

Paul speaks of people as if they were **containers**. Alternate translation: “people who deserve mercy” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the riches of his glory upon (ULT)

Paul compares God’s wonderful actions here to great **riches**. Alternate translation: “his glory, which is of great value, upon” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### which he had previously prepared for glory (ULT)

Here, **glory** refers to life in heaven with God. Alternate translation: “whom he prepared ahead of time in order that they might live with him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> and so that he might make known the riches of his glory upon containers of mercy, which he had previously prepared for glory—

## Romans 9:24

### even...us (ULT)

The pronoun **us** here refers to Paul and fellow believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### he called (ULT)

Here, **called** means God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> even us whom he called, not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles?

## Romans 9:25

### Connecting Statement:

In this section Paul explains how Israel's unbelief as a nation was told ahead of time by the prophet Hosea.

### As he says also in Hosea (ULT)

Here, **he** refers to God. Alternate translation: "As God says also in the book that Hosea wrote" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Hosea (ULT)

**Hosea** was an Old Testament prophet. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### I will call my people who were not my people

"I will choose for my people those who were not my people"

### the one who was not beloved, 'Beloved (ULT)

Here, **the one** refers to Hosea's wife, Gomer, who represents the nation of Israel. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I will choose her whom I did not love to be one whom I love" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> As he says also in Hosea: "I will call those who were not my people, 'my people,' and the one who was not beloved, 'Beloved.'"

## Romans 9:26

### sons of the living God (ULT)

The word **living** may refer to the fact that God is the only true God, and not like the false idols. Alternate translation: "children of the true God"

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> And it will be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You {are} not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

## Romans 9:27

### cries out (ULT)

“calls out”

### as the sand of the sea (ULT)

Here Paul compares the number of the people of Israel to the number of grains of **sand** in the **sea**. Alternate translation: “too many to count” (See: [Simile](#))

### will be saved (ULT)

Paul uses the word **saved** in a spiritual sense. If God saves a person, it means that through believing in Jesus’ death on the cross, God has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished for his sin. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will save” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> But Isaiah cries out concerning Israel,  
“Though the number of the sons of  
Israel might be as the sand of the sea,  
the remnant will be saved,

## Romans 9:28

### his} word...the Lord will carry out...on the earth (ULT)

Here, **word** refers to how he has decided to punish people. Alternate translation: "the Lord will punish people on the earth according to how he has said"

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> for the Lord will carry out {his} word on the earth, completely and without delay."

## Romans 9:29

### us ... we

Here the pronouns **us** and **we** refer to Isaiah and those to whom he spoke. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah (ULT)

God killed all of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sin. Alternate translation: “we all would have been destroyed like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah” or “God would have destroyed all of us, like he destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> And just as Isaiah had said previously, “If the Lord of hosts had not left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah.”

## Romans 9:30

### What will we say then (ULT)

Paul uses this question to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "This is what we must say." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### That the Gentiles (ULT)

"We will say that the Gentiles"

### who are not pursuing righteousness (ULT)

"who were not trying to please God"

### righteousness...that {is} by faith (ULT)

Here, **by faith** refers to placing one's trust in Christ. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "because God made them right with him when they trusted in Christ" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>30</sup> What will we say then? That the Gentiles, who are not pursuing righteousness, obtained righteousness, but righteousness that {is} by faith.

## Romans 9:31

### did not attain it through the law (ULT)

This means that the Israelites could not please God by trying to keep **the law**. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “were not able to please God by keeping the law because they could not keep it” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>31</sup> But Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain it through the law.

## Romans 9:32

### Why (ULT)

This is an ellipsis. You can include the implied words in your translation. Alternate translation: “Why could they not attain righteousness?” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> Why? Because it was not by faith, but as by works. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling,

### Why (ULT)

Paul asks this question to get the attention of his readers. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### as by works (ULT)

This refers to things that people do to try to please God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “by trying to do things that would please God” or “by keeping the Law” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 9:33

### just as it has been written (ULT)

You can indicate that Isaiah wrote this. Alternate translation: “just as it has been written by Isaiah the prophet” (See: [Assumed Knowledge](#) and [Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> just as it has been written, “Behold, I place in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and the one who believes in it will not be ashamed.”

### just as it has been written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “as Isaiah the prophet wrote” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### in Zion (ULT)

Here, **Zion** is a metonym that represents Israel. Alternate translation: “in Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense (ULT)

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. (See: [Doublet](#))

### a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense (ULT)

These phrases are metaphors that refer to Jesus and his death on the cross. It was as if the people stumbled over a stone because they were disgusted when they considered Jesus’ death on the cross. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### who believes in it (ULT)

Because the stone stands for a person, you may need to translate this as “who believes in him.”

## Romans 10

### Romans 10 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

Some translations set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULT does this with the quoted words in verse 8.

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 verses 18-20 of this chapter, which are words from the Old Testament.

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### God's righteousness

Paul teaches here that while many Jews earnestly tried to be righteous, they did not succeed. We cannot earn God's righteousness. God gives us Jesus' righteousness when we believe in him. (See: [righteous](#), [righteousness](#), [unrighteous](#), [unrighteousness](#), [upright](#), [uprightness](#) and [faith](#))

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

##### Rhetorical questions

Paul uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. He does this to convince his readers that God does not save only the Hebrew people, so Christians must be ready to go and share the gospel with the whole world. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [save](#), [saved](#), [safe](#), [salvation](#))

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### "I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation"

Paul uses this prophecy to explain that God will use the church to make the Hebrew people jealous. This is so they will seek God and believe the gospel. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophecy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#) and [jealous](#), [jealousy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 10:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul continues stating his desire for Israel to believe but emphasizes that both those who are Jews as well as everyone else can only be saved by faith in Jesus.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Brothers, the desire of my heart and {my} request to God {is} for them, for salvation.

### Brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### the desire of my heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's emotions or inner being. Alternate translation: "my greatest desire" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### is} for them, for salvation (ULT)

"is that God will save the Jews"

## Romans 10:2

### I testify...about them (ULT)

"I declare truthfully about them"

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

## Romans 10:3

### For they do not know the righteousness of God (ULT)

Here, **righteousness** refers to the way God puts people right with himself. You can make this explicit in the translation. Alternate translation: "For they do not know how God puts people right with himself" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For they do not know the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God.

### of God...they did not submit to the righteousness (ULT)

"they did not accept God's way of putting people right with himself"

## Romans 10:4

### For Christ {is} the fulfillment of the law (ULT)

“For Christ completely fulfilled the law”

### for righteousness for everyone who believes (ULT)

Here, **believes** means “trusts.” Alternate translation: “in order that he may make everyone who trusts in him right before God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> For Christ {is} the fulfillment of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes.

## Romans 10:5

### the righteousness that comes from the law

“how the law makes a person right before God”

### The man who does the righteousness of the law will live by this righteousness

In order to be made right with God through the law, a person would have to keep the law perfectly, which is not possible. Alternate translation: “The person who perfectly obeys the law will live because the law will make him right before God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness that {is} from the law: “The man who has done these things will live by them.”

### will live (ULT)

Here, **will live** could refer to: (1) eternal life. (2) mortal life in fellowship with God.

## Romans 10:6

### But the righteousness from faith says this (ULT)

Here, **righteousness** is described as a person who can speak.  
Alternate translation: "But Moses writes this about how faith makes a person right before God" (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But the righteousness from faith says this: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down);

### Do not say in your heart (ULT)

Moses was addressing the people as if he were speaking to only one person. The pronoun **your** is singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### Do not say in your heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "Do not say to yourself" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### Who will ascend into heaven (ULT)

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one is able to go up to heaven" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### that is, to bring Christ down (ULT)

"in order that they might have Christ come down to earth"

## Romans 10:7

### Who will descend into the abyss (ULT)

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "No person can go down and enter the place where the spirits of dead persons are" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

### from the dead (ULT)

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all **dead** people together in the underworld.

### the dead (ULT)

Here, **the dead** speaks of physical death.

## Romans 10:8

### But what does it say (ULT)

The word **it** refers to “the righteousness” of [Romans 10:6](#). Here Paul describes righteousness as a person who can speak. Alternate translation: “But this is what Moses says?” (See: [Personification](#))

### But what does it say (ULT)

Paul uses a question to emphasize the answer he is about to give. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### The word is near you (ULT)

Paul speaks of God’s word as if it were a person who can move. Alternate translation: “You have heard the message” (See: [Personification](#))

### The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (ULT)

The word **mouth** is a metonym that refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: “You can hear and know how to speak and think about God’s message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### in your heart (ULT)

The phrase **in your heart** is metonym that refers to what a person thinks and believes. Alternate translation: “and you know what it means” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### The...word of faith (ULT)

“God’s message that tells us that we must believe in him”

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.” That is the word of faith, which we proclaim.

## Romans 10:9

### if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord (ULT)

“if you verbally confess that Jesus is Lord”

### believe in your heart (ULT)

Here, **heart** is a metonym for a person’s mind or inner person. Alternate translation: “believe in your mind” or “truly believe” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### raised him from the dead (ULT)

Here, **raised** here is an idiom for “caused to live again.” Alternate translation: “caused him to live again” (See: [Idiom](#))

### you will be saved (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will save you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

## Romans 10:10

**For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation (ULT)**

Here, **heart** is a metonym that represents the mind or will. Alternate translation: "For it is with the mind that a person trusts and is right

before God, and it is with the mouth that a person confesses and God saves him" (See: [Metonymy](#))

**with the mouth (ULT)**

Here, **mouth** is a synecdoche that represents a person's capacity to speak. (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### ULT

<sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation.

## Romans 10:11

### For the scripture says (ULT)

Paul speaks of the scripture as if it were alive and had a voice. (See: [Personification](#))

### For the scripture says (ULT)

You can make explicit who wrote the scripture that Paul uses here. Alternate translation: "For Isaiah wrote in the scriptures" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame (ULT)

This is equivalent to: "Everyone who does not believe will be shamed." The negative is used here for emphasis. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will honor everyone who believes in him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**11** For the scripture says, "Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame."

## Romans 10:12

### For there is no difference between Jew and Greek (ULT)

Paul implies that God will treat all people the same. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "In this way, God treats the Jews and the non-Jews the same" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord {is} of all, being rich to all who call upon him.

### being rich to all who call upon him (ULT)

Here, **being rich** means that God blesses richly. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "and he richly blesses all who trust in him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 10:13

### For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (ULT)

Here the word **name** is a metonym for Jesus. (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>13</sup> For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

### For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For the Lord will save everyone who trusts in him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 10:14

### How then would they call to whom they have not believed (ULT)

Paul uses a question to emphasize the importance of taking the good news of Christ to those who have not heard. The word **they** refers to those who do not yet belong to God. Alternate translation: “Those who do not believe in God cannot call on him!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> How then would they call to whom they have not believed? And how would they believe in whom they have not heard? And how would they hear without someone preaching?

### how...would they believe in whom they have not heard (ULT)

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: “they cannot believe in him if they have not heard his message!” or “they cannot believe in him if they have not heard the message about him!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### would they believe in (ULT)

Here this means to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

### how...would they hear without someone preaching (ULT)

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: “they cannot hear the message if someone does not tell them!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

## Romans 10:15

### How beautiful {are} the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things (ULT)

Paul uses **feet** to represent those who travel and bring the message to those who have not heard it. Alternate translation: "It is wonderful when messengers come and tell us the good news" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> And how would they preach, unless they would be sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful {are} the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things!"

## Romans 10:16

### not all of them obeyed (ULT)

Here, **them** refers to the Jews. “not all of the Jews obeyed”

### Lord, who has believed our message (ULT)

Paul is using this question to emphasize that Isaiah prophesied in the Scriptures that many Jews would not believe in Jesus. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: “Lord, so many of them do not believe our message.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

**16** But not all of them obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”

### our message (ULT)

Here, **our** refers to God and Isaiah.

## Romans 10:17

### faith {is} from hearing (ULT)

Here, **faith** refers to “believing in Christ”

### hearing by the word of Christ

“hearing by listening to the message about Christ”

#### ULT

**17** So faith {is} from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

## Romans 10:18

### But I say, "Did they certainly not hear?" Yes, indeed (ULT)

Paul uses a question for emphasis. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "But, I say the Jews certainly have heard the message about Christ" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>18</sup> But I say, "Did they certainly not hear?" Yes, indeed. "Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

### Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (ULT)

Both of these statements mean basically the same thing and Paul uses them for emphasis. (See: [Parallelism](#))

### Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (ULT)

The word **their** refers to the sun, moon, and stars. Here they are described as human messengers that tell people about God. This refers to how their existence shows God's power and glory. Alternate translation: "The sun, moon, and the stars are proof of God's power and glory, and everyone in the world sees them and knows the truth about God." (See: [Personification](#))

### Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world (ULT)

You can make explicit that Paul is quoting Scripture here. Alternate translation: "As the Scriptures record, 'The sun, moon, and the stars are proof of God's power and glory, and everyone in the world sees them and knows the truth about God.'" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 10:19

### But I say, “Did Israel certainly not know (ULT)

Paul uses a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: “Again I tell you that Israel did know the message.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### But I say, “Did Israel certainly not know (ULT)

The word **Israel** is a metonym for the people who lived in the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: “Again I tell you the people of Israel did know the message” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**19** But I say, “Did Israel certainly not know?” First Moses says, “I will provoke you to jealousy by {what is} not a nation; by means of a nation without understanding, I will provoke you to anger.”

### First Moses says (ULT)

This means that Moses wrote down what God said. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### I will provoke you to jealousy...I will provoke you to anger (ULT)

Both instances of **I** refer to God, and **you** refers to the Israelites. Alternate translation: “God will provoke you ... God will stir you up to anger.” (See: [Forms of You](#))

### certainly not...by...a nation (ULT)

“by those you do not consider to be a real nation” or “by people who do not belong to any nation”

### by means of a nation without understanding (ULT)

Here, **without understanding** means that the people do not know God. Alternate translation: “by a nation with people who do not know me or my commands” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### you...I will provoke...to anger (ULT)

“I will make you angry” or “I will cause you to become angry”

### you (ULT)

Here, **you** refers to the nation of Israel. (See: [Forms of You](#))

## Romans 10:20

### General Information:

Here the words **I**, “me,” and “my” refer to God.

### Now Isaiah was very bold when he says (ULT)

This means the prophet **Isaiah** wrote what God had said.

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Now Isaiah was very bold when he says, “I was found by those not seeking me; I appeared to those not asking for me.”

### I was found by those not seeking me (ULT)

Prophets often speak of things in the future as if they have already happened. This emphasizes that the prophecy will certainly come true.

### I was found by those not seeking me (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Even though the Gentile people will not look for me, they will find me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### I appeared (ULT)

“I made myself known”

### he says (ULT)

**He** refers to God, who is speaking through Isaiah.

## Romans 10:21

### The whole day (ULT)

This phrase is used to emphasize God's continual effort.  
"Continually"

### I reached out my hands to a disobedient and contradictory people (ULT)

The action of reaching out a hand represents offering help to a person. Alternate translation: "I tried to welcome you and to help you, but you refused my help and continued to disobey" (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> But to Israel he says, "The whole day I reached out my hands to a disobedient and contradictory people."

## Romans 11

### Romans 11 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 verses 9-10, 26-27, and 34-35, which are words from the Old Testament.

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Grafting

Paul uses the image of “grafting” to refer to the place of the Gentiles and Jews in the plans of God. Making one plant to be permanently part of another plant is called “grafting.” Paul uses the picture of God grafting the Gentiles as a wild branch into his saving plans. But God has not forgotten about the Jews, who are spoken of as the natural plant. God will also save Jews who believe in Jesus.

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### “Did God reject his people? May it never be”

Whether Israel (the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) has a future in the plans of God, or if they have been replaced in the plans of God by the church, is a major theological issue in Chapters 9-11. This phrase is an important part of this section of Romans. It seems to indicate that Israel remains distinct from the church. Not all scholars arrive at this conclusion. Despite their currently rejecting Jesus as their Messiah, Israel has not exhausted the grace and mercy of God. (See: [Christ, Messiah](#) and [grace, gracious](#) and [mercy, merciful](#))

## Romans 11:1

### Connecting Statement:

Though Israel as a nation has rejected God, God wants them to understand salvation comes by grace without works.

### I say then (ULT)

“I, Paul, say then”

### God did not reject his people, did he (ULT)

Paul asks this question so that he can answer the questions of other Jews who are upset that God has included the Gentiles among his people, while the hearts of the Jewish people have been hardened. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### not...did he...May it never be (ULT)

“That is not possible!” or “Certainly not!” This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in [Romans 9:14](#).

### of the tribe of Benjamin (ULT)

This refers to the **tribe** descended from **Benjamin**, one of the 12 tribes into which God divided the people of Israel.

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> I say then, God did not reject his people, did he? May it never be! For I also am an Israelite, from the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

## Romans 11:2

### whom he foreknew (ULT)

“whom he knew ahead of time”

### Or do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel (ULT)

You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: “Surely you know what the Scriptures record about when Elijah pleaded with God against Israel” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### what the scripture says (ULT)

Paul is referring to the **scriptures** as if they were able to speak. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Or do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel?

## Romans 11:3

### they have killed (ULT)

Here, **they** refers to the people of Israel.

### and I alone was spared (ULT)

The pronoun **I** here refers to Elijah.

### they seek my life (ULT)

"they want to kill me"

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have broken down your altars, and I alone was spared, and they seek my life."

## Romans 11:4

### But what does the divine response say to him (ULT)

Paul is using this question to bring the reader to his next point.  
Alternate translation: "How does God answer him?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### to him (ULT)

The pronoun **him** refers to Elijah.

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for myself 7,000 men who have not bent the knee to Baal."

## Romans 11:5

### a remnant (ULT)

Here this means a small part of people whom God chose to receive his grace.

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the choice of grace.

## Romans 11:6

### But if by grace (ULT)

Paul continues to explain how God's mercy works. Alternate translation: "But since God's mercy works by grace" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But if by grace, {it is} no longer by works. Otherwise grace would no longer be grace. <sup>[1]</sup>

## Romans 11:7

### What then (ULT)

“What should we conclude?” Paul asks this question to move his reader to his next point. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: “This is what we need to remember.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> What then? The thing Israel seeks, it did not obtain, but the chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened,

## Romans 11:8

### God gave them a spirit of dullness, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear (ULT)

This is a metaphor about the fact that the people are spiritually dull. They are not able to **hear** or receive spiritual truth. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> just as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of dullness, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear, to this very day."

### a spirit of dullness (ULT)

Here, **spirit** means "the characteristics of," such as the "spirit of wisdom."

### eyes not to see (ULT)

The concept of seeing with one's **eyes** was considered to be equivalent to gaining understanding.

### not to see...ears...to hear (ULT)

The concept of hearing with the **ears** was considered to be equivalent to obedience.

## Romans 11:9

### Let their table become for a net and for a trap (ULT)

Here, **table** here is a metonym that represents feasting. Alternate translation: "Please, God, make their feasts become like a trap" (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> And David says, "Let their table become for a net and for a trap, and for a stumbling block and for a retribution for them."

### Let their table become for a net and for a trap (ULT)

Here, **net** and **trap** are metaphors that represent punishment. Alternate translation: (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Let their table become for a net and for a trap (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Please, God, make their feasts like a trap that catches them" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### a stumbling block (ULT)

A **stumbling block** is anything that causes a person to trip so that he falls down. Here it represents something that tempts a person to sin. Alternate translation: "something that tempts them to sin" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### a retribution for them (ULT)

"something that allows you to take revenge on them"

## Romans 11:10

### make their backs bend continually (ULT)

Here, **make their backs bend** is a metonym for forcing slaves to carry heavy loads on their backs. Alternate translation: “make them continually carry heavy loads” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Let their eyes be darkened to not see,  
and make their backs bend continually.”

### make their backs bend continually (ULT)

This is a metaphor for making them suffer. Alternate translation: “make them continually suffer like people carrying heavy loads” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 11:11

### Connecting Statement:

With Israel as a nation rejecting God, Paul warns the Gentiles to be careful they do not make the same mistake.

### They did not stumble so as to fall, did they (ULT)

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "Has God rejected them forever because they sinned?" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### not...did they...May it never be (ULT)

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in [Romans 9:14](#).

### to provoke...them...to jealousy (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [Romans 10:19](#).

#### ULT

**11** I say then, "They did not stumble so as to fall, did they?" May it never be! Instead, by their transgression, salvation {is} to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy.

## Romans 11:12

### if...their transgression {is} riches of the world, and their loss {is} riches of the Gentiles (ULT)

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. If you need to, you can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: “when the Jews failed spiritually, the result was that God abundantly blessed the non-Jews” (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> Now if their transgression {is} riches of the world, and their loss {is} riches of the Gentiles, how much greater {will} their completion {be}?

### is} riches...of the Gentiles (ULT)

Because the Jews rejected Christ, God richly blessed the **Gentiles** by giving them the opportunity to receive Christ.

### of the world (ULT)

Here the **world** is a metonym that refers to the people who live in the world, especially the Gentiles.

## Romans 11:13

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>13</sup> Now I speak to you Gentiles. As much therefore as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry,

## Romans 11:14

### I might provoke to jealousy (ULT)

See how you translated this phrase in [Romans 10:19](#).

### those who {are} of my own flesh (ULT)

This refers to Paul's fellow Jews.

### and might save some of them (ULT)

God will save those who believe. Alternate translation: “and perhaps some will believe and God will save them”  
(See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> if somehow I might provoke to jealousy those who {are} of my own flesh and might save some of them.

## Romans 11:15

### For if their rejection {is} reconciliation of the world (ULT)

“For if because God rejected them, he will reconcile the rest of the **world** to himself”

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> For if their rejection {is} reconciliation of the world, what {is their} acceptance if not life from the dead?

### their rejection (ULT)

The pronoun **their** refers to Jewish unbelievers.

### of the world (ULT)

Here, **the world** is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: “the people in the world” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### what {is their} acceptance if not life from the dead (ULT)

Paul asks this question to emphasize that when God accepts the Jews, it will be a wonderful thing. Alternate translation: “how will it be when God accepts them? It will be like they have come back to life from among the dead!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### what {is their} acceptance if not life from the dead (ULT)

You can translate it in an active form. Alternate translation: “then when God accepts them, it will be like they have died and become alive again!” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### the dead (ULT)

These words speak of all **dead** people together in the underworld.

## Romans 11:16

### Now if the firstfruits {are} holy, the lump of dough also (ULT)

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the first grain or **firstfruits** to be harvested. He is also speaking of the Israelites who are descendants of those men as if they were a **lump of dough** that they made from the grain. Alternate translation: "If Abraham is counted as the first of what has been offered to God, all of our ancestors who followed should also be counted as God's possession" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> Now if the firstfruits {are} holy, the lump of dough also. And if the root {is} holy, the branches also.

### if the root {is} holy, the branches also (ULT)

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the **root** of a tree, and the Israelites who are descendants of those men, as if they were the **branches** of the tree. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### are} holy (ULT)

The people always dedicated to God the first crops that they harvested. Here, "firstfruits" stands for the first people to believe in Christ. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 11:17

### But if some of the branches were broken off (ULT)

Here Paul refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus as **branches** that were **broken off**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### But if some of the branches were broken off (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "But if someone broke off some of the branches" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### and you, being a wild olive branch (ULT)

The pronoun **you**, and the phrase **a wild olive branch**, refer to the Gentile people who have accepted salvation through Jesus.

### were grafted into them (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of the Gentile Christians as if they were **grafted** into the faith of Abraham and the Jewish patriarchs. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### were grafted into them (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God attached you to the tree among the remaining branches" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### of the richness of the root of the olive tree (ULT)

Here, **the richness of the root** is a metaphor that refers to the promises of God. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>17</sup> But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive branch, were grafted into them, and {became} partakers with them of the richness of the root of the olive tree,

## Romans 11:18

### do not boast over the branches (ULT)

Here, **the branches** is a metaphor that stands for the Jewish people. Alternate translation: “do not say you are better than the Jewish people God has rejected” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**18** do not boast over the branches. But if you boast, you do not support the root, but the root, you.

### you do not support the root, but the root, you (ULT)

Again Paul implies that the Gentile believers are branches that are connected to the **root** of the faith of the Abraham and the Jewish patriarchs. God saves them only because of the covenant promises that he made to the Jews. (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 11:19

### Branches were broken off (ULT)

**Branches** here refer to the Jews who rejected Jesus and whom God has now rejected. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Branches were broken off (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God broke branches off” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### I might be grafted in (ULT)

Paul uses this phrase to refer to the Gentile believers whom God has accepted. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### I might be grafted in (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “he might attach me in” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**19** You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.”

## Romans 11:20

### They were broken off in {their} unbelief (ULT)

The pronouns **They** and **their** refer to the Jewish people who did not believe.

### but you stand firm in the faith (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Gentile believers remaining faithful as if they were standing **firm** and no one could move them. Alternate translation: “but you remain because of your faith” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> {That is} true. They were broken off in {their} unbelief, but you stand firm in the faith. Do not think highly of yourself, but fear.

## Romans 11:21

### For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you (ULT)

Here the **natural branches** refer to the Jewish people who rejected Jesus. Alternate translation: “Since God did not spare those unbelieving Jews, who grew up like a tree’s natural branches that came from the root, then know, if you do not believe, he will not spare you either” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

## Romans 11:22

### kindness and severity of God (ULT)

Paul is reminding the Gentile believers that although God may act very kindly toward them, he will not hesitate to judge and punish them.

### severity on those who fell, but kindness of God on you (ULT)

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns **severity** and **kindness**. Alternate translation: “God dealt harshly with the Jews who fell, but God acts kindly toward you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### those who fell (ULT)

Doing what is wrong is spoken of as if it is falling down. Alternate translation: “the Jews who have done wrong” or “the Jews who have refused to trust in Christ” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### if you continue in {his} kindness (ULT)

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun **kindness**. Alternate translation: “if you continue doing what is right so that he continues being kind to you” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

### Otherwise you also will be cut off (ULT)

Paul again uses the metaphor of a branch, which God can **cut off** if he needs to. Here, **cut off** is a metaphor for rejecting someone. Alternate translation: “Otherwise you will be rejected” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### Otherwise you also will be cut off (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Otherwise God will cut you off” or “Otherwise God will reject you” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> See, then, kindness and severity of God: severity on those who fell, but kindness of God on you, if you continue in {his} kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

## Romans 11:23

### if they do not continue in {their} unbelief (ULT)

The phrase **do not continue in their unbelief** is a double negative. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “if the Jews start believing in Christ” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> But they, if they do not continue in {their} unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again.

### will be grafted in (ULT)

Paul speaks of the Jews as if they were branches that could be **grafted** back into a tree if they start to believe in Jesus. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### will be grafted in (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will graft them back in” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to graft...in (ULT)

This is a common process where the end of a live branch of one tree is inserted into another tree so that the new branch will continue to grow in that tree.

### they...them (ULT)

The occurrences of **they** and **them** refer to the Jews.

## Romans 11:24

**For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, who {are} according to nature, be grafted back into their own olive tree (ULT)**

Paul continues speaking of the Gentile believers and Jews as if they were branches of a tree. (See: [Metaphor](#))

**For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, who {are} according to nature, be grafted back into their own olive tree (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “For if God had cut you out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature had grafted you into a good olive tree, how much more will he graft these Jews, who are the natural branches, into their own olive tree?” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**who {are} according to nature (ULT)**

Paul continues speaking of the Jews and Gentiles as if they were branches. The branches **according to nature** represent the Jews who were originally connected to the faith of Abraham and the Jewish patriarchs. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### ULT

<sup>24</sup> For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, who {are} according to nature, be grafted back into their own olive tree?

## Romans 11:25

### not...I do...want you to be ignorant (ULT)

Here Paul uses a double negative. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I very much want you to be aware" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### I do...want (ULT)

Here the pronoun **I** refers to Paul.

### you...you might...be...yourselves (ULT)

The pronouns **you** and **yourselves** refer to the Gentile believers.

### in order that you might not be wise in yourselves (ULT)

Paul does not want the Gentile believers to think they are wiser than the Jewish unbelievers. Alternate translation: "so that you will not think you are wiser than you are" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### a partial hardening has occurred in Israel (ULT)

Paul speaks of stubbornness as if it were a **hardening** of physical organs in the body. Some Jews have refused to accept salvation through Jesus. Alternate translation: "many people of Israel continue to be stubborn" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### of...mystery...until...completion of the Gentiles might come in (ULT)

The word **until** here implies that a portion Jews will refuse to believe until after God has finished bringing the **Gentiles** into the church.

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, in order that you might not be wise in yourselves, for a partial hardening has occurred in Israel, until the completion of the Gentiles might come in;

## Romans 11:26

### Connecting Statement:

Paul says that a deliverer will come out of Israel to the glory of God.

### and thus all Israel will be saved (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “and thus God will save all Israel” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “just as the scriptures record” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### From Zion (ULT)

Here, **Zion** is used as a metonym for the place where God dwells. Alternate translation: “From where God is among the Jews” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### the Deliverer (ULT)

“the one who brings his people to safety”

### He will remove ungodliness (ULT)

Paul speaks of **ungodliness** as if it were an object that someone could remove, perhaps like someone removes a garment. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### from Jacob (ULT)

Here, **Jacob** is used as a metonym for Israel. Alternate translation: “from the Israelite people” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**26** and thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written: “From Zion will come the Deliverer. He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

## Romans 11:27

### I will take away their sins (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of **sins** as if they were objects that someone could take away. Alternate translation: "I will remove the burden of their sins" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**27** And this {will be} the covenant from me to them, when I will take away their sins."

## Romans 11:28

### As far as the gospel is concerned

You can make explicit why Paul mentions the **gospel**. Alternate translation: “Because the Jews rejected the gospel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### they are} enemies for your sake (ULT)

You can make explicit whose **enemies** they are, and how this was for the Gentiles’ sake. Alternate translation: “they are God’s enemies for your sake” or “God has treated them as enemies in order that you also might hear the gospel” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### according to...election (ULT)

You can make explicit why Paul mentions **election**. Alternate translation: “because God has elected the Jews” or “because God has chosen the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### they are} beloved because of their forefathers (ULT)

You can make explicit who loves the Jews and why Paul mentions **their forefathers**. Alternate translation: “they are loved by God because of what he promised to do for their ancestors” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### they are} beloved because of their forefathers (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God still loves them because of what he promised to do for their ancestors” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>28</sup> According to the gospel, {they are} enemies for your sake, but according to election, {they are} beloved because of their forefathers.

## Romans 11:29

### For the gifts and the calling of God {are} unchangeable (ULT)

Paul speaks of the spiritual and material blessings that God promised to give his people as if they were **gifts**. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> For the gifts and the calling of God {are} unchangeable.

### For the gifts and the calling of God {are} unchangeable (ULT)

The call of God refers to the fact that God called the Jews to be his people. Alternate translation: “For God never changed his mind about what he has promised to give them, and about how he has called them to be his people” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 11:30

### **you were formerly disobedient (ULT)**

“you did not obey in the past”

### **have received mercy in that disobedience (ULT)**

Here, **mercy** means God’s undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: “because the Jews have rejected Jesus, you have received blessings that you did not deserve” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### **you (ULT)**

Here, **you** refers to Gentile believers, and is plural. (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>30</sup> For just as you were formerly disobedient to God, but now have received mercy in that disobedience,

## Romans 11:31

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>31</sup> thus also, these now have been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you, they might also now receive mercy.

## Romans 11:32

### has shut up...God...all into disobedience (ULT)

God has treated people who disobey him like prisoners who are unable to escape from prison. Alternate translation: "God has made prisoners of those who disobey him. Now they cannot stop disobeying God" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>32</sup> For God has shut up all into disobedience, in order that he might have mercy on all.

## Romans 11:33

### Oh, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God (ULT)

Here, **wisdom** and **knowledge** mean basically the same thing.  
Alternate translation: "How amazing are the many benefits of both God's wisdom and knowledge!" (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable {are} his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering!

### How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering

"We are completely unable to understand the things that he has decided and find out the ways in which he acts toward us"

## Romans 11:34

### For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has become his advisor (ULT)

Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one is as wise as the Lord. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation:

“No one has ever known the mind of the Lord, and no one has become his advisor.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>34</sup> “For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has become his advisor?”

### the mind of the Lord (ULT)

Here, **mind** is a metonym for knowing things or thinking about things. Alternate translation: “all that the Lord knows” or “what the Lord thinks about” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## Romans 11:35

**Or who has first given anything to him, that he will be repaid by him (ULT)**

Paul uses this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: “No one has ever given anything to God that he did not first receive from God” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### ULT

<sup>35</sup> Or who has first given anything to him, that he will be repaid by him?”

## Romans 11:36

### For from him ... through him ... to him

Here, all occurrences of **him** refer to God. (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them](#) )

### To him {be} the glory to the ages (ULT)

This expresses Paul's desire for all people to honor God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "May all people honor him forever" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him {are} all things. To him {be} the glory to the ages. Amen.

## Romans 12

### Romans 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 words of verse 20, which are from the Old Testament.

Many scholars believe Paul uses the word **therefore** in [Romans 12:1](#) to refer back to all of Chapters 1-11. Having carefully explained the Christian gospel, Paul now explains how Christians should live in light of these great truths. Chapters 12-16 focus on living out one's Christian faith. Paul uses many different commands in these chapters to give these practical instructions. (See: [faith](#))

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Christian living

Under the law of Moses, people were required to offer temple sacrifices of animals or grain. Now Christians are required to live their lives as a type of sacrifice to God. Physical sacrifices are no longer required. (See: [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

##### Body of Christ

The body of Christ is an important metaphor or image used in Scripture to refer to the church. Each church member plays a unique and important function. Christians need each other. (See: [body](#) and [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 12:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul tells what the life of a believer should be and how believers should serve.

### I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: "Fellow believers, because of the great mercy that God has given you I very much want you" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which {is} your reasonable service.

### to present your bodies a living sacrifice (ULT)

Here Paul uses the word **bodies** to refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "to offer yourselves completely to God as a living sacrifice" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### to present your bodies a living sacrifice (ULT)

Paul is comparing a believer in Christ who completely obeys God to the animals that the Jews killed and then offered to God. Alternate translation: "to offer yourselves completely to God while you are alive as if you were a dead sacrifice on a temple altar" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### holy, acceptable to God (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) a sacrifice that you give to God alone and that pleases him. (2) a sacrifice that is **acceptable** to God because it is morally pure. (See: [Doublet](#))

### your...which {is...reasonable service (ULT)

"which is the right way to worship God"

## Romans 12:2

### do not be conformed to this age (ULT)

This could mean: (1) do not behave as the world behaves. (2) do not think the way the world does. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### do not be conformed to this age (ULT)

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “do not act and think like the world does” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to this age (ULT)

Here, **this world** refers to unbelievers who live in the world. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### but be transformed by the renewal of the mind (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “but let God change the way you think” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of the mind, for you to prove what {is} the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## Romans 12:3

### through the grace that has been given to me (ULT)

Here, **grace** refers to God's choosing Paul to be an apostle and leader of the church. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "through the grace that caused me to become an apostle" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### through the grace that has been given to me (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God freely chose me to be an apostle" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to everyone who is among you to not think more highly of himself than what he ought to think (ULT)

"that no one among you should think they are better than they are"

### to think, but...with sound mind (ULT)

"but you should be wise in how you think about yourselves"

### as God has distributed to each one a measure of faith (ULT)

Paul implies here that believers have different abilities that correspond to their **faith** in God. Alternate translation: "since God has given each of you the faith to trust in him" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For I say, through the grace that has been given to me, to everyone who is among you to not think more highly of himself than what he ought to think, but to think with sound mind, as God has distributed to each one a measure of faith.

## Romans 12:4

### For (ULT)

Paul the word **For** to show that he will now explain why some Christians should not think they are better than others.

### we have many members in one body (ULT)

Paul refers to all the believers in Christ as if they were different parts of the human **body**. He does this to illustrate that although believers may serve Christ in different ways, each person belongs to Christ and serves in an important way. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### members (ULT)

Here, **members** are such things as eyes, stomachs, and hands.

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> For just as we have many members in one body, but not all the members have the same function,

## Romans 12:5

### are individually members of each other

Paul speaks of the believers as if God had physically joined them together like the parts of the human body. (See: [Metaphor](#))

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God has joined each believer together with all other believers” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> in the same way, the many are one body in Christ and individually members of each other.

## Romans 12:6

### But we have different gifts according to the grace that has been given to us (ULT)

Paul speaks of believers' different abilities as being free gifts from God. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### But we have different gifts according to the grace that has been given to us (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has freely given each of us the ability to do different things for him" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### according to the...proportion of {his} faith (ULT)

This could mean: (1) he should speak prophecies that do not go beyond the amount of faith God has given us. (2) he should speak prophecies that agree with the teachings of our faith.

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> But we have different gifts according to the grace that has been given to us: if prophecy, according to the proportion of {his} faith;

## Romans 12:7

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>7</sup> if service, in serving; if the one  
teaching, in teaching;

## Romans 12:8

### the one giving (ULT)

Here, **giving** refers to giving money and other things to people. You can make this meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “if one has the gift of giving money or other goods to people in need” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> if the one encouraging, in encouragement; the one giving, in generosity; the one leading, in diligence; the one showing mercy, with cheerfulness.

## Romans 12:9

### Let love be without hypocrisy (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "You must love people sincerely and truly" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### love (ULT)

The word Paul uses here refers to the kind of love that comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself.

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Let love be without hypocrisy,  
abhorring the evil, holding on to the  
good;

## Romans 12:10

### in love of the brothers (ULT)

This is another word that means brotherly **love** or love for a friend or family member. This is natural human love between friends or relatives.

#### ULT

**10** in love of the brothers, affectionate to one another; in honor, preferring one another;

### in love of the brothers...affectionate (ULT)

Here Paul begins a list of nine items, each of the form **in ... be** to tell the believers what kind of people they should be. You may need to translate some of the items as "in ... do." The list continues to [Romans 12:13](#).

### in love of the brothers (ULT)

"as for how you love your fellow believers"

### in love of the brothers...one another...in honor...preferring (ULT)

"honor and respect one another" or "honor your fellow believers by respecting them"

## Romans 12:11

**Concerning diligence, do not be hesitant.  
Concerning the spirit, be eager. Concerning  
the Lord, serve him**

“do not be lazy in your duty, but be eager to follow the Spirit and to serve the Lord”

### ULT

<sup>11</sup> in diligence, not hesitant; in the spirit,  
being eager; serving the Lord;

## Romans 12:12

### in hope...in suffering...being patient (ULT)

“wait patiently whenever you have troubles”

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> in hope, rejoicing; in suffering, being patient; in prayer, persisting;

## Romans 12:13

### in the needs of the saints, sharing (ULT)

“when fellow Christians are in trouble, help them with what they need”

#### ULT

**13** in the needs of the saints, sharing;  
pursuing hospitality.

### pursuing hospitality (ULT)

This is the last item in the list that began in [Romans 12:9](#). “always welcome them into your home when they need a place to stay”

## Romans 12:14

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless  
and do not curse;

## Romans 12:15

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>15</sup> to rejoice with those who rejoice; to weep with those who weep;

## Romans 12:16

### of the same mind toward one another (ULT)

This is an idiom that means to live in unity. Alternate translation: “agreeing with one another” or “living in unity with each other” (See: [Idiom](#))

### of...mind...not...in proud ways (ULT)

“do not think that you are more important than others”

### accepting lowly people (ULT)

“welcome people who do not seem important”

### not...Do...be wise in yourselves (ULT)

“Do not think of yourselves as having more wisdom than everyone else”

#### ULT

**16** of the same mind toward one another, not thinking in proud ways, but accepting lowly people. Do not be wise in yourselves;

## Romans 12:17

### repaying no one evil for evil (ULT)

“do not do evil things to someone who has done evil things to you”

### practicing good things in the sight of all men (ULT)

“do things that everyone considers to be good”

#### ULT

**17** repaying no one evil for evil;  
practicing good things in the sight of all  
men;

## Romans 12:18

**what {is} from you, living at peace with all men (ULT)**

“do whatever you can to live in peace with everyone”

### ULT

<sup>18</sup> if possible, what {is} from you, living at peace with all men;

## Romans 12:19

### give way to the wrath (ULT)

Here, **wrath** is a metonym for God's punishment. Alternate translation: "allow God to punish them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

### for it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for someone has written" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Vengeance {is} to me; I will repay (ULT)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that God will avenge his people. Alternate translation: "I will certainly avenge you" (See: [Parallelism](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> not avenging yourselves, beloved, but give way to the wrath, for it is written, "'Vengeance {is} to me; I will repay,' says the Lord."

## Romans 12:20

### your enemy...you will heap (ULT)

The pronouns **your** and **you** are singular and addressed as to one person. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### But if your enemy is hungry ... his head

In 12:20 Paul quotes another part of scripture. Alternate translation: "But the scripture also says, 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For doing this, you will heap coals of fire on his his head'"

### you will heap coals of fire on his head (ULT)

Paul speaks of the blessings that the enemies will receive as if someone were pouring hot **coals** on their heads. This could mean: (1) you will make the person who harmed you feel badly about how he has mistreated you. (2) you will give God a reason to judge your enemy more harshly. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**20** "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For doing this, you will heap coals of fire on his head."

## Romans 12:21

### Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (ULT)

Paul describes **evil** as though it were a person. (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### Do not be overcome by evil (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let those who are evil defeat you" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome...evil (ULT)

These verbs are addressed as to one person and so are singular.

## Romans 13

### Romans 13 General Notes

#### Structure and formatting

In the first part of this chapter, Paul teaches Christians to obey rulers who govern them. At that time, ungodly Roman rulers governed the land. (See: [godly](#), [godliness](#), [ungodly](#), [godless](#), [ungodliness](#), [godlessness](#))

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Ungodly rulers

When Paul teaches about obeying rulers, some readers will find this difficult to understand, especially in places where rulers persecute the church. Christians must obey their rulers as well as obey God, unless the rulers do not allow Christians to do something God explicitly commands them to do. There are times when a believer must submit to these rulers and suffer at their hands. Christians understand that this world is temporary and they will ultimately be with God forever. (See: [eternity](#), [everlasting](#), [eternal](#), [forever](#))

#### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

##### Flesh

This is a complex issue. “Flesh” is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive (“in the flesh”), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: [flesh](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

## Romans 13:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul tells believers how to live under their rulers.

### every soul...Let...be (ULT)

Here, **soul** is a synecdoche for the whole person. "Let every Christian obey" or "Everyone should obey" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### subject to governing authorities (ULT)

"submit to government officials"

### no...there is...authority except from God (ULT)

This is a double negative. You can translate it in a positive form. Alternate translation: "all authority comes from God" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### and the ones that exist are appointed by God (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "And the people who are in authority are there because God put them there" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Let every soul be subject to governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and the ones that exist are appointed by God.

## Romans 13:2

### that authority (ULT)

“that government authority” or “the authority that God placed in power”

### the ones...who oppose it will bring judgment on themselves (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will judge those who oppose government authority” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the one who resists that authority opposes the command of God, and the ones who oppose it will bring judgment on themselves.

## Romans 13:3

### For (ULT)

Paul uses this word to begin his explanation of [Romans 13:2](#) and to tell about what will result if the government condemns a person.

### rulers...rulers...are not a terror (ULT)

Rulers do not make good people afraid.

### to good deeds...to good...to evil deeds (ULT)

People are identified with their **good deeds** or **evil deeds**.

### Now do you desire not to be afraid of authority (ULT)

Paul uses this question to get people to think about what they need to do in order not to be afraid of rulers. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you how you can be unafraid of the ruler." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

### you will receive approval from it (ULT)

The government will say good things about people who do what is good.

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good deeds, but to evil deeds. Now do you desire not to be afraid of authority? Do good, and you will receive approval from it,

## Romans 13:4

### not...he does...carry the sword in vain (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: “he carries the sword for a very good reason” or “he has the power to punish people, and he will punish people” (See: [Litotes](#))

### he does...carry the sword (ULT)

Roman governors carried a short **sword** as a symbol of their authority. (See: [Metonymy](#))

### an avenger for wrath (ULT)

Here, **wrath** represents the punishment people receive when they do evil deeds. Alternate translation: “a person who punishes people as an expression of the government’s anger against evil” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> for he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not carry the sword in vain, for he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath on the one who does evil.

## Romans 13:5

### **not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience**

“not only so the government will not punish you, but also so you will have a clear conscience before God”

#### **ULT**

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, you must obey, not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience.

## Romans 13:6

### because of this (ULT)

“because the government punishes evildoers”

### you pay (ULT)

Paul is addressing the believers here, so this verb is plural.

### For they are

“This is why you should pay taxes: authorities are”

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> For because of this you pay taxes also; for they are servants of God, attending continually to this very thing.

## Romans 13:7

### Pay back to everyone (ULT)

Paul is addressing the believers here, so this verb is plural.

### tax to whom tax, toll to whom toll, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor (ULT)

The word “pay” is understood from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: “pay tax to whom tax is due and toll to whom toll is due. Pay fear to whom fear is due and honor to him to whom honor is due” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor (ULT)

Here paying **fear** and **honor** is a metaphor for fearing and honoring those who deserve to be feared and honored. Alternate translation: “Fear those who deserve to be feared, and honor those who deserved to be honored” or “Respect those whom you ought to respect, and honor those whom you ought to honor” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### toll (ULT)

This is a kind of tax.

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Pay back to everyone what {is} owed to them: tax to whom tax, toll to whom toll, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

## Romans 13:8

### Connecting Statement:

Paul tells believers how to act toward neighbors.

### Owe no one anything, except to love one another (ULT)

This is a double negative. You can translate it in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Pay all you owe to everyone, and fulfill your obligation to love one another" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves {his} neighbor has fulfilled the law.

### except to love one another (ULT)

This is the one debt that can remain.

### Owe (ULT)

This verb is plural and applies to all the Christians in Rome.

### to love (ULT)

This refers to the kind of **love** that comes from God and focuses on the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself.

## Romans 13:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For this: “Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not covet,” and if any other commandment, it is summed up in this command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

## Romans 13:10

### Love does not cause harm to a neighbor (ULT)

This phrase portrays love as a person who is being kind to other people. Alternate translation: "People who love their neighbors do not harm them" (See: [Personification](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> Love does not cause harm to a neighbor; therefore, love {is} the fulfillment of the law.

## Romans 13:11

### knowing the time, that {it is} already the season for us to awake from sleep (ULT)

Paul speaks of the need for the Roman believers to change their behavior as if they needed to wake up from being asleep. (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**11** And this, knowing the time, that {it is} already the season for us to awake from sleep. For now our salvation {is} nearer than when we believed.

## Romans 13:12

### The night has advanced (ULT)

Paul speaks of the time when people do evil deeds as **night**. Alternate translation: "The sinful time is almost over" or "It is as though the night is almost finished" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### the...day has come near (ULT)

Paul speaks of the time when people do what is right as the **day**. Alternate translation: "the time of righteousness will begin soon" or "it is as though it will soon be day" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> The night has advanced, and the day has come near. Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

### Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness (ULT)

Paul speaks of **works of darkness** as if they are clothing that a person puts aside. Here to **put aside** means to stop doing something. Here, **darkness** is a metaphor for evil. Alternate translation: "Let us therefore stop doing the evil things that people do in the dark" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### let us put on...the armor of light (ULT)

Here, **light** is a metaphor for what is good and right. Paul speaks of doing what is right as if it were putting on armor to protect one's self. Alternate translation: "let us start doing what is right. Doing this will protect us from what is evil like armor protects a soldier" (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 13:13

### Let us walk (ULT)

Paul includes his readers and other believers with himself. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### Let us walk decently, as in the day (ULT)

Paul speaks of living as true believers as if one were walking while it is **day**. Alternate translation: "Let us walk in a visible way knowing that everyone can see us" (See: [Metaphor](#))

### in sexual immorality and uncontrolled lust (ULT)

These concepts mean basically the same thing. You can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: "in sexually immoral acts" (See: [Doublet](#))

### in strife (ULT)

This refers to plotting against and arguing with other people.

#### ULT

**13** Let us walk decently, as in the day, not in drunken celebrations or drunkenness; let us not walk in sexual immorality and uncontrolled lust, not in strife and jealousy.

## Romans 13:14

### put on the Lord Jesus Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of accepting the moral nature of Christ as if he were our outer clothing that people can see. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### put on (ULT)

If your language has a plural form for commands, use it here.

### make no provision for the flesh (ULT)

Here the **flesh** refers to the self-directed nature of people who oppose God. This is the sinful nature of human beings. Alternate translation: “do not allow your old evil heart any opportunity at all for doing wicked things” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

**14** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, for lusts.

## Romans 14

### Romans 14 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 verse 11 of this chapter, which Paul quotes from the Old Testament.

#### Special concepts in this chapter

##### Weak in faith

Paul teaches that Christians can have real faith and at the same time be “weak in faith” in a given situation. This describes Christians whose faith is immature, not strong, or misunderstood. (See: [faith](#))

##### Dietary restrictions

Many religions in the ancient Near East restricted what was eaten. Christians have freedom to eat what they want. But they need to use this freedom wisely, in a way that honors the Lord and does not cause others to sin. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

##### The judgment seat of God

The judgment seat of God or Christ represents a time when all people, including Christians, will be held accountable for the way they lived their lives.

## Romans 14:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages believers to remember that they are answerable to God.

### who is weak in faith (ULT)

This refers to those who felt guilty over eating and drinking certain things.

### not for passing judgment on opinions (ULT)

“and do not condemn them for their opinions”

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> But receive the one who is weak in faith, not for passing judgment on opinions.

## Romans 14:2

### One person believes to eat anything (ULT)

Some people believe God permits them to eat any kind of food.

### the one...who is weak eats only vegetables (ULT)

This describes a person who believes God does not want him to eat meat.

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> One person believes to eat anything, but the one who is weak eats only vegetables.

## Romans 14:3

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Let the one who eats not despise the one who does not eat, and let the one who does not eat not judge the one who eats. For God has accepted him.

## Romans 14:4

### Who are you who judges a servant belonging to another (ULT)

Paul is using a question to scold those who are judging others. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: “You are not God, and you are not allowed to judge one of his servants!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>4</sup> Who are you who judges a servant belonging to another? To his own master he stands or falls. But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

### you...who judges (ULT)

The form of **you** here is singular. (See: [Forms of You](#))

### To his own master he stands or falls (ULT)

Paul speaks of God as if he were a **master** who owned slaves. Alternate translation: “Only the master can decide if he will accept the slave or not” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand (ULT)

Paul speaks of the servant who is acceptable to God as if he were being **made to stand** instead of falling. (See: [Metaphor](#))

### But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “But the Lord will accept him because he is able to make the servant acceptable” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 14:5

**One person values one day above another.  
Another values every day equally**

“One person thinks one day is more important than all the others, but another person thinks that all days are the same”

### ULT

<sup>5</sup> One person judges day from day, but another person judges every day. Let each one be convinced in his own mind.

**Let each one be convinced in his own mind (ULT)**

You can make the full meaning explicit. Alternate translation: “Let each person be convinced that he is honoring the Lord by what he does” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**Let each one be convinced in his own mind (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Let each person be sure what he is doing is to honor the Lord” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 14:6

### The one who observes the day, observes it for the Lord (ULT)

Here, **observes** refers to worshiping. Alternate translation: “The person who worships on a certain day does it to honor the Lord” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the one who eats (ULT)

The word “everything” is understood from [Romans 14:3](#). It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: “the person who eats every kind of food” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### for the Lord...eats (ULT)

“eats to honor the Lord” or “eats that way in order to honor the Lord”

### and the one who does not eat (ULT)

The word “everything” is understood from [Romans 14:3](#). It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: “and he who does not eat everything” or “and the person who does not eat certain kinds of food” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> The one who observes the day, observes it for the Lord; and the one who eats, eats for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God, and the one who does not eat, does not eat for the Lord; he also gives thanks to God.

## Romans 14:7

### For none of us lives for himself (ULT)

Here, **lives for himself** means to live only to please oneself.  
Alternate translation: "None of us should live merely to please ourselves" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> For none of us lives for himself, and none dies for himself.

### none...of us (ULT)

Paul is including his readers, so this is inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### none dies for himself (ULT)

This means anyone's death affects other people. Alternate translation: "none of us should think that when we die, it affects only us" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 14:8

### General Information:

Paul is speaking of both himself and his readers, so all instances of “we” are inclusive. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or whether we die, we are of the Lord.

## Romans 14:9

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>9</sup> For to this purpose Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and of the living.

## Romans 14:10

### why do you judge your brother? And you also, why do you despise your brother (ULT)

By using these questions, Paul is demonstrating how he might need to scold individuals among his readers. Alternate translation: “it is wrong for you to judge your brother, and it is wrong for you to despise your brother!” or “stop judging and despising your brother!” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> But you, why do you judge your brother? And you also, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

### brother (ULT)

Here, **brother** means a fellow Christian, male or female.

### For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God (ULT)

The **judgment seat** refers to God’s authority to judge. Alternate translation: “For God will judge us all” (See: [Metonymy](#))

## Romans 14:11

### For it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has written in the scriptures:" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### As I live (ULT)

This phrase is used to start an oath or solemn promise. Alternate translation: "You can be certain that this is true" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will confess to God (ULT)

Paul uses the word **God** and **tongue** to refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "every person will bow and give praise to God" (See: [Synecdoche](#))

### to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will confess to God (ULT)

The Lord uses the word **God** to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "every person will bow and give praise to me" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

#### ULT

**11** For it is written, "As I live," says the Lord, "to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will confess to God."

## Romans 14:12

**will give an account concerning himself to God (ULT)**

“will have to explain our actions to God”

### ULT

<sup>12</sup> So then, each one of us will give an account concerning himself to God.

## Romans 14:13

**but instead judge this: that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for {his} brother (ULT)**

Here, **stumbling block** and **snare** mean basically the same thing.  
Alternate translation: "but instead make it your goal not to do or say anything that might cause a fellow believer to sin" (See: [Doublet](#))

**for {his} brother (ULT)**

Here, **brother** refers to a fellow Christian, male or female.

### ULT

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, let us no longer judge one another, but instead judge this: that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for {his} brother.

## Romans 14:14

### I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus (ULT)

Here the words **know** and **am persuaded** mean basically the same thing; Paul uses them to emphasize his certainty. Alternate translation: "I am certain because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus" (See: [Doublet](#))

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing {is} unclean by itself, except to the one who considers anything to be unclean, for him {it is} unclean.

### nothing {is} unclean by itself (ULT)

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "everything by itself is clean" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### by itself (ULT)

"by its nature" or "because of what it is"

### except to the one who considers anything to be unclean, for him {it is} unclean (ULT)

Paul implies here that a person should stay away from anything that he thinks is unclean. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "but if a person thinks something is unclean, then for that person it is unclean and he should stay away from it" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 14:15

### if...for the sake of food your brother is hurt (ULT)

“If you hurt your fellow believer’s faith over the matter of food.”  
Here the word **your** refers to those who are strong in faith and **brother** refers to those who are weak in faith.

### brother (ULT)

Here, **brother** refers to a fellow Christian, male or female.

### you are no longer walking according to love (ULT)

Paul speaks of the behavior of believers as if it were a walk. Alternate translation: “then you are no longer showing love” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>15</sup> For if for the sake of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food that one for whom Christ died.

## Romans 14:16

### So do not allow your good to be spoken of as evil (ULT)

“If someone else thinks that something is evil, do not do it, even if you consider it to be good”

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> So do not allow your good to be spoken of as evil.

## Romans 14:17

**For the kingdom of God is not food and drink,  
but righteousness and peace and joy in the  
Holy Spirit (ULT)**

Paul argues that God set up his **kingdom** so he could give us a right relationship with himself, and to provide peace and joy. Alternate translation: "For God did not set up his kingdom so that he could rule over what we eat and drink. He set up his kingdom so we could have a right relationship with him, and so he could give us peace and joy" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

## Romans 14:18

### approved by men (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “people will approve of him” or “people will respect him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**18** For the one who serves Christ in this way {is} acceptable to God and approved by men.

## Romans 14:19

### let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another (ULT)

Here, **build up one another** refers to helping each other grow in faith. Alternate translation: “let us seek to live peacefully together and help one another grow stronger in faith” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>19</sup> So then, let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another.

## Romans 14:20

### Do not destroy the work of God on account of food (ULT)

You can make explicit the full meaning of this sentence. Alternate translation: "Do not undo what God has done for a fellow believer just because you want to eat a certain kind of food" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Do not destroy the work of God on account of food. All things {are} indeed clean, but {it is} evil for the man who eats through a stumbling block.

### but {it is} evil for the man who eats through a stumbling block (ULT)

Here a **stumbling block** is a food that a weaker brother eats despite thinking it is wrong, and thereby goes against his conscience. Alternate translation: "but it would be a sin for someone to eat food, which another brother thinks is wrong to eat, if by eating this causes the weaker brother to do something that is against his conscience" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 14:21

**It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor anything by which your brother takes offense**

“It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything else that might cause your brother to sin”

### ULT

<sup>21</sup> {It is} good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine—nothing by which your brother stumbles or is caused to stumble or becomes weak.

### brother (ULT)

Here, **brother** refers to a fellow Christian, male or female.

### your (ULT)

Here, **you** is singular and stresses the responsibility of each individual believer for his fellow believer. (See: [Forms of You](#))

## Romans 14:22

### The faith that you have (ULT)

Here, **faith** refers back to the beliefs about food and drink.

### you...yourself (ULT)

Here, **you** and **yourself** are singular. Because Paul is addressing the believers, you may have to translate this using plural. (See: [Forms of You](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> The faith that you have, keep to yourself before God. Blessed {is} the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves.

### Blessed {is} the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves (ULT)

“Blessed are those who do not feel guilty for what they decide to do”

## Romans 14:23

### But the one who doubts is condemned if he eats (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “God will say that the person does wrong if he is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but he eats it anyway” or “The person who is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but then eats it anyway will have a troubled conscience” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> But the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, because {it is} not from faith. And everything that {is} not from faith is sin.

### because {it is} not from faith (ULT)

Anything that is **not from faith** is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: “God will say that he is wrong because he is eating something he believes God does not want him to eat” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### And everything that {is} not from faith is sin (ULT)

Anything that is **not from faith** is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: “you are sinning if you do something that you do not believe God wants you to do” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 15

### Romans 15 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 verses 9-11 and 21 of this chapter, which are words from the Old Testament.

Some translations set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the quoted words in verse 12.

In [Romans 15:14](#), Paul begins to speak more personally. He shifts from teaching to telling of his personal plans.

#### Important figures of speech in this chapter

##### Strong/Weak

These terms are used to refer to people who are mature and immature in their faith. Paul teaches that those who are strong in faith need to help those who are weak in faith. (See: [faith](#))

## Romans 15:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul concludes this section about believers' living for others with reminding them how Christ lived.

### Now (ULT)

Translate this using the words your language uses to introduce a new idea into an argument.

### we who {are} strong (ULT)

Here, **strong** refers to the people who are strong in their faith. They believe that God allows them to eat any kind of food. Alternate translation: "we who are strong in faith" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### we (ULT)

This refers to Paul, his readers, and other believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'](#))

### of the weak (ULT)

Here, **the weak** refers to the people who are weak in their faith. They believe that God does not allow them to eat some kinds of food. Alternate translation: "those who are weak in faith" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now we who {are} strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

## Romans 15:2

### for {his} building up (ULT)

By this, Paul means to strengthen someone's faith. Alternate translation: "to strengthen his faith" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> Let each of us please {his} neighbor for {his} good, for {his} building up.

## Romans 15:3

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “someone wrote in the scriptures” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### just as it is written (ULT)

Here Paul refers to a scripture where Christ (the Messiah) speaks to God. Alternate translation: “the Messiah said to God in the scriptures” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### The insults of those who insult you fell on me (ULT)

The insults of those who insulted God fell on Christ.

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> For even Christ did not please himself. Instead, just as it is written, “The insults of those who insult you fell on me.”

## Romans 15:4

### **For whatever was previously written was written for our own instruction (ULT)**

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “For in times past, the prophets wrote everything in the Scriptures to teach us” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### **our own...we would have (ULT)**

Paul includes his readers and other believers. (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

### **in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures we would have hope (ULT)**

Here, **have hope** means that the believers will know that God will fulfill his promises. You can make explicit the full meaning in your translation. Alternate translation: “In this way the scriptures will encourage us to expect that God will do for us everything that he has promised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>4</sup> For whatever was previously written was written for our own instruction, in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures we would have hope.

## Romans 15:5

### Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the believers to remember that both Gentile believers and Jews that believe are made one in Christ.

### God...may...grant (ULT)

"I pray that ... God ... will grant"

### to think the same with each other (ULT)

"to be in agreement with each other" or "to be united"

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> Now may the God of patience and of encouragement grant you to think the same with each other according to Christ Jesus,

## Romans 15:6

### you might glorify with one mouth (ULT)

This means to be united in praising God. Alternate translation:  
 “praise God together in unity as if only one mouth were speaking”  
 (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> so that with one mind you might  
 glorify with one mouth the God and  
 Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Romans 15:7

### receive one another (ULT)

“accept one another”

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, receive one another, just as Christ also received you, to the glory of God.

## Romans 15:8

### For I say that (ULT)

The pronoun **I** refers to Paul.

### Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision (ULT)

Here, **the circumcision** is a metonym that refers to the Jews. Alternate translation: “Jesus Christ has been made a servant of the Jews” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> For I say that Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God, to confirm the promises of the fathers,

### Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “Jesus Christ has become a servant of the Jews” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### to confirm the promises (ULT)

This is one of the two purposes for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision.

### the promises of the fathers (ULT)

Here, **the fathers** refers to the ancestors of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: “the promises to the ancestors of the Jews” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### the promises of the fathers (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “the promises that God gave to the ancestors of the Jews” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 15:9

### and for the Gentiles to glorify God for {his} mercy (ULT)

This is the second reason for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision. Alternate translation: “and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy”

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “as someone has written in the scriptures” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### sing praise to your name (ULT)

Here, **your name** is a metonym that refers to God. Alternate translation: “sing praise to you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> and for the Gentiles to glorify God for {his} mercy, just as it is written, “For this reason, I will acknowledge you among the Gentiles and sing praise to your name.”

## Romans 15:10

### And again it says (ULT)

“And again the scripture says”

### with his people (ULT)

This refers to God’s **people**. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: “with the people of God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>10</sup> And again it says, “Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

## Romans 15:11

### let...praise him (ULT)

“let ... praise the Lord”

#### ULT

**11** And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; and let all the peoples praise him.”

## Romans 15:12

### The root of Jesse (ULT)

**Jesse** was the physical father of King David. Alternate translation: “descendant of Jesse” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### in him the Gentiles will hope (ULT)

Here, **him** refers to the descendant of Jesse, the Messiah. Those who are not Jews will also trust him to fulfill his promises. Alternate translation: “the people who are not Jews can trust him to do what he has promised” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**12** And again, Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even the one who rises to rule over the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles will hope.”

## Romans 15:13

### may...fill you with all joy and peace (ULT)

Paul exaggerates here to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "may ... fill you with great joy and peace" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**13** Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Romans 15:14

### Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers in Rome that God chose him to reach the Gentiles.

**am...convinced...I myself...also...about you, my brothers (ULT)**

#### ULT

**14** But I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers, that also you yourselves are full of goodness, having been filled with all knowledge, able to also exhort one another.

Paul is quite sure that the believers in Rome are honoring each other in their behavior. Alternate translation: "I myself am completely sure that you yourselves have acted toward others in a completely good way" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

**brothers (ULT)**

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

**having been filled with all knowledge (ULT)**

Paul exaggerates here to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "having been filled with sufficient knowledge to follow God" (See: [Hyperbole](#))

**able to also exhort one another (ULT)**

Here, to **exhort** means to teach. Alternate translation: "also able to teach each other" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 15:15

### the grace having been given me by God (ULT)

Paul speaks of **grace** as if it were a physical gift that **God** had **given** him. God had appointed Paul and apostle even though he had persecuted believers before he decided to follow Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “the grace that God gave me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

**15** But I wrote more boldly to you about some things as reminding you, through the grace having been given me by God,

## Romans 15:16

### the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable (ULT)

Paul speaks of his preaching the gospel as if he, as a priest, were making an **offering** to God. Alternate translation: “the Gentiles might please God when they obey him” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>16</sup> for me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, offering as a priest the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

## Romans 15:17

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

**17** Therefore, in Christ Jesus I have reason to boast of things pertaining to God.

## Romans 15:18

**For I will not dare to speak anything which Christ has not accomplished through me for the obedience of the Gentiles—by word and deed (ULT)**

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: “For the sake of the obedience of the Gentiles, I will only speak of what Christ has accomplished through me in my words and actions and by the power of signs and wonders through the power of the Holy Spirit” (See: [Double Negatives](#))

### ULT

<sup>18</sup> For I will not dare to speak anything which Christ has not accomplished through me for the obedience of the Gentiles—by word and deed,

**for the obedience of the Gentiles (ULT)**

“so that the Gentiles will obey God”

**by word and deed (ULT)**

Here, **word and deed** refers to what Christ has accomplished through Paul. Alternate translation: “through me in my words and actions” or “the things that Christ has accomplished through what I have said and done” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 15:19

### of signs and wonders (ULT)

These two words mean basically the same thing and refer to various kinds of miracles. (See: [Doublet](#))

### so that...and...from Jerusalem...round about as far as Illyricum (ULT)

This is from the city of **Jerusalem** as far as the province of **Illyricum**, a region close to Italy.

#### ULT

**19** in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem, and round about as far as Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;

## Romans 15:20

**but in this way, strongly desiring to proclaim the gospel, not where Christ has been named (ULT)**

Paul only wants to preach to people who have never heard of Christ. Alternate translation: “but because of this, I want to preach the good news in places where people have never heard of Christ” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>20</sup> but in this way, strongly desiring to proclaim the gospel, not where Christ has been named, in order that I might not build upon another man’s foundation.

**in order that I might not build upon another man’s foundation (ULT)**

Paul speaks of his ministry work as if he were building a house on a **foundation**. Alternate translation: “in order that I might not be simply continuing the work that someone else already started. I do not want to be like a man who builds a house on someone else’s foundation” (See: [Metaphor](#))

## Romans 15:21

### just as it is written (ULT)

Here Paul refers to what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures. You can make the meaning explicit. Alternate translation: “what is happening is like what was written by Isaiah in the scriptures” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> But just as it is written: “Those to whom was not reported concerning him will see him, and those who have not heard will understand.”

### just as it is written (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form and make the meaning explicit. Alternate translation: “what is happening is like what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### Those to whom was not reported concerning him (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “Those whom no one had told the news about him” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 15:22

### Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the believers in Rome about his personal plans to visit them and asks the believers to pray.

### I was also hindered (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “they also hindered me” or “people also hindered me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> Therefore, I was also hindered many times from coming to you.

## Romans 15:23

### no longer having any place in these regions (ULT)

Paul implies that there are no more places in these areas where people live who have not heard about Christ. Alternate translation: "there are no more places in these regions where people have not heard about Christ" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> But now, no longer having any place in these regions, and having a longing for many years to come to you,

## Romans 15:24

### Spain (ULT)

At that time, **Spain** was a Roman province west of Rome that Paul desired to visit. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### passing through (ULT)

“as I pass through Rome” or “while I am on my way”

### and to be helped by you there (ULT)

Here Paul implies that he wants the Roman believers to provide some financial assistance to him for his journey to Spain. Alternate translation: “that you will provide for me on my journey” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### and to be helped by you there (ULT)

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: “and that you will help me on my journey” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### you...if I might first be satisfied for a while (ULT)

“after I have enjoyed spending some time with you”

#### ULT

<sup>24</sup> whenever I go to Spain, I indeed hope, passing through, to see you, and to be helped by you there, if I might first be satisfied for a while by you.

## Romans 15:25

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>25</sup> But now I am going to Jerusalem,  
ministering to the saints.

## Romans 15:26

### were pleased...Macedonia and Achaia (ULT)

Here the words **Macedonia** and **Achaia** are synecdoches for the people who live in those areas. Alternate translation: “the believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia were happy” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

#### ULT

<sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a certain contribution to the poor of the saints in Jerusalem.

## Romans 15:27

### Indeed, they were pleased (ULT)

“Indeed, the believers in Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to do it”

### they are their debtors (ULT)

“indeed the people of Macedonia and Achaia are in debt to the believers in Jerusalem”

### if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to serve them

“since the Gentiles have shared in the spiritual things of the Jerusalem believers, the Gentiles ought to share their physical things with the Jerusalem believers”

#### ULT

<sup>27</sup> Indeed, they were pleased, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they ought also to minister to them in material things.

## Romans 15:28

### have sealed this fruit to them (ULT)

Paul speaks of the money he is taking to Jerusalem as if it were a **fruit** that was collected and **sealed** for them. Alternate translation: “and have safely delivered this offering to them” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**28** Therefore, when I have completed this and have sealed this fruit to them, I will go through you to Spain.

## Romans 15:29

### I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ (ULT)

This phrase means that Christ will bless Paul and the Roman believers. Alternate translation: "Christ will abundantly bless us" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>29</sup> But I know that coming to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

## Romans 15:30

### Now (ULT)

If your language has a way to show that Paul has stopped talking about the good things he is confident of ([Romans 15:29](#)) and is now starting to talk about the dangers he faces, use it here.

### I urge...you (ULT)

“I encourage you”

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### to strive together with (ULT)

“to work hard with” or “to struggle with”

### ULT

<sup>30</sup> Now I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in {your} prayers to God for me,

## Romans 15:31

### **I might be rescued from those who are disobedient (ULT)**

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: “God may rescue me from those who are disobedient” or “God may keep those who are disobedient from harming me” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### **ULT**

<sup>31</sup> so that I might be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service in Jerusalem might be acceptable to the saints;

### **and that my service in Jerusalem might be acceptable to the saints (ULT)**

Here Paul expresses his desire that the **saints** in **Jerusalem** will gladly accept the money from the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. Alternate translation: “and pray that the believers in Jerusalem will be glad to receive the money that I am bringing them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 15:32

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>32</sup> so that I might come to you in joy  
through the will of God, {and} might be  
refreshed together with you.

## Romans 15:33

### the...God of peace be with (ULT)

The **God of peace** means the God who causes believers to have inner peace. Alternate translation: "I pray that God who causes all of us to have inner peace may be with" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>33</sup> Now the God of peace be with you all.  
Amen.

## **Romans 16**

### **Romans 16 General Notes**

#### **Structure and formatting**

In this chapter, Paul gives personal greetings to some of the Christians in Rome. It was common to end a letter in the ancient Near East with this type of personal greeting.

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

Because of the personal nature of this chapter, much of the context is unknown. This will make translation more difficult. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 16:1

### Connecting Statement:

Paul then greets many of the believers in Rome by name.

### Now I commend to you Phoebe (ULT)

“I want you to respect Phoebe”

### Phoebe (ULT)

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

### our sister (ULT)

The word **our** refers to Paul and all believers. Alternate translation: “our sister in Christ” (See: [Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’](#))

### Cenchrea (ULT)

**Cenchrea** was a seaport city in Greece. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

<sup>1</sup> Now I commend to you Phoebe our sister, also being a servant of the church in Cenchrea,

## Romans 16:2

### you might receive her in the Lord (ULT)

Paul encourages the Roman believers to welcome Phoebe as a fellow believer. Alternate translation: “you would welcome her because we all belong to the Lord” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### in a manner worthy of the saints (ULT)

“in the way that believers should welcome other believers”

### stand by her (ULT)

Paul encourages the Roman believers to give to Phoebe anything she needs. Alternate translation: “help her” (See: [Euphemism](#))

### has become a helper of many, and of myself as well

“has helped many people, and she has also helped me”

#### ULT

<sup>2</sup> in order that you might receive her in the Lord, in a manner worthy of the saints, and stand by her in whatever matter she might have need of you. For she has also become a helper of many, and of myself as well.

## Romans 16:3

### Priscilla and Aquila (ULT)

**Priscilla** was the wife of **Aquila**. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### my fellow workers in Christ Jesus (ULT)

Paul's **fellow workers** are people who also tell others about Jesus. Alternate translation: "who work with me to tell people about Christ Jesus" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

<sup>3</sup> Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

## Romans 16:4

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>4</sup> who for my life laid down their own neck. To them not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles,

## Romans 16:5

### and the church in their house (ULT)

“and greet the believers who meet in their house to worship”

### Epaenetus (ULT)

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

### the firstfruits of Asia to Christ (ULT)

Paul speaks of Epaenetus as if he were a fruit that he harvested. Alternate translation: “first person in Asia to believe in Jesus” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>5</sup> and the church in their house. Greet Epaenetus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia to Christ.

## Romans 16:6

### Mary (ULT)

**Mary** is a woman's name. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

<sup>6</sup> Greet Mary, who worked much for you.

## Romans 16:7

### Andronicus (ULT)

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

### Junias (ULT)

This could refer to: (1) Junia, a woman's name. (2) Junias, a man's name, although this is less likely. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### who are prominent among the apostles (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom the apostles know very well" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

#### ULT

<sup>7</sup> Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners who are prominent among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

## Romans 16:8

### Ampliatius (ULT)

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

### my beloved in the Lord (ULT)

"my dear friend and fellow believer in the Lord"

#### ULT

<sup>8</sup> Greet Ampliatius, my beloved in the Lord.

## Romans 16:9

### Urbanus...Stachys (ULT)

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

#### ULT

<sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

## Romans 16:10

### Apelles...of Aristobulus (ULT)

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

### the approved in Christ (ULT)

The word **approved** refers to someone who has been tested and proved to be genuine. Alternate translation: “whom Christ has approved”

#### ULT

**10** Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who {are} from the household of Aristobulus.

## Romans 16:11

### Herodion...of Narcissus (ULT)

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

### who are in the Lord (ULT)

This refers to those who trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: “who are believers” or “who belong to the Lord” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

#### ULT

**11** Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those from the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

## Romans 16:12

### Tryphaena...Tryphosa...Persis (ULT)

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

#### ULT

<sup>12</sup> Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who work hard in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked much in the Lord.

## Romans 16:13

### Rufus (ULT)

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

### chosen in the Lord (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Lord has chosen" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

### his mother and mine (ULT)

Paul speaks of the mother of Rufus as if she were his own **mother**. Alternate translation: "his mother, whom I also think of as my mother" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

## Romans 16:14

### Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas (ULT)

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

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

#### ULT

<sup>14</sup> Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who {are} with them.

## Romans 16:15

### Philologus...Nereus...Olympas (ULT)

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

### Julia (ULT)

**Julia** is the name of a woman. She was probably the wife of Philologus. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

#### ULT

**15** Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who {are} with them.

## Romans 16:16

### a holy kiss (ULT)

an expression of affection for fellow believers

### All the churches of Christ greet you (ULT)

Here Paul speaks in a general manner concerning the **churches** of Christ. Alternate translation: “The believers in all the churches in this area send their greetings to you” (See: [Hyperbole](#))

#### ULT

**16** Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

## Romans 16:17

### Connecting Statement:

Paul gives one last warning to the believers about unity and living for God.

### brothers (ULT)

Here, **brothers** refers to fellow Christians, including both men and women.

### to take note of (ULT)

“to watch out for”

### divisions and obstacles...who are causing (ULT)

This refers to those who argue and cause others to stop trusting in Jesus. Alternate translation: “who are causing believers to argue with one another and to stop having faith in God” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### contrary to the teaching that you have learned (ULT)

“and teaching things that do not agree with the truth you have already learned”

### turn away from them (ULT)

Here, **turn away** is a metaphor for “refuse to listen.” Alternate translation: “do not listen to them” (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

**17** Now I urge you, brothers, to take note of those who are causing divisions and obstacles, contrary to the teaching that you have learned, and turn away from them.

## Romans 16:18

### but their own stomach (ULT)

The words “they serve” are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: “but they serve their own stomach” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

### but their own stomach (ULT)

Here, **stomach** is a metonym that refers to physical desires. Alternate translation: “but they only care about their physical desires” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### but their own stomach (ULT)

Serving there **stomach** represents satisfying their desires. Alternate translation: “but they only want to satisfy their own selfish desires” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### and through {their} smooth and flattering speech (ULT)

The words **smooth** and **flattering** mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing how these people are deceiving believers. Alternate translation: “and by saying things that seem to be good and true” (See: [Doublet](#))

### they deceive the hearts of the innocent (ULT)

Here, **hearts** is a metonym for a person’s mind or inner being. Alternate translation: “they deceive the innocent believers” (See: [Metonymy](#))

### of the innocent (ULT)

This refers to those who are simple, inexperienced, and naive. Alternate translation: “of those who innocently trust them” or “of those who do not know these teachers are fooling them”

#### ULT

**18** For ones such as these do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach, and through {their} smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent.

## Romans 16:19

### For your obedience reaches to everyone (ULT)

Here Paul speaks of the Roman believers' **obedience** as if it were a person who could go to people. Alternate translation: "For everyone has heard how you obey Jesus" (See: [Personification](#))

### innocent...to...the...evil (ULT)

"not involved in doing evil things"

#### ULT

**19** For your obedience reaches to everyone. I rejoice, therefore, over you, but I want you to be wise as to the good, but innocent as to the evil.

## Romans 16:20

### Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet (ULT)

The phrase **crush ... under your feet** refers to complete victory over an enemy. Here Paul speaks of the victory over **Satan** as if the Roman believers were trampling an enemy under their **feet**.

Alternate translation: "Soon God will give you peace and complete victory over Satan" (See: [Metaphor](#))

#### ULT

<sup>20</sup> Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## Romans 16:21

### Connecting Statement:

Paul gives greetings from the believers who are with him.

### Lucius...Jason...Sosipater (ULT)

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

#### ULT

<sup>21</sup> Timothy, my fellow worker, and  
Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my  
kinsmen, greet you.

## Romans 16:22

### I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle (ULT)

**Tertius** is the man who wrote down what Paul spoke. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

### greet you...in the Lord (ULT)

“greet you as a fellow believer”

#### ULT

<sup>22</sup> I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle,  
greet you in the Lord.

## Romans 16:23

### Gaius...Erastus...Quartus (ULT)

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

### the host (ULT)

This refers to Gaius, the person in whose house Paul and his fellow believers gathered for worship.

### the...treasurer (ULT)

This is a person who takes care of the money for a group.

#### ULT

<sup>23</sup> Gaius, the host for me and for the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus the brother.

## Romans 16:24

*(There are no notes for this verse.)*

### ULT

<sup>24</sup><sup>[1]</sup> [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you all. Amen.]

## Romans 16:25

### Connecting Statement:

Paul closes with a prayer of blessing.

### Now (ULT)

Here the word **Now** marks the closing section of the letter. If you have a way of doing this in your language, you can use it here.

#### ULT

<sup>25</sup> Now to the one who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, having been kept secret for long ages,

### to establish you (ULT)

Paul speaks here of having strong faith as if a person were being set firmly in place. Alternate translation: “to make your faith strong” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ

“by the good news that I have preached about Jesus Christ”

### according to the revelation of the mystery, having been kept secret for long ages (ULT)

Paul says that God has revealed previously hidden truths to the believers. He speaks of these truths as if they were a **secret**. Alternate translation: “because God has revealed to us believers what had been kept secret for a long time” (See: [Metaphor](#))

### according to the revelation of the mystery, having been kept secret for long ages (ULT)

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: “because God has revealed to us believers the secret that he was keeping for a long time” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

## Romans 16:26

**but now having been revealed through the prophetic writings, according to the command of the eternal God, to the obedience of faith, having been made known to all the nations (ULT)**

The verbs **revealed** and **made known** mean basically the same thing. Paul uses both of them to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: “but now the mystery has been made known to all the nations through the prophetic writings so people can believe” (See: [Doublet](#))

### ULT

<sup>26</sup> but now having been revealed through the prophetic writings, according to the command of the eternal God, to the obedience of faith, having been made known to all the nations,

**but now having been revealed through the prophetic writings, according to the command of the eternal God, to the obedience of faith, having been made known to all the nations (ULT)**

You can combine the verbs **revealed** and **made known** in an active form. Alternate translation: “but now the eternal God has made it known to all the nations through the prophetic writings so that people would believe” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

**to the obedience of faith (ULT)**

Here, **obedience** and **faith** are abstract nouns. You can use the verbs “obey” and “trust” in your translation. Alternate translation: “so that all nations will believe and obey” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

**to the obedience of faith (ULT)**

You may need to make explicit who will obey and trust. Alternate translation: “so that all nations will obey God because they trust in him” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

## Romans 16:27

**to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom {be} the glory to eternity. Amen (ULT)**

Here, **through Jesus Christ** refers to what Jesus did. To give **glory** means to praise God. Alternate translation: "Because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we will praise forever the one who alone is God and who alone is wise. Amen!" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

### ULT

<sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom {be} the glory to eternity. Amen.



# **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: [Introduction to Romans](#); [Romans 1:18](#); [3:28](#); [4:15](#); [8:35](#); [11:22](#); [16:26](#))

## 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: [Romans 1 General Notes](#); 1:1; 1:4; 1:5; 1:7; 1:12; 1:13; 1:17; 1:18; 1:19; 1:20; 1:21; 1:29; 2:12; 2:13; 2:15; 2:18; 2:24; 2:26; 2:27; 3:4; 3:10; 3:19; 3:21; 3:24; 3:27; 3:28; 4:3; 4:4; 4:5; 4:7; 4:9; 4:11; 4:17; 4:18; 4:20; 4:22; 4:23; 4:24; 4:25; [Notes](#); 5:5; 5:9; 5:10; 5:13; 5:19; 6:4; 6:5; 6:6; 6:7; 6:9; 6:17; 6:18; 6:22; 7:3; 7:4; 7:6; 8:4; 8:14; 8:17; 8:18; 8:19; 8:20; 8:21; 8:24; 8:28; 8:29; 8:36; 9:3; 9:9; 9:17; 9:25; 9:27; 9:33; 10:9; 10:11; 10:13; 10:20; 11:9; 11:15; 11:17; 11:19; 11:22; 11:23; 11:24; 11:26; 11:28; 12:2; 12:3; 12:5; 12:6; 12:9; 12:19; 12:21; 13:1; 13:2; 14:4; 14:5; 14:11; 14:18; 14:23; 15:3; 15:4; 15:8; 15:9; 15:15; 15:21; 15:22; 15:24; 15:31; 16:7; 16:13; 16:25; 16:26)

# Apostrophe

## Description

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. He does this to tell his listeners his message or feelings about that person or thing in a very strong way.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called an apostrophe?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to, or think that the speaker is crazy to talk to things or people who cannot hear.

## Examples from the Bible

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on you. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

King Saul was killed on Mount Gilboa, and David sang a sad song about it. By telling these mountains that he wanted them to have no dew or rain, he showed how sad he was.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. (Luke 13:34a ULT)

Jesus was expressing his feelings for the people of Jerusalem in front of his disciples and a group of Pharisees. By speaking directly to Jerusalem as though its people could hear him, Jesus showed how deeply he cared about them.

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

The man of God spoke as if the altar could hear him, but he really wanted the king, who was standing there, to hear him.

## Translation Strategies

If apostrophe would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells **them** his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him. See the example below.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

He said this about the altar: "This is what Yahweh says **about this altar**. 'See, ... they will burn people's bones on **it**.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

**Mountains of Gilboa**, let there not be dew or rain on **you**. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

**As for these mountains of Gilboa**, let there not be dew or rain on **them**. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

(Go back to: [Romans 2:1](#))

## 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: [Romans 1:1](#); [1:3](#); [1:11](#); [1:16](#); [1:17](#); [1:18](#); [1:19](#); [1:25](#); [1:28](#); [1:32](#); [2:1](#); [2:12](#); [2:13](#); [2:14](#); [2:20](#); [3:1](#); [3:2](#); [3:4](#); [3:11](#); [3:12](#); [3:22](#); [3:24](#); [4:11](#); [4:14](#); [4:17](#); [4:18](#); [5:9](#); [5:13](#); [5:15](#); [5:16](#); [5:18](#); [5:20](#); [5:21](#); [6:7](#); [6:8](#); [6:10](#); [6:13](#); [6:14](#); [7:6](#); [8:1](#); [8:2](#); [8:10](#); [8:23](#); [8:29](#); [8:30](#); [8:37](#); [9:23](#); [9:25](#); [9:29](#); [9:30](#); [9:31](#); [9:32](#); [9:33](#); [Notes](#); [10:3](#); [10:4](#); [10:5](#); [10:11](#); [10:12](#); [10:18](#); [10:19](#); [11:6](#); [11:14](#); [11:25](#); [11:28](#); [11:29](#); [11:30](#); [11:36](#); [12:1](#); [12:3](#); [12:8](#); [14:5](#); [14:6](#); [14:7](#); [14:11](#); [14:14](#); [14:17](#); [14:19](#); [14:20](#); [14:23](#); [15:1](#); [15:2](#); [15:3](#); [15:4](#); [15:8](#); [15:10](#); [15:12](#); [15:14](#); [15:18](#); [15:20](#); [15:21](#); [15:23](#); [15:24](#); [15:29](#); [15:31](#); [15:33](#); [Notes](#); [16:2](#); [16:3](#); [16:11](#); [16:17](#); [16:26](#); [16:27](#))

## 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: [Romans 1:13](#); [4:20](#); [11:23](#); [11:25](#); [13:1](#); [13:8](#); [14:14](#); [15:18](#))

# 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: [Romans 2:5](#); [2:8](#); [2:9](#); [8:35](#); [9:1](#); [9:2](#); [9:33](#); [11:12](#); [11:33](#); [12:1](#); [13:13](#); [14:13](#); [14:14](#); [15:19](#); [16:18](#); [16:26](#))

# 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: [Romans 3:27](#); [4:13](#); [8:12](#); [8:35](#); [9:32](#); [13:7](#); [14:6](#); [16:18](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:24](#); [1:26](#); [1:27](#); [16:2](#))

# Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

## Description

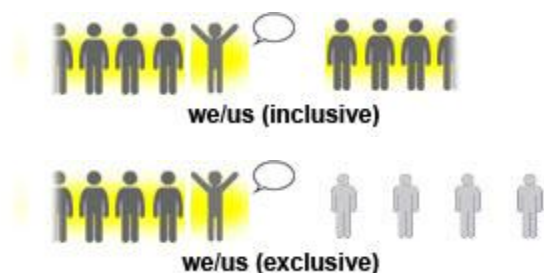
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also 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:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations]]

(Go back to: [Romans 2:2](#); [3:31](#); [4:16](#); [4:24](#); [5:1](#); [5:3](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:8](#); [5:10](#); [5:21](#); [6:1](#); [7:6](#); [8:36](#); [9:10](#); [9:24](#); [9:29](#); [13:13](#); [14:7](#); [14:8](#); [15:1](#); [15:4](#); [16:1](#))

# 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: [Romans 14:11](#))

## 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-yousingular\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-youdual\]\]](#)

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: [Romans 2:1](#); [4:17](#); [8:36](#); [9:17](#); [9:19](#); [10:6](#); [10:19](#); [11:30](#); [12:20](#); [14:4](#); [14:21](#); [14:22](#))

## 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:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-gendernotations\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Romans 3:28](#))

# 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 Romans](#); [Romans 9:25](#); [15:24](#); [16:1](#); [16:3](#); [16:5](#); [16:6](#); [16:7](#); [16:8](#); [16:9](#); [16:10](#); [16:11](#); [16:12](#); [16:13](#); [16:14](#); [16:15](#); [16:21](#); [16:22](#); [16:23](#))

# 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: [Romans 3:4](#); [3:14](#); [7:15](#); [8:36](#); [9:13](#); [9:17](#); [15:13](#); [15:14](#); [16:16](#))

## Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining ...” “What if the sun stopped shining ...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining ...” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

## Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

## Examples From the Bible

### Hypothetical Situations in the Past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! **If the mighty deeds had been done** in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

## Hypothetical Situations in the Present

And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed.** (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out?**” (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

## Hypothetical Situation in the Future

**Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved.** But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

## Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

The Israelites said to them, “**If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

## Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at [https://ufw.io/figs\\_hypo](https://ufw.io/figs_hypo).

(Go back to: [Romans 2 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## 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: [Romans 2:14](#); [2:15](#); [3:12](#); [4:12](#); [4:24](#); [6:4](#); [6:9](#); [7:4](#); [8:4](#); [8:10](#); [8:11](#); [9:2](#); [9:17](#); [10:9](#); [12:16](#))

# 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: [Romans 6:20](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:16](#); [2:11](#); [4:19](#); [13:4](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:13](#); [1:14](#); [1:20](#); [1:21](#); [2:5](#); [2:15](#); [2:17](#); [2:19](#); [2:20](#); [3:13](#); [3:15](#); [4:14](#); [5:5](#); [6:2](#); [6:4](#); [6:5](#); [6:6](#); [6:11](#); [6:17](#); [6:18](#); [6:20](#); [6:22](#); [Notes](#); [7:2](#); [7:4](#); [7:5](#); [7:10](#); [7:11](#); [7:22](#); [7:24](#); [7:25](#); [Notes](#); [8:2](#); [8:4](#); [8:12](#); [8:13](#); [8:17](#); [8:21](#); [8:22](#); [8:23](#); [8:27](#); [Notes](#); [9:4](#); [9:8](#); [9:15](#); [9:16](#); [9:20](#); [9:22](#); [9:23](#); [9:33](#); [11:8](#); [11:9](#); [11:10](#); [11:16](#); [11:17](#); [11:18](#); [11:19](#); [11:20](#); [11:21](#); [11:22](#); [11:23](#); [11:24](#); [11:25](#); [11:26](#); [11:27](#); [11:29](#); [11:32](#); [Notes](#); [12:1](#); [12:2](#); [12:4](#); [12:5](#); [12:6](#); [12:20](#); [13:7](#); [13:11](#); [13:12](#); [13:13](#); [13:14](#); [14:4](#); [14:15](#); [15:16](#); [15:20](#); [15:28](#); [16:5](#); [16:13](#); [16:17](#); [16:18](#); [16:20](#); [16:25](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:5](#); [1:18](#); [1:21](#); [2:5](#); [2:8](#); [2:15](#); [2:24](#); [2:29](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [3:13](#); [3:14](#); [3:16](#); [3:23](#); [3:25](#); [3:30](#); [4:9](#); [5:5](#); [5:9](#); [6:6](#); [6:17](#); [6:19](#); [7:18](#); [8:27](#); [8:35](#); [9:8](#); [9:17](#); [9:33](#); [10:1](#); [10:6](#); [10:8](#); [10:9](#); [10:10](#); [10:13](#); [10:15](#); [10:19](#); [11:9](#); [11:10](#); [11:15](#); [11:26](#); [11:34](#); [12:2](#); [12:19](#); [13:4](#); [13:14](#); [14:10](#); [15:6](#); [15:8](#); [15:9](#); [15:12](#); [16:18](#))

# 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: [Romans 2:8](#); [2:19](#); [2:29](#); [3:4](#); [4:7](#); [10:18](#); [12:19](#))

# Personification

## Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

## Examples From the Bible

You cannot **serve** God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom **call** out? Does not Understanding **raise her voice**? (Proverbs 8:1 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

## Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

- (1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
- (2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
- (3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

**Sin crouches** at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

Sin is at your door, **waiting to attack you**.

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

**NOTE:** We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Apostrophe](#)

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bita-part1]]

(Go back to: [Romans 2:2](#); [3:19](#); [3:21](#); [4:3](#); [5:5](#); [5:12](#); [5:14](#); [5:17](#); [5:20](#); [5:21](#); [6:9](#); [6:12](#); [6:14](#); [6:16](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#); [7:9](#); [7:11](#); [7:13](#); [7:17](#); [7:20](#); [7:21](#); [8:3](#); [8:6](#); [8:19](#); [8:20](#); [9:17](#); [10:6](#); [10:8](#); [10:11](#); [10:18](#); [11:2](#); [12:21](#); [13:10](#); [16:19](#))

# 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: [Romans 11:36](#))

## 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: [Romans 2 General Notes](#); 2:3; 2:4; 2:21; 2:22; 2:23; 2:26; [Notes](#); 3:1; 3:3; 3:5; 3:6; 3:7; 3:8; 3:9; 3:27; 3:29; 3:31; [Notes](#); 4:1; 4:3; 4:9; 4:10; [Notes](#); 6:1; 6:2; 6:3; 6:15; 6:16; 6:21; 7:1; 7:7; 7:13; 7:24; 8:24; 8:31; 8:32; 8:33; 8:34; 8:35; 9:14; 9:19; 9:20; 9:21; 9:30; 9:32; [Notes](#); 10:6; 10:7; 10:8; 10:14; 10:16; 10:18; 10:19; 11:1; 11:2; 11:4; 11:7; 11:11; 11:15; 11:34; 11:35; 13:3; 14:4; 14:10)

# 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: [Romans 6:4](#); [8:36](#); [9:27](#))

# 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: [Romans 8:34](#); [10:21](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:24](#); [2:9](#); [2:28](#); [2:29](#); [3:15](#); [3:18](#); [3:19](#); [6:12](#); [6:13](#); [6:19](#); [10:10](#); [12:1](#); [13:1](#); [14:11](#); [15:26](#))

## 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> [1]

[1] 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."] [2]

[2] 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 Romans](#))

## 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: [Romans 8:15](#))

# 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: [Romans 1:3](#); [1:7](#); [1:9](#); [5:10](#); [8:3](#); [8:29](#); [8:32](#))



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Words**

**Version 28**

## adoption, adopt, adopted

### Definition:

The terms “adopt” and “adoption” refer to the process of someone legally becoming the child of people who are not his biological parents.

- The Bible uses “adoption” and “adopt” in a figurative way to describe how God causes people to be part of his family, making them his spiritual sons and daughters.
- As adopted children, God makes believers to be co-heirs with Jesus Christ, giving them all of the privileges of sons and daughters of God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with a term that the language of translation uses to describe this special parent-child relationship. Make sure it is understood that this has a figurative or spiritual meaning.
- The phrase “experience adoption as sons” could be translated as “be adopted by God as his children” or “become God’s (spiritual) children.”
- To “wait for the adoption of sons” could be translated as “look forward to becoming God’s children” or “wait expectantly for God to receive as children.”
- The phrase “adopt them” could be translated as “receive them as his own children” or “make them his own (spiritual) children.”

(See also: heir, inherit, spirit)

### Bible References:

- Ephesians 1:5
- Galatians 4:3-5
- Romans 8:14-15
- Romans 8:23
- Romans 9:4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G52060

(Go back to: [Romans 8 General Notes](#))

# believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

## Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

### 1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

### 2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

### 3. believer

In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term “believer” literally means “person who believes.”
- The term “Christian” eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

### 4. unbelief

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

## Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”
- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”

- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: [believe](#), apostle, Christian, disciple, [faith](#), trust)

## Bible References:

- Genesis 15:6
- Genesis 45:26
- Job 9:16-18
- Habakkuk 1:5-7
- Mark 6:4-6
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 9:41
- John 1:12
- Acts 6:5
- Acts 9:42
- Acts 28:23-24
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Corinthians 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 9:5
- 2 Corinthians 6:15
- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **4:8** Abram **believed** God’s promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God’s promise.
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:6** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, “I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?”
- **43:1** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:3** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:1** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:9** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- **46:9** It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called “Christians.”
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

(**Go back to:** [Romans 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## body

### Definition:

The term “body” refers to the physical body of a person or animal. This term is also used figuratively to refer to an object or to a group consisting of individual members.

- Often the term “body” refers to a dead person or animal. Sometimes this is referred to as a “dead body” or a “corpse.”
- When Jesus said to the disciples at his last Passover meal, “This (bread) is my body,” he was referring to his physical body that would be “broken” (killed) to pay for their sins.
- In the Bible, Christians as a group are referred to as the “body of Christ.”
- Just as a physical body has many parts, the “body of Christ” has many individual members.
- Each individual believer has a special function in the body of Christ to help the whole group work together to serve God and bring him glory.
- Jesus is also referred to as the “head” (leader) of the “body” of his believers. Just as a person’s head tells his body what to do, so Jesus is the one who guides and directs Christians as members of his “body.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The best way to translate this term would be with the word that is most commonly used to refer to a physical body in the project language. Make sure that the word used is not an offensive term.
- When referring collectively to believers, for some languages it may be more natural and accurate to say “spiritual body of Christ.”
- When Jesus says, “This is my body,” it is best to translate this literally, with a note to explain it if needed.
- Some languages may have a separate word when referring to a dead body, such as “corpse” for a person or “carcass” for an animal. Make sure the word used to translate this makes sense in the context and is acceptable.

(See also: head, hand; face; loins; righthand; tongue)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:12
- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- Ephesians 4:4
- Judges 14:8
- Numbers 6:6-8
- Psalm 31:9
- Romans 12:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0990, H1320, H1460, H1465, H1472, H1480, H1655, H3409, H4191, H5038, H5085, H5315, H6106, H6297, H7607, G44300, G49540, G49830, G55590

(Go back to: [Romans 12 General Notes](#))

# 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: [Romans 11 General Notes](#))

## circumcise, circumcised, circumcision, uncircumcised, uncircumcision

### Definition:

The term “circumcise” means to cut off the foreskin of a man or male child. A circumcision ceremony may be performed in connection with this.

- God commanded Abraham to circumcise every male among his family and servants as a sign of God’s covenant with them.
- God also commanded Abraham’s descendants to continue to do this for every baby boy born into their households.
- The phrase, “circumcision of the heart” refers figuratively to the “cutting away” or removal of sin from a person.
- In a spiritual sense, “the circumcised” refers to people whom God has purified from sin through the blood of Jesus and who are his people.
- The term “uncircumcised” refers to those who have not been circumcised physically. It can also refer figuratively to those who have not been circumcised spiritually, who do not have a relationship with God.

The terms “uncircumcised” and “uncircumcision” refer to a male who has not been physically circumcised. These terms are also used figuratively.

- Egypt was a nation that also required circumcision. So when God talks about Egypt being defeated by the “uncircumcised,” he is referring to people whom the Egyptians despised for not being circumcised.
- The Bible refers to people who have an “uncircumcised heart” or who are “uncircumcised in heart.” This a figurative way of saying that these people are not God’s people, and are stubbornly disobedient to him.
- If a word for circumcision is used or known in the language, “uncircumcised” could be translated as “not circumcised.”
- The expression “the uncircumcision” could be translated as “people who are not circumcised” or “people who do not belong to God,” depending on the context.
- Other ways to translate figurative senses of this term could include “not God’s people” or “rebellious like those who don’t belong to God” or “people who have no sign of belonging to God.”
- The expression “uncircumcised in heart” could be translated as “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to believe.” However, if possible it is best to keep the expression or a similar one since spiritual circumcision is an important concept.

### Translation Suggestions:

- If the culture of the target language performs circumcisions on males, the word used to refer to this should be used for this term.
- Other ways to translate this term would be, “cut around” or “cut in a circle” or “cut off the foreskin.”
- In cultures where circumcision is not known, it may be necessary to explain it in a footnote or glossary.
- Make sure the term used to translate this does not refer to females. It may be necessary to translate this with a word or phrase that includes the meaning of “male.”

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

(See also: Abraham, [covenant](#))

### Bible References:

- Genesis 17:11
- Genesis 17:14
- Exodus 12:48

- Leviticus 26:41
- Joshua 5:3
- Judges 15:18
- 2 Samuel 1:20
- Jeremiah 9:26
- Ezekiel 32:25
- Acts 10:44-45
- Acts 11:3
- Acts 15:1
- Acts 11:3
- Romans 2:27
- Galatians 5:3
- Ephesians 2:11
- Philippians 3:3
- Colossians 2:11
- Colossians 2:13

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:3** "You must **circumcise** every male in your family."
- **5:5** That day Abraham **circumcised** all the males in his household.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H4135, H4139, H5243, H6188, H6189, H6190, G02030, G05640, G19860, G40590, G40610

(Go back to: [Romans 4 General Notes](#))

## condemn, condemned, condemnation

### Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: [judge](#), punish)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 3:20
- Job 9:29
- John 5:24
- Luke 6:37
- Matthew 12:7
- Proverbs 17:15-16
- Psalms 34:22
- Romans 5:16

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G01760, G08430, G26070, G26130, G26310, G26320, G26330, G29170, G29190, G29200, G52720, G60480

(Go back to: [Romans 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## covenant

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “covenant” refers to a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

- This agreement can be between individuals, between groups of people, or between God and people.
- When people make a covenant with each other, they promise that they will do something, and they must do it.
- Examples of human covenants include marriage covenants, business agreements, and treaties between countries.
- Throughout the Bible, God made several different covenants with his people.
- In some of the covenants, God promised to fulfill his part without conditions. For example, when God established his covenant with mankind promising to never destroy the earth again with a worldwide flood, this promise had no conditions for people to fulfill.
- In other covenants, God promised to fulfill his part only if the people obeyed him and fulfilled their part of the covenant.

The term “new covenant” refers to the commitment or agreement God made with his people through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus.

- God’s “new covenant” was explained in the part of the Bible called the “New Testament.”
- This new covenant is in contrast to the “old” or “former” covenant that God had made with the Israelites in Old Testament times.
- The new covenant is better than the old one because it is based on the sacrifice of Jesus, which completely atoned for people’s sins forever. The sacrifices made under the old covenant did not do this.
- God writes the new covenant on the hearts of those who become believers in Jesus. This causes them to want to obey God and to begin to live holy lives.
- The new covenant will be completely fulfilled in the end times when God establishes his reign on earth. Everything will once again be very good, as it was when God first created the world.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “binding agreement” or “formal commitment” or “pledge” or “contract.”
- Some languages may have different words for covenant depending on whether one party or both parties have made a promise they must keep. If the covenant is one-sided, it could be translated as “promise” or “pledge.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not sound like people proposed the covenant. In all cases of covenants between God and people, it was God who initiated the covenant.
- The term “new covenant” could be translated as “new formal agreement” or “new pact” or “new contract.”
- The word “new” in these expressions has the meaning of “fresh” or “new kind of” or “another.”

(See also: [covenant](#), promise)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 9:12
- Genesis 17:7
- Genesis 31:44
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Joshua 24:24-26

- 2 Samuel 23:5
- 2 Kings 18:11-12
- Mark 14:24
- Luke 1:73
- Luke 22:20
- Acts 7:8
- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26
- 2 Corinthians 3:6
- Galatians 3:17-18
- Hebrews 12:24

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:9** Then God made a **covenant** with Abram. A **covenant** is an agreement between two parties.
- **5:4** "I will make Ishmael a great nation, too, but my **covenant** will be with Isaac."
- **6:4** After a long time, Abraham died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the **covenant** were passed on to Isaac.
- **7:10** "The **covenant** promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to Jacob."
- **13:2** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, "If you will obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."
- **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."
- **15:13** Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the **covenant** that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai.
- **21:5** Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised that he would make a **New Covenant**, but not like the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. 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. The Messiah would start the **New Covenant**.
- **21:14** Through the Messiah's death and resurrection, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the **New Covenant**.
- **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. Do this to remember me every time you drink it."
- **48:11** But God has now made a **New Covenant** that is available to everyone. Because of this **New Covenant**, anyone from any people group can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H1285, H2319, H3772, G08020, G12420, G49340

(Go back to: [Romans 4 General Notes](#))

# die, dead, deadly, death

## Definition:

The term “death” refers to being physically dead instead of alive.

## 1. Physical death

- To “die” means to stop living. Death is the end of physical life.
- The expression “put to death” refers to killing or murdering someone, especially when a king or other ruler gives an order for someone to be killed.

## 2. Eternal death

- Eternal death is the separation of a person from God.
- This is the kind of death that happened to Adam when he sinned and disobeyed God. His relationship with God was broken. He became ashamed and tried to hide from God.
- This same kind of death happens to every person, because we sin. But God gives us eternal life when we have faith in Jesus Christ.

## Translation Suggestions:

- To translate this term, it is best to use the everyday, natural word or expression in the target language that refers to death.
- In some languages, to “die” may be expressed as to “not live.” The term “dead” may be translated as “not alive” or “not having any life” or “not living.”
- Many languages use figurative expressions to describe death, such as to “pass away” in English. However, in the Bible it is best to use the most direct term for death that is used in everyday language.
- In the Bible, eternal life and eternal death are often compared to physical life and physical death. It is important in a translation to use the same word or phrase for both physical death and eternal death.
- In some languages it may be more clear to say “eternal death” when the context requires that meaning. Some translators may also feel it is best to say “physical death” in contexts where it is being contrasted to spiritual death.
- The expression “the dead” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who have died. Some languages will translate this as “dead people” or “people who have died.” (See: nominal adjective)
- The expression “put to death” could also be translated as “kill” or “murder” or “execute.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faith](#), life)

## Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:21
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Acts 10:42
- Acts 14:19
- Colossians 2:15
- Colossians 2:20
- Genesis 2:15-17
- Genesis 34:27
- Matthew 16:28
- Romans 5:10

- Romans 5:12
- Romans 6:10

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:11** God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate from this tree, he would **die**.
- **2:11** "Then you will **die**, and your body will return to dirt."
- **7:10** Then Isaac **died**, and Jacob and Esau buried him.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he **dies**. Everyone who believes in me will never **die**."
- **40:8** Through his **death**, Jesus opened a way for people to come to God.
- **43:7** "Although Jesus **died**, God raised him from the dead."
- **48:2** Because they sinned, everyone on earth gets sick and everyone **dies**.
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or **death**.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0006, H1478, H1826, H1934, H2491, H4191, H4192, H4193, H4194, H4463, H5038, H5315, H6297, H6757, H7496, H7523, H8045, H8546, H8552, G03360, G03370, G05200, G05990, G06150, G06220, G16340, G19350, G20790, G22530, G22860, G22870, G22880, G22890, G23480, G28370, G29660, G34980, G34990, G35000, G44300, G48800, G48810, G50530, G50540

(Go back to: [Romans 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

### Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, reign, life)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18

- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **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**?”
- **28:1** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”
- **28:10** Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

(Go back to: [Romans 13 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: [Romans 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [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: [Romans 7 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## fruit, fruitful, unfruitful

### Definition:

The term “fruit” literally refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” has a lot of fruit. These terms are also used figuratively in the Bible.

- The Bible often uses “fruit” to refer to a person’s actions. Just as fruit on a tree shows what kind of tree it is, in the same way a person’s words and actions reveal what his character is like.
- A person can produce good or bad spiritual fruit, but the term “fruitful” always has the positive meaning of producing much good fruit.
- The term “fruitful” is also used figuratively to mean “prosperous.” This often refers to having many children and descendants, as well as having plenty of food and other wealth.
- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the “fruit of wisdom” refers to the good things that come from being wise.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.
- The figurative expression “fruit of the Spirit” refers to godly qualities that the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of people who obey him.
- The expression “fruit of the womb” refers to “what the womb produces”—that is children.

### Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term using the general word for “fruit” that is commonly used in the project language to refer to the edible fruit of a fruit tree. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- Depending on the context, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much spiritual fruit” or “having many children” or “prosperous.”
- The expression “fruit of the land” could also be translated as “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When God created animals and people, he commanded them to “be fruitful and multiply,” which refers to having many offspring. This could also be translated as “have many offspring” or “have many children and descendants” or “have many children so that you will have many descendants.”
- The expression “fruit of the womb” could be translated as “what the womb produces” or “children a woman gives birth to” or just “children.” When Elizabeth says to Mary “blessed is the fruit of your womb,” she means “blessed is the child you will give birth to.” The project language may also have a different expression for this.
- Another expression “fruit of the vine,” could be translated as “vine fruit” or “grapes.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as “will produce more fruit” or “will have more children” or “will be prosperous.”
- The apostle Paul’s expression “fruitful labor” could be translated as “work that brings very good results” or “efforts that result in many people believing in Jesus.”
- The “fruit of the Spirit” could also be translated as “works that the Holy Spirit produces” or “words and actions that show that the Holy Spirit is working in someone.”

(See also: descendant, grain, grape, Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

### Bible References:

- Galatians 5:23
- Genesis 1:11
- Luke 8:15
- Matthew 3:8

- Matthew 7:17

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0004, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2233, H2981, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H5108, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8393, H8570, G10810, G25900, G25920, G25930, G37030, G50520, G53520

(Go back to: [Romans 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness

### Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

The terms “ungodly” and “godless” describe people who are in rebellion against God. Living in an evil way, without thought of God, is called “ungodliness” or “godlessness.”

- The meanings of these words are very similar. However, “godless” and “godlessness” may describe a more extreme condition in which people or nations do not even acknowledge God or his right to rule them.
- God pronounces judgment and wrath on ungodly people, on everyone who rejects him and his ways.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “the godly” could be translated as “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: nominaladj)
- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”
- The phrase “in a godly manner” could be translated as “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”
- Ways to translate “godliness” could include “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”
- Depending on the context, the term “ungodly” could be translated as “displeasing to God” or “immoral” or “disobeying God.”
- The terms “godless” and “godlessness” literally mean that the people are “without God” or “having no thought of God” or “acting in a way that does not acknowledge God.”
- Other ways to translate “ungodliness” or “godlessness” could be “wickedness” or “evil” or “rebellion against God”.

(See also evil, honor, obey, [righteous](#), [righteous](#))

### Bible References:

- Job 27:10
- Proverbs 11:9
- Acts 3:12
- 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- 1 Timothy 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:12
- Hebrews 12:14-17
- Hebrews 11:7
- 1 Peter 4:18
- Jude 1:16

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H1100, H2623, H5760, H7563, G05160, G07630, G07640, G07650, G21240, G21500, G21520, G21530, G23160, G23170

(Go back to: [Romans 6 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## grace, gracious

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

### Bible References:

- Acts 4:33
- Acts 6:8
- Acts 14:4
- Colossians 4:6
- Colossians 4:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 4:7
- John 1:16
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G21430, G54850, G55430

(Go back to: [Romans 11 General Notes](#))

## guilt, guilty

### Definition:

The term “guilt” refers to the fact of having sinned or committed a crime.

- To “be guilty” means to have done something morally wrong, that is, to have disobeyed God.
- The opposite of “guilty” is “innocent.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages might translate “guilt” as “the weight of sin” or “the counting of sins.”
- Ways to translate to “be guilty” could include a word or phrase that means, to “be at fault” or “having done something morally wrong” or “having committed a sin.”

(See also: innocent, iniquity, punish, [sin](#))

### Bible References:

- Exodus 28:36-38
- Isaiah 6:7
- James 2:10-11
- John 19:4
- Jonah 1:14

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** They brought many witnesses who lied about him (Jesus). However, their statements did not agree with each other, so the Jewish leaders could not prove he was **guilty** of anything.
- **39:11** After speaking with Jesus, Pilate went out to the crowd and said, “I find no **guilt** in this man.” But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “He is not **guilty**.” But they shouted even louder. Then Pilate said a third time, “He is not **guilty**!”
- **40:4** Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Don’t you fear God? We are **guilty**, but this man is innocent.”
- **49:10** Because of your sin, you are **guilty** and deserve to die.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0816, H0817, H0818, H5352, H5355, H7563, G03380, G17770, G37840, G52670

(Go back to: [Romans 2 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [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:** [Romans 3 General Notes](#))

## in Christ, in Jesus, in the Lord, in him

### Definition:

The phrase “in Christ” and related terms refer to the state or condition of being in relationship with Jesus Christ through faith in him.

- Other related terms include “in Christ Jesus, in Jesus Christ, in the Lord Jesus, in the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Possible meanings for the term “in Christ” could include “because you belong to Christ” or “through the relationship you have with Christ” or “based on your faith in Christ.”
- These related terms all have the same meaning of being in a state of believing in Jesus and being his disciple.
- Note: Sometimes the word “in” belongs with the verb. For example, “share in Christ” means to “share in” the benefits that come from knowing Christ. To “glory in” Christ means to be glad and give praise to God for who Jesus is and what he has done. To “believe in” Christ means to trust him as Savior and know him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “in Christ” and “in the Lord” (and related phrases) could include:
  - “who belong to Christ”
  - “because you believe in Christ”
  - “because Christ has saved us”
  - “in service to the Lord”
  - “relying on the Lord”
  - “because of what the Lord has done.”
- People who “believe in” Christ or who “have faith in” Christ believe what Jesus taught and are trusting him to save them because of his sacrifice on the cross that paid the penalty for their sins. Some languages may have one word that translates verbs like “believe in” or “share in” or “trust in.”

(See also: [Christ](#), Lord, Jesus, [believe](#), [faith](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 John 2:5
- 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 2 Timothy 1:1
- Galatians 1:22
- Galatians 2:17
- Philemon 1:6
- Revelation 1:10
- Romans 9:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G15190, G29620, G55470

(Go back to: [Introduction to Romans](#))

## jealous, jealousy

### Definition:

The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” refer to a strong desire to protect the purity of a relationship. They can also refer to a strong desire to keep possession of something or someone.

- These terms are often used to describe the angry feeling that a person has toward a spouse who has been unfaithful in their marriage.
- When used in the Bible, these terms often refer to God’s strong desire for his people to remain pure and unstained by sin.
- God is also “jealous” for his name, desiring that it be treated with honor and reverence.
- Another meaning of jealous involves being angry that someone else is successful or more popular. This is close in meaning to the word “envious.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “jealous” could include “strong protective desire” or “possessive desire.”
- The term “jealousy” could be translated as “strong protective feeling” or “possessive feeling.”
- When talking about God, make sure the translation of these terms does not give a negative meaning of being resentful of someone else.
- In the context of people’s wrong feelings of anger toward other people who are more successful, the terms “envious” and “envy” could be used. But these terms should not be used for God.

(See also: [envy](#))

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 12:20
- Deuteronomy 5:9
- Exodus 20:5
- Ezekiel 36:5
- Joshua 24:19
- Nahum 1:2-3
- Romans 13:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7065, H7067, H7068, H7072, G22050, G38630

([Go back to: Romans 10 General Notes](#))

## judge, judgment

### Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right. However, these terms can also refer to actions performed by a person as the result of a decision, usually in the context of deciding that something is bad, wrong, or evil.

- The terms “judge” and “judgment” can also mean “to cause harm to” (usually because God has decided a person or nation’s actions are wicked).
- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate to “judge” could include to “decide” or to “condemn” or to “punish” or to “decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: decree, judge, judgment day, [just](#), law, [law](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:17
- 1 Kings 3:9
- Acts 10:42-43
- Isaiah 3:14
- James 2:4
- Luke 6:37
- Micah 3:9-11
- Psalm 54:1

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:16** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- **21:8** A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, “We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?”

- **50:14** But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G01440, G03500, G09680, G11060, G12520, G13410, G13450, G13480, G13490, G29170, G29190, G29200, G29220, G29230, G42320

(Go back to: [Romans 2 General Notes](#))

## just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification

### Definition:

“Just” and “justice” refer to treating people fairly according to God’s laws. Human laws that reflect God’s standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be “just” is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God’s eyes.
- To act “justly” means to treat people in a way that is right, good, and proper according to God’s laws.
- To receive “justice” means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by the law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term “just” has the broader meaning of “righteous” or “following God’s laws.”

The terms “unjust” and “unjustly” refer to treating people in an unfair and often harmful manner.

- An “injustice” is something bad that is done to someone that the person did not deserve. It refers to treating people unfairly.
- Injustice also means that some people are treated badly while others are treated well.
- Someone who is acting in an unjust way is being “partial” or “prejudiced” because he is not treating people equally.

The terms “justify” and “justification” refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- “Justification” refers to what God does when he forgives a person’s sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “just” could include “morally right” or “fair.”
- The term “justice” could be translated as “fair treatment” or “deserved consequences.”
- To “act justly” could be translated as “treat fairly” or “behave in a just way.”
- In some contexts, “just” could be translated as “righteous” or “upright.”
- Depending on the context, “unjust” could also be translated as “unfair” or “partial” or “unrighteous.”
- The phrase “the unjust” could be translated as “the unjust ones” or “unjust people” or “people who treat others unfairly” or “unrighteous people” or “people who disobey God.”
- The term “unjustly” could be translated as “in an unfair manner” or “wrongly” or “unfairly.”
- Ways to translate “injustice” could include, “wrong treatment” or “unfair treatment” or “acting unfairly.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- Other ways to translate “justify” could include “declare (someone) to be righteous” or “cause (someone) to be righteous.”
- The term “justification” could be translated as “being declared righteous” or “becoming righteous” or “causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “resulting in justification” could be translated as “so that God justified many people” or “which resulted in God causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “for our justification” could be translated as “in order that we could be made righteous by God.”

(See also: [forgive](#), [guilt](#), [judge](#), [righteous](#), [righteous](#))

## Bible References:

- Genesis 44:16
- 1 Chronicles 18:14
- Isaiah 4:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:3
- Ezekiel 18:16-17
- Micah 3:8
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 11:19
- Matthew 23:23-24
- Luke 18:3
- Luke 18:8
- Luke 18:13-14
- Luke 21:20-22
- Luke 23:41
- Acts 13:38-39
- Acts 28:4
- Romans 4:1-3
- Galatians 3:6-9
- Galatians 3:11
- Galatians 5:3-4
- Titus 3:6-7
- Hebrews 6:10
- James 2:24
- Revelation 15:3-4

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:9** David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- **18:13** Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.
- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H2555, H3477, H4941, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, H8636, G00910, G00930, G00940, G13420, G13440, G13450, G13460, G13470, G17380

(Go back to: [Romans 2 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## 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: [Romans 2 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## mercy, merciful

### Definition:

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

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

### Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: compassion, forgive)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 1 Timothy 1:13
- Daniel 9:17
- Exodus 34:6
- Genesis 19:16
- Hebrews 10:28-29
- James 2:13
- Luke 6:35-36
- Matthew 9:27
- Philippians 2:25-27
- Psalms 41:4-6
- Romans 12:1

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.
- **19:17** He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- **20:12** The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- **27:11** Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- **32:11** But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”
- **34:9** “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H2551, H2603, H2604, H2616, H2617, H2623, H3722, H3727, H4627, H4819, H5503, H5504, H5505, H5506, H6014, H7349, H7355, H7356, H7359, G16530, G16550, G16560, G24330, G24360, G36280, G36290, G37410, G46980

(Go back to: [Romans 11 General Notes](#))

## predestine, predestined

### Definition:

The terms “predestine” and “predestined” refer to deciding or planning beforehand that something will happen.

- This term especially refers to God predestining people to receive eternal life.
- Sometimes the word “foreordain” is used, which also means to decide beforehand.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “predestine” could also be translated as “decide before” or “decide ahead of time.”
- The term “predestined” could be translated as “decided long ago” or “planned ahead of time” or “decided beforehand.”
- A phrase such as “predestined us” could be translated as “decided long ago that we” or “already decided ahead of time that we.”
- Note that the translation of this term should be different from the translation of the term “foreknew.”

(See also: foreknew)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 2:6-7

### Word Data:

- Strong's: G43090

(Go back to: [Romans 8 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: [Romans 10 General Notes](#))

## remnant

### Definition:

The term “remnant” literally refers to people or things that are “remaining” or “left over” from a larger amount or group.

- Often a “remnant” refers to people who survive a life-threatening situation or who remain faithful to God while undergoing persecution.
- Isaiah referred to a group of Jews as being a remnant who would survive attacks from outsiders and live to return to the Promised Land in Canaan.
- Paul talks about there being a “remnant” of people who were chosen by God to receive his grace.
- The term “remnant” also implies that there were other people who did not remain or were not left over.

### Translation Suggestions:

- A phrase such as “the remnant of this people” could be translated as “the rest of these people” or “the people who are left.”
- The “whole remnant of people” could be translated by “all the rest of the people” or “the remaining people.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 15:17
- Amos 9:12
- Ezekiel 6:8-10
- Genesis 45:7
- Isaiah 11:11
- Micah 4:6-8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3498, H3499, H5629, H6413, H7604, H7605, H7611, H8281, H8300, G26400, G30050, G30620

(Go back to: [Introduction to Romans](#))

# 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: [Romans 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## save, saved, safe, salvation

### Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”
- The term “salvation” could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: cross, deliver, punish, [sin](#), Savior)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 49:18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 80:3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Micah 6:3-5
- Luke 2:30
- Luke 8:36-37
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 2:21
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 10:10
- Ephesians 6:17
- Philippians 1:28
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:8** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:2** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:5** Moses told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you."
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:8** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"
- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be **saved**?" Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**."
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0983, H2421, H2502, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H5338, H6308, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8199, H8668, G08030, G08040, G08060, G12950, G15080, G49820, G49910, G49920, G51980

(Go back to: [Romans 3 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## seed, semen

### Definition:

A “seed” is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant. However, in the Bible the term “seed” is used figuratively to mean several different things.

- The term “seed” is used figuratively and euphemistically to refer to the tiny cells inside a man that combine with cells of a woman to cause a baby to grow inside her. A collection of these cells is called “semen.”
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a person’s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared his seeds to the Word of God, which is planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- For a literal seed, it is best to use the literal term for “seed” that is used in the target language for what a farmer plants in his field.
- The literal term should also be used in contexts where it refers figuratively to God’s Word.
- For the figurative use that refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of “seed.” Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people. (See: [euphemism](#))

(See also: children, descendant)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:32
- Genesis 1:11
- Jeremiah 2:21
- Matthew 13:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H2233, H3610, H6507, G46150, G46870, G46900, G47010, G47030

(Go back to: [Romans 5 General Notes](#))

## sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

### Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that 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: [Romans 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

## Son of God, the Son

### Facts:

The term “Son of God” refers to Jesus, the Word of God, who came into the world as a human being. He is also often referred to as “the Son.”

- The Son of God has the same nature as God the Father, and is fully God.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all of one essence.
- Unlike human sons, the Son of God has always existed.
- In the beginning, the Son of God was active in creating the world, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Because Jesus is God’s Son, he loves and obeys his Father, and his Father loves him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- For the term “Son of God,” it is best to translate “Son” with the same word the language would naturally use to refer to a human son.
- Make sure the word used to translate “son” fits with the word used to translate “father” and that these words are the most natural ones used to express a true father-son relationship in the project language.
- Using a capital letter to begin “Son” may help show that this is talking about God.
- The phrase “the Son” is a shortened form of “the Son of God,” especially when it occurs in the same context as “the Father.”

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

(See also: [Christ](#), ancestor, God, God the Father, Holy Spirit, Jesus, son, sons of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:10
- Acts 9:20
- Colossians 1:17
- Galatians 2:20
- Hebrews 4:14
- John 3:18
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 11:27
- Revelation 2:18
- Romans 8:29

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:5** The angel explained, “The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the power of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the **Son of God**.”
- **24:9** God had told John, “The Holy Spirit will come down and rest on someone you baptize. That person is **the Son of God**.”
- **31:8** The disciples were amazed. They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, “Truly, you are **the Son of God**.”
- **37:5** Martha answered, “Yes, Master! I believe you are the Messiah, the **Son of God**.”
- **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.”
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began preaching to the Jews in Damascus, saying, “Jesus is the **Son of God**!”

- **49:9** But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only **Son** so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1121, H1247, G23160, G52070

(Go back to: [Romans 5 General Notes](#); [Notes](#))

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